



ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2019-2020

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Introduction

The UCD *Academic Regulations* set out the regulations governing the academic programmes of the University and encompass student assessment, grading, progression, and graduation at University College Dublin. The Academic Regulations are divided into eight sections:

- 1) *Academic Governance*
- 2) *University Awards*
- 3) *Academic Calendar, Modules, and Programme Structures*
- 4) *Assessment, Grading and Feedback*
- 5) *Programme Progression and Completion*
- 6) *Module Completion and Remediation*
- 7) *Regulations for Research Degrees (Research Master's and PhD Degrees)*
- 8) *Regulations for Professional Doctorate Degrees*
- 9) *Regulations for Doctor of Medicine Degrees*

The *Academic Regulations* are to be used for reference and action as appropriate by students, faculty and staff. The *Academic Regulations* are underpinned by the following principles, which are shaped by UCD's distinct traditions:

- *A spirit of enquiry:* We are committed to ensuring freedom of expression and dialogue, in a respectful and civil manner, across the spectrum of views held by our varied and diverse student communities.
- *Quality and depth of provision:* Our UCD modular curriculum offers a wide range of subjects, uniting our research tradition and heritage, articulating an approach to education that will resonate with ambitious, intellectually curious and dedicated students and faculty.
- *Collegiality and Collaboration:* This finds expression in our commitment to work with our students to understand and develop their academic experience in line with their needs and ambitions, and to ensure they are appropriately supported as individuals.
- *Diversity:* We will work to foster a respectful, cooperative, equitable and inclusive learning environment for our diverse student communities.
- *Integrity:* This is reflected in our adherence to the highest ethical standards, and in our commitment to transparency and accountability in everything we do related to student experience.

Purpose of UCD Academic Regulations

The main purposes of the UCD Academic Regulations are:

- To promote a shared and common understanding of UCD qualifications;
- To promote consistency in the use of qualifications and credit across the University;
- To provide a reference point for setting and assessing academic standards when designing, approving, monitoring and reviewing programmes of study and modules;
- To promote transparency and consistency across the University, ensuring that all students are treated fairly and equitably;
- To provide students with a clear set of expectations in relation to their academic achievement and progression;

- To communicate to employers, schools, parents, prospective students, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and other stakeholders the achievements represented by the qualifications of UCD;
- To inform international comparability of academic standards.

The UCD Academic Regulations outline the regulations that are applicable to all UCD taught and research programmes and to all new and continuing students from September 2019, regardless of the location or mode of study. The Academic Regulations encompass disciplines and subjects taught by the University. Faculty and staff and students are required to comply with the provisions of this document.

Key terms used in the Academic Regulations

Academic Regulation: High level, overarching rules governing the academic programmes of the University, e.g. minimum requirements for an award, number of credits to be completed, calculation of degree classification.

Derogation: An approved exemption or deviation from the Academic Regulations, often due to the requirements of the subject or of a professional, statutory or regulatory body. Derogations may be requested for any regulation by a Governing Board or School as appropriate. Academic Council or its relevant committee considers, and may approve, derogation requests.

Board of Studies: A Board of Studies is a Governing Board established by Academic Council with additional responsibilities that would normally be undertaken by a School, such as the design, delivery, and assessment of modules. A Board of Studies typically oversees modules and programmes delivered by units that are not Schools, such as the Applied Languages Centre or the Institute for Chinese Studies and are not located within Schools and/or Colleges.

Exemption based on Exceptional Circumstances: Unusual circumstances might require a deviation from a module descriptor during the delivery of the relevant module (e.g. a change to the teaching or assessment strategy) or prevent the completion of a task on schedule (e.g. grades might be entered into University systems or students might receive feedback after the scheduled date). In such instances, an Exemption based on Exceptional Circumstances may be approved by the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning in the relevant College, on the recommendation of the relevant Head of School. The recommendation should detail the unusual circumstances that necessitated the Exemption based on Exceptional Circumstances and a strategy to avoid future occurrence. An annual report of all applications for Exemptions based on Exceptional Circumstances shall be submitted by each School to the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

Governing Board: All programmes in the University are overseen by a Programme Board, Graduate School Board, Board of Studies, or Joint Academic Programme Board (hereafter referred to as a Governing Board), which is responsible for monitoring the overall performance and progression of students registered to its programmes and ensuring their academic welfare. Governing Boards are established by Academic Council.

Policy: A committee decision or management directive which sets out the official position of the University on any aspect of the institution's activities. Policy mandates key principles and provisions to enable decision making.

Procedure: A detailed mandatory direction on how a policy or regulation will be implemented in an operating environment.

Programme Specification: A statement that sets out the purpose and structure of the programme, which is approved by the relevant Governing Board in accordance with the policies and procedures established by Academic Council or its relevant committee.

Requirement: A statement of minimum standards or expectations e.g. progression requirements, deadlines.

Subject: Subjects are organised to facilitate learning and teaching. The Academic Council may establish criteria for the recognition of subjects of the University and shall maintain a register of the subjects of the University. This Register provides for subjects to be primarily affiliated with one school.

1 Governance

Introduction

- 1.1** Academic Council establishes effective processes for the design, development, approval and monitoring of programmes of study in order to discharge fully its responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities.

Academic Governance

- 1.2** Academic Council controls the academic affairs of the university including the curriculum of, and instruction and education provided by, the university. Responsibility for specific functions and roles may be delegated as necessary to bodies or individuals but Academic Council or its relevant committees shall review the function, operation and decisions of such bodies or individuals on a regular basis.

Programme Governance

- 1.3** The university shall offer programmes of study (programmes). A programme is an approved course of study, the successful completion of which leads to a University award. The award is conferred when the programme outcomes have been appropriately demonstrated by accumulating the required number of credits at appropriate levels over an appropriate period of time and all other programme requirements have been met. The specific approval of Academic Council shall be required to offer programmes leading to awards other than those set out in section 2.5.
- 1.4** Each programme shall be governed by a Governing Board. A programme shall be approved, managed and reviewed by its Governing Board.
- 1.5** The composition and governance structure of each Governing Board shall follow the policies and procedures approved by Academic Council. A Governing Board may be responsible for more than one programme.
- 1.6** In accordance with the University's policies and regulations, a Governing Board's responsibilities in relation to the programmes it governs and the students registered to these programmes include the following:
- a) Ensuring the implementation of University strategy, policies, and procedures
 - b) Design, development, regulation, delivery, and quality assurance and enhancement
 - c) Assuring outcomes-based emphasis in programme design and assessment
 - d) Ensuring that assessment strategy is appropriate and measures achievement of programme outcomes
 - e) Approving the structure and content of the programme and any special regulations relating to the programme

- f) Oversight of the admission of students
- g) Oversight of internships
- h) Oversight of study abroad opportunities
- i) Adjudication on student applications for leave of absence and transfer between programmes
- j) Academic welfare of the students registered to the programmes and identifying students whose academic welfare is of concern
- k) Consideration of extenuating circumstances and approval of appropriate actions
- l) Progression of students within the programme
- m) Where a student's academic performance is deemed to be unacceptable by the Governing Board, referring the case with a recommendation and supporting evidence to the Academic Council or its relevant committee
- n) Overseeing and enhancing the academic quality of programmes and the student learning experience
- o) Ensuring appropriate supervisory arrangements are in place for research students

1.7 A Governing Board shall appoint a member of faculty as Programme Director, reporting to the Chair of the Governing Board, for each taught programme it governs. The Programme Director's responsibilities include:

- a) day to day management of the programme;
- b) consulting with faculty and staff involved in the delivery of the programme;
- c) monitoring the assessment and feedback strategies of the programme;
- d) monitoring student satisfaction and engagement with the programme and constituent modules;
- e) identifying students whose academic welfare is of concern and reporting concerns to the Governing Board; and
- f) making recommendations in relation to quality assurance and programme enhancement to the Governing Board.

1.8 A Governing Board may assign specific activities of the Board to individuals, units or establish such and so many committees as it thinks necessary to ensure effective delivery of the programmes within its remit. The Governing Board retains responsibility for any such assigned activities.

1.9 A Governing Board shall establish so many Programme Examination Boards, as subcommittees of the Governing Board, as are required for the programmes it governs.

Programme Examination Boards shall be responsible for:

- a) the consideration and approval of grades submitted by Schools;
- b) approval of the progression of students on taught programmes;
- c) consideration of extenuating circumstances and approval of appropriate actions;
- d) recommendation of final award (and class, if appropriate) on the delegated authority of Academic Council;
- e) reflection on student performance, grade distributions and other assessment matters; and
- f) making recommendations to the Governing Board for future action.

- 1.10** In considering the grades submitted to it, the Programme Exam Board shall have regard to the specified programme outcomes and shall assess student performance against the achievement of programme outcomes. A Programme Examination Board shall be entitled to require a School to review, in a timely manner, any grades submitted.
- 1.11** Where a Programme Examination Board and a School cannot agree on the grades submitted, whether for individual students or entire modules, the matter shall be referred to Academic Council or its relevant committee for adjudication.
- 1.12** For research students, a Governing Board shall make recommendation on the composition of the Examination Committee to Academic Council or its relevant committee.

Programme Specification

- 1.13** A Governing Board shall approve, and review as necessary, a programme specification for each taught programme under its control, and as appropriate will further develop programme specifications for majors and minors within that programme.
- 1.14** The programme specification shall detail:
- a) the purpose, vision and values of the programme;
 - b) the programme outcomes;
 - c) a statement of how the programme is to be structured (e.g. how many stages, how many credits per stage);
 - d) mode of programme delivery;
 - e) how credit may be accumulated to achieve the award (e.g. a summary of the programme's core modules and option modules)
 - f) opportunities for taking elective modules (if applicable);
 - g) admission criteria;
 - h) continuation and/or progression requirements (if applicable);
 - i) assessment and feedback strategies;
 - j) the award GPA rule (if applicable);
 - k) careers and skills statements;
 - l) programme accreditation (in whole or in part) by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB);
 - m) Programme Student Fitness to Practise Statement (if applicable);
 - n) garda vetting requirements (if applicable); and
 - o) available exit strategies.
- 1.15** The University is responsible for the design and validation of its own degree programmes. Where those programmes are also subject to professional, statutory or regulatory accreditation, the University and the appropriate Governing Board shall endeavour to have the requirements of the accrediting body stated in terms of programme outcomes rather than specified curricular content.

2 University Awards

Introduction

- 2.1** This section outlines the awards made by University College Dublin and reflect the diversity and range of educational opportunities provided. Programme award levels are drafted with reference to:
- a) the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ);
 - b) the European Qualifications Framework;
 - c) the European Higher Education Area 'Bologna Framework';
 - d) Quality and Qualifications Ireland; and
 - e) the requirements of professional, statutory or regulatory bodies associated with particular programmes of study, some of which grant a licence to practise.
- 2.2** The Irish National Framework of Qualifications is a framework through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way. These levels are described in terms of general (non-subject-specific) indicators of a person's knowledge, skill and competence (i.e. standards for their learning achievements). The university confers the following awards:
- a) Major Awards: a named award on the National Framework of Qualifications
 - b) Minor Awards: partial completion of the outcomes of the Major Award
 - c) Special Purpose Awards: standalone award with a distinct identity which reflects their clearly defined purpose
 - d) Supplemental Awards: learning that is additional to a Major award
- 2.3** The university offers the following awards for its taught and research programmes which are aligned to the National Framework of Qualifications. Each award requires the accumulation of credits and/or the completion of a programme of study and/or research as outlined below.
- 2.4** With the exception of grade neutral awards, awards are classified based on an award Grade Point Average (GPA) (see section 2.7 and Appendix for examples).

2.5 University Awards Table – Taught Programmes

	Award Type	Credit Range	Minimum UCD Level Requirements	GPA Award Classification
NFQ Level 6				
Certificate of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	5-15		Greater than or equal to 3.68 Distinction
Diploma of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	20-30		
NFQ Level 7				
Certificate of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	5-15		Greater than or equal to 2.48 and less than 3.68 Merit
Professional Certificate	Special Purpose	5-15		
Professional Diploma	Special Purpose	20-30		
University Certificate	Minor Award	20-40	20 credits at UCD Level 1 or above	
University Diploma	Minor Award	60-120	45 credits at UCD Level 1 or above	
NFQ Level 8				
Certificate of Continuing Professional Development	Supplemental	5-10		Greater than or equal to 2.00 and less than 2.48 Pass
Professional Certificate	Special Purpose	5-15		
Professional Diploma	Special Purpose	20-30		
University Certificate	Minor Award	20-40	20 credits at UCD Level 3 or above	
Diploma of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	20-30		Greater than or equal to 3.68 First class honours Greater than or equal to 3.08 and less than 3.68 Second class honours, Grade I Greater than or equal to 2.48 and less than 3.08 Second class honours, Grade II Greater than or equal to 2.00 and less than 2.48 Pass
Higher Diploma	Major Award	60-120	30 credits at UCD Level 3 or above	
Honours Bachelor's Degree	Major Award	180-360	40 credits at Level 3 or above	
NFQ Level 9				
Certificate of Continuing Professional Development	Supplemental	5-10		Distinction Merit Pass As above
Professional Certificate	Special Purpose	5-15		
Professional Diploma	Special Purpose	20-30		
Graduate Certificate	Minor Award	30-40	20 credits at Level 4 or above	Greater than or equal to 3.68 First class honours Greater than or equal to 3.08 and less than 3.68 Second class honours, Grade I Greater than or equal to 2.48 and less than 3.08 Second class honours, Grade II Greater than or equal to 2.00 and less than 2.48 Pass
Graduate Diploma	Major Award	60-80	45 credits at Level 4 or above	
Master's Degree / Professional Master's Degree	Major Award	90 - 180	70 credits at Level 4 or above	

2.6 University Awards Table – Research Programmes

	Award Type	Registration Period	Taught Credit Requirements
Research Master's Degree	Major Award	3-6 trimesters (FT) 5-9 trimesters (PT)	No taught programme requirement
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD)	Major Award	9-12 trimesters (FT) 15 – 18 trimesters (PT)	Minimum 30 taught credits
Doctor of Medicine Degree (MD)	Major Award	6 trimesters (FT) 12 trimesters (PT)	Maximum 20 taught credits
Doctor of Nursing Degree (DN) / Doctor of Midwifery Degree (DM)	Major Award	9 trimesters (FT) 18 trimesters (PT)	Minimum 135 taught credits
Doctor of Governance Degree (DGov)	Major Award	12-18 trimesters (PT)	Minimum 90 taught credits
Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation Degree (DVMS)	Major Award	9-12 trimesters (FT)	Minimum 20 taught credits
Doctor of Educational Psychology Degree (DEdPsych)	Major Award	9 trimesters (FT) 15 trimesters (PT)	Minimum 60 taught credits
Doctor of Clinical Psychology Degree (DPsychSc)	Major Award	9 trimesters (FT)	Minimum 60 taught credits

Award GPA Rules

2.7 The Award GPA will be determined by the Programme Examination Board applying one of the following award GPA rules:

- a) Final stage only** – The award GPA is the weighted average of the grade points awarded upon passing the modules or other credit-bearing learning activities that satisfy the requirements of the final stage. The grade points are weighted by credit value.
- b) Final and penultimate stages (equal weight)** – The award GPA is the weighted average of the grade points awarded upon passing the modules or other credit-bearing learning activities that satisfy the requirements of the final and penultimate stages. The grade points are weighted by credit value.
- c) Final and penultimate stages (stage-weighted)** – The award GPA is the weighted average of the grade points awarded upon passing the modules or other credit-bearing learning activities that satisfy the requirements of the final and penultimate stages. The grade points are weighted by the credit value, and by a factor of seven for the final stage and a factor of three for the penultimate stage.
- d) Three-stage weighted – For programmes with greater than 3 stages** – The award GPA is the weighted average of the grade points awarded upon passing the modules or other credit-bearing learning activities that satisfy the requirements of the final three stages of a programme. The grade points are weighted by the credit value, and by a factor of five for the final stage, a factor of three for the penultimate stage, and by a factor of two for the antepenultimate stage.

2.8 Where grades are weighted across multiple stages, grade neutral credit shall not alter the stages that contribute to the calculation of award GPA nor the weightings of the GPA rule (see appendix B for examples).

2.9 Where a programme specification allows for modules to be taken in a different higher education institution, and where grade equivalence tables are agreed and published in advance, such modules may contribute to stage GPA and Award GPA as detailed by the Governing Board in the programme specification.

3 Academic Calendar, Modules, and Programme Structures

Introduction

3.1 This section sets out the academic session, reflects expectations around student workload and explains subjects, modules and other learning experiences, and programme structures. The academic session is structured into trimesters of varying length. While the tradition of concentrating teaching into two trimesters is maintained, the regulations provide the flexibility for schools to undertake teaching during the third trimester.

Academic Session

3.2 The university's academic session is structured into trimesters (Autumn, Spring, Summer).

3.3 The Academic Council determines and publishes in advance the trimester term dates.

3.4 The teaching on taught programmes of the University will generally be delivered during the Autumn and Spring trimesters but may be offered during the Summer trimester where this is detailed in approved programme specifications or module descriptors.

3.5 The teaching, learning and assessment activities associated with a module or other learning experiences will be completed during a single trimester, unless one of the following criteria are met:

- a) The module is a research-related capstone module, such as a dissertation, research project or thesis module, where the credit value of the module is 20 credits or greater and extension over more than one trimester is detailed in the module descriptor.
- b) The module is a studio module, or a professional or work experience module (for example, an internship module) where the credit value of the module is 10 credits or greater and the extension over more than one trimester is detailed in the module descriptor.
- c) The module is a clinical teaching module where delivery over more than one trimester is necessary to achieve access to relevant facilities, support, or materials; and the extension over more than one trimester is detailed in the module descriptor.

3.6 In addition to providing for teaching, revision and assessment, a trimester may include a period of up to two weeks to accommodate fieldwork, clinical placement, work experience, revision and private study.

Workload

- 3.7** A student may not register to more than 40 credits in any trimester. In determining workload, credits from resits and repeats shall be counted by a Governing Board.
- 3.8** A programme may not require a student to take more than 30 credits per trimester (including elective credit).
- 3.9** Governing Boards shall monitor student workloads and where, in the opinion of a Governing Board, a student's workload is unsustainable, it may, following appropriate consultation with the student, require that the student's workload be reduced to sustainable levels.

Programme Structure

- 3.10** Programmes shall be structured so that the learning outcomes of the modules or other credit-bearing learning opportunities that are listed in the programme specification align to the programme outcomes.
- 3.11** A Governing Board awards credit to a student when the student has demonstrated the achievement of the learning outcomes associated with that module, as detailed in section 6 of the Academic Regulations. Achievement by a student of a module's learning outcomes is normally demonstrated through assessment, as detailed in section 4 of the Academic Regulations.
- 3.12** Where the learning outcomes of several modules are comparable, assessment tasks may be shared across those modules. Where the learning outcomes of several modules are complementary to the achievement of programme outcomes, assessment may be integrated across those modules and a Governing Board may award a student credit for the combination of modules where the student demonstrates the achievement of the learning outcomes associated with that combination of modules.

Modules

- 3.13** Schools offer subjects and Schools and Boards of Study offer individual modules to programmes. Schools and Boards of Studies are responsible for the design, delivery and assessment of these modules, the quality of the teaching provided in these modules and the academic welfare of the students enrolled to those modules. All subjects shall have subject extern examiners, appointed in accordance with university policy as determined by Academic Council.¹
- 3.14** Each module shall have a named Module Coordinator appointed by, and accountable to, the Head of School or Chair of the Board of Studies to oversee the design, delivery, assessment, and grading of the module on behalf of the School or Board of Studies. The Module

¹ [Extern Examination at UCD Policy](#)

Coordinator also acts as the Principal Examiner of that module, a function that may not be delegated.

- 3.15** Module Coordinators are members of faculty of the University or are approved to act by Academic Council or its relevant committee. Where modules are delivered by someone who is not a member of faculty, a named member of faculty will be responsible for assuring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of that module.
- 3.16** A School or Board of Studies shall approve, and review as necessary, a module descriptor for each module it offers according to the requirements set down by Academic Council.
- 3.17** The module descriptor shall detail:
- a) the School or Board of Studies responsible for the module;
 - b) the Module Coordinator responsible for the module;
 - c) the purpose and overarching content of the module;
 - d) the identity of staff that teach on the module;
 - e) the UCD Level of the module;
 - f) the credit value of the module;
 - i. Modules (excluding research and dissertation modules) may be delivered in sizes of 5, 7.5, 10, or 15 credits.
 - ii. Research, project, or work experience modules may bear credit in multiples of 5 credits, up to a maximum of 30 credits.
 - iii. Modules of 2.5 credits are permitted for specific educational purposes at Level 4 or above.
 - iv. Dissertation modules shall bear credit in multiples of 5 credits, and may be 15-30 credits in size in undergraduate programmes and 30 credits or higher in graduate programmes.
 - g) the learning outcomes of the module;
 - h) the indicative curricular content;
 - i) mode of delivery;
 - j) approaches to learning;
 - k) assessment and feedback activity and timing, including the weighting of assessment components, whether there are must pass components, and whether examinations (if applicable) are open or closed book examinations;
 - l) whether the module is grade neutral or not;
 - m) the mark-to-grade conversion scale (if applicable);
 - n) expected types and quantity of student activity (for example lectures, seminars, specified learning activities, and autonomous student learning);
 - o) any module dependencies, exclusions, or requisites that may apply;
 - p) remediation opportunities, to include information on whether passing component grades are carried forward into subsequent repeat attempts at the module; and
 - q) the number of student places available on the module.

Core Modules

3.18 The modules listed in the programme specification as providing learning outcomes that must be demonstrated to achieve the programme outcomes are called core modules. Core modules may be defined at the level of the programme or subject, and different core modules may apply depending on whether the subject is being pursued as a major or minor. All core modules must be passed before a student is eligible to complete a programme.

Option Modules

3.19 The modules listed in the programme specification as providing learning outcomes that contribute to the achievement of programme outcomes, where a specified number of such modules must be passed to demonstrate the achievement of the programme outcomes, are called option modules. Option modules may be defined at the level of the programme or subject, and different option modules may apply depending on whether the subject is being pursued as a major, minor, or specialisation.

3.20 To enable students to negotiate and tailor their learning, a Governing Board may approve a request from a student to treat a module that is not listed in the programme specification as an option module, where the Governing Board is satisfied that passing the module will contribute appropriately to the achievement of programme outcomes. Such modules are referred to as negotiated option modules

Elective Modules

3.21 A module undertaken by a student that is not contained within the programme specification of the programme to which they are registered, and which is not a negotiated option module, is taken by that student as an elective module.

3.22 Undergraduate degree students are entitled to take a minimum number of elective modules, equating to 25 credits, as part of their programme.

3.23 Incoming undergraduate degree students shall not take elective modules in trimester 1 of stage 1, unless required to meet a module requirement, as per section 3.28 (f), in their programme.

3.24 An undergraduate degree student may choose to take less than the full amount of elective modules which they are entitled to take as part of their programme, in which case a student shall take additional option modules or credit-bearing learning experiences with an equivalent credit value.

3.25 Schools and Boards of Studies shall reserve places in modules for which they are responsible as elective places. The overall provision of elective places by a School or Board of Studies shall be reviewed annually by Academic Council or its relevant committee and adjusted where possible to meet student demand.

Timetable and Capacity Constraints

- 3.26** Schools and Boards of Studies shall provide sufficient capacity on the modules they deliver to ensure sufficient places for all students required to take those modules as core modules.
- 3.27** A student's ability to select a module as an option module or elective module shall be subject to timetable and capacity constraints.

Module Dependencies, Exclusions, and Requisites

3.28 Module Dependencies: Module dependencies specify the prior or parallel learning required of students to undertake a module, while module exclusions are designed to ensure students do not gain credit more than once for the same learning outcomes. The types of module dependencies and exclusions that may be specified include the following:

- a) **Pre-Requisites** – students must have achieved credit for demonstrating the required learning outcomes associated with the modules listed or through appropriate recognition of prior learning or concurrent learning.
 - b) **Required Modules**– students must have attempted the modules listed as required modules in order to register to the module.
 - c) **Co-Requisites** – students must also take or have taken the modules listed as co-requisites in order to register to the module.
 - d) **Incompatible Modules**– students cannot be awarded credit for passing the module and also be awarded credit for passing any of the modules listed as incompatible modules owing to the similarity of their learning outcomes.
 - e) **Exclusions** – students cannot be awarded credit for passing the module if they have already achieved similar educational outcomes in higher, further or secondary education as specified by the exclusion.
 - f) **Module requirement** – students must have satisfied these requirements, which could include a minimum overall performance at earlier stages of the programme expressed as a required GPA, or a minimum performance at higher, further or secondary education in a specified subject or subjects
- 3.29** Enrolment is not permitted in a module unless prerequisites, co-requisites and requirements have been satisfied and any other requirements prescribed with the module descriptor have been fulfilled.

Other Learning Experiences

- 3.30** A programme specification may include learning opportunities, other than modules, as credit-bearing learning activities where the Governing Board is satisfied that such activity will contribute appropriately to the achievement of programme outcomes. These may include, but do not have to be limited to, work placements, independent learning, or voluntary activities.
- 3.31** To enable students to negotiate and tailor their learning, a Governing Board may approve a request from a student to recognise an activity that is not listed in the programme specification as a credit-bearing learning activity, where the Governing Board is satisfied that such activity will contribute appropriately to the achievement of programme outcomes.
- 3.32** Credit may be awarded within a programme for the demonstration of learning outcomes achieved outside of that programme, in accordance with any policies or procedures developed by Academic Council or its relevant committee for the recognition of prior learning or concurrent learning. Credit awarded in this manner will count towards progression and programme credit accumulation requirements.
- 3.33** A Governing Board may require and specify an assessment activity or activities be undertaken to ensure that credit-bearing learning activity achieves the stated programme outcomes.

Undergraduate Degree Programme Structure

- 3.34** Undergraduate university awards can be given in the name of any of the subjects on the University's *Register of Subjects*.
- 3.35** All University undergraduate degree programmes shall consist of at least one Major. In addition, an undergraduate degree programme may include provision for additional Majors, Minors, Specialisations, and Structured Electives.
- 3.36** Majors and Minors can be offered in areas that are not formally recognised as subjects where Academic Council or its relevant committee is satisfied that there is a disciplinary coherence to such an offering.
- 3.37** Majors, Minors, Specialisations, and Structured Electives shall be structured as follows:
- a) Major – The achievement of a singular and coherent understanding of a subject or theme where credit has been accumulated in a manner approved by the appropriate Governing Board. The minimum specification for the award of a Major is 50 credits at level 2 or higher, as specified in the programme specification.
 - b) Minor – The achievement of a singular and coherent understanding of a subject or theme where credit has been accumulated in a manner approved by the appropriate

Governing Board. The minimum specification for the award of a Minor is 35 credits at level 2 or higher, as specified in the programme specification.

- c) Specialisation – In order to promote deeper learning, a Governing Board may offer particular combinations of modules and other units of learning as a coherent unit within the programme specification for any programmes for which it is responsible. The minimum specification for the award of a Specialisation is 20 credits at level 2 or higher, of which at least 10 credits must be at level 3 or higher, to consist of option modules, negotiated option modules, or other learning experiences.

- d) Structured Electives – A student may choose to select their elective modules from a coherent combination of modules not listed within their programme specification, where the credit value of those modules amounts to a minimum of 15 credits and is recognised by a Governing Board as combining to form a Structured Elective. The ability of a student to complete a Structured Elective is subject to capacity and timetable constraints.

Student Engagement

- 3.38** The first trimester of an undergraduate programme should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the diverse backgrounds and prior learning of the incoming students. There should be an emphasis on acquiring the intellectual skills and learning approaches appropriate to a university programme.

- 3.39** Students are expected to participate in all activities associated with the modules or other learning experiences to which they are registered. This includes regular and punctual attendance at, and engagement with, lectures, laboratories and other teaching and learning activities. Engagement and participation requirements may be incorporated into assessment strategies or programme specifications.

Registration to Multiple Programmes

- 3.40** With the approval of the relevant Governing Boards, students may be registered concurrently to more than one programme, subject to the limitation of maximum student workload.

4 Assessment, Grading and Feedback

Principles of Assessment

The principles that underpin assessment in UCD are:

- **Clear and high standards are communicated** through assessment tasks, that address learning outcomes and motivate students, and address learning outcomes. Assignments should be challenging, but achievable, and reflect appropriate work and effort. Assessment requirements should be clearly understood. Summative assessment load should be the minimum required to sample the students learning
- **Assessment is central to curriculum design and learning** where assessment guides and encourages effective approaches to learning; where assessment is valid and reliably measures expected programme outcomes and where grading defines and protects academic standards.
- **Alignment between expected programme outcomes and assessment** where each school has a clear policy that guides assessment and where module assessment is integrated into programme assessment.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** All students shall have equal opportunity to effectively demonstrate their learning and be assessed by different, appropriate and applicable methods across their programme, subject or major. UCD upholds the principle of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Assessment ensuring that assessment does not bear more heavily against any group and no bias, either conscious or unconscious impacts upon the assessment process.
- **Variety of assessment approaches:** A variety of methods should be used so that there is not over reliance on specific methods of assessment, tasks assess generic skills as well as subject specific knowledge and there is a clear progression in the complexity and demands of assessment requirements over the sequential levels of modules and stage programme outcomes. A variety of assessment approaches will mitigate against inherent biases that may disadvantage particular student groups.
- **A comprehensive assessment design framework** which operates at programme level; takes into account student and staff workloads when scheduling and designing assessment tasks and provides students with defined periods for examination remediation opportunities and the resubmission of assignments; where assessment tasks are balanced between formative, summative and self-assessment approaches; and where grades are calculated and reported on the basis of clearly articulated programme outcomes and criteria for levels of achievement.

Introduction

- 4.1** This section outlines the regulations with reference to assessment, grading, and feedback. Colleges, Schools and UCD Registry shall ensure that information for students on all aspects of their assessment is explicit, transparent, targeted towards students, up-to-date, readily available, and emphasised at the outset of a module to guide student learning. The principles that underpin assessment in UCD aim to promote consistency across the university, and parity in student experience of assessment; and act as an important reference point for setting and maintaining UCD's academic standards.
- 4.2** Assessment processes and regulations must accord with the principles of natural justice and pay due notice to the danger of inadvertent or indirect discrimination or bias, ensuring that, as far as possible, procedures do not bear more heavily on specific groups.
- 4.3** The focus of assessment should be achievement of stated learning outcomes and not on the specific elements of the curriculum. This may be particularly important in providing opportunities for substitution and/or remediation of modules or other learning experiences.

Assessment of Modules

- 4.4** The following regulations apply to individual modules. However, it may be appropriate, notwithstanding the self-contained nature of modules, to group a number together for the purposes of assessment or to permit the assessment for one module to be applied to another where the learning outcomes are equivalent or complementary and where all the relevant modules are contained within the same trimester or trimesters.
- 4.5** The assessment strategy for a module will, as far as practicable, be considered and planned in relation to overall assessment load of the programmes in which the module is specified. The assessment strategy will include one or more components of assessment. A component of assessment may be a single assessment task (such as a terminal written examination, a major essay or a project) or may comprise a number of separate assessment tasks of a given type (such as a series of laboratory reports, tutorial assessments or short tests).
- 4.6** A module should make use of an appropriate range of methods of assessment. Where end-of-trimester examination is used as a means of assessment, an appropriate balance between formal end-of-trimester examinations and in-trimester assessment should be achieved.
- 4.7** In developing formative assessment, Module Coordinators shall ensure that students have opportunities to:
- a) self-monitor and/or learn from other students;
 - b) receive feedback; and
 - c) practice assessments, and see examples of unfamiliar tasks – e.g. software, virtual learning environment (VLE) functionality, question type – prior to submission.

- 4.8** The assessment strategy for a module shall be specified and approved by the responsible School or Board of Studies and shall be reviewed from time to time as required by Academic Council. Assessment strategies may not be changed during the course of the module unless the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning in the relevant College grants an exemption based on exceptional circumstances.
- 4.9** Participation may be an assessed component of a module where a clear assessment methodology and set of assessment criteria is provided in advance to students; such forms of assessment should be made explicit in the assessment strategy of the module. Grades must not be awarded solely for attendance.
- 4.10** All teaching and assessment of modules within programmes leading to an academic award of the University shall be in the English language, apart from the following exceptions:
- a) Irish modules, foreign language modules and any modules on a programme with a significant foreign language curriculum specialisation
 - b) Modules provided and assessed by another institution associated with a student exchange or collaborative programme and approved by the relevant University committee/board
- 4.11** The volume of assessment should be appropriate to the learning outcomes and lengthy terminal examinations shall be avoided where there has been substantial assessment during the module. The length of a written terminal examination shall not exceed two hours.
- 4.12** Module Coordinators must ensure that records of assessment are kept in a safe, accurate and comprehensive manner and in accordance with the University's retention policy and procedures, and enter the component grades into University systems not later than 20 working days (unless the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning in the relevant College grants an exemption based on exceptional circumstances) after the assessment submission for all work submitted within the time specified in the assessment strategy, or the date specified by Academic Council for the final submission of grades for the trimester, whichever comes first.
- 4.13** A student is responsible for the academic integrity of any assessment they submit.² Module coordinators shall take all appropriate steps to assess the academic integrity of any assessment submitted by students. The Head of School shall ensure that robust procedures in accordance with University policies and procedures are in place to address any alleged breaches of academic integrity.

² See [UCD Plagiarism Policy](#) and [UCD Research Ethics Policy](#).

Grading

- 4.14** Assessment in the University shall be graded. Where assessment components are objective and quantitative, a suitable numerical scale may be used to establish performance in the component and the outcomes of a module shall be reported as a module grade using the conversion process established by Academic Council or its relevant committee. Grading should be according to the module assessment criteria and students must be made aware of those criteria in advance. Grading scales must be transparent and clearly communicated to students in advance of the assessment.
- 4.15** A School may require that an assessment component of a module must be passed to pass that module. Such a component is called a must pass component and must meet the following criteria:
- a) such a component will contribute at least:
 - i. twenty percent to the overall grade for the module; or
 - ii. ten percent to the overall grade for the module in the context of a competency-based assessment required by a professional, statutory or regulatory body;
 - b) opportunities to repeat this component (an in-module repeat of an assessment component – see section 4.26) shall be provided prior to confirmation of the grade by the Programme Examination Board; and
 - c) the use of must pass components and the approach to, and timing of, in-module repeats for those components, must be specified in the module descriptor.
- 4.16** To assure consistency and fairness assessment processes should include internal moderation processes where appropriate, including second grading.
- 4.17** The School shall ensure that an appropriate process is in place for grading all forms of assessment. The process shall ensure that all faculty involved in the delivery of the module have a significant role in grading.
- 4.18** Following the completion of the module, the School shall assure the quality of the grading process, ensure the timely collation of all grades awarded for components and ensure that the final grades for a module are entered into University systems as soon as possible and no later than the deadline specified by the Academic Council.
- 4.19** Grading of assessments shall be undertaken by an approved examiner. Academic Council or its relevant committee shall approve examiners.
- 4.20** The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that the provisional grades awarded by Module Coordinators for individual modules are subsequently validated by the School within such a period of time as the Academic Council may specify.

- 4.21** The School shall establish a Modular Examination Committee, which will review and assure the grades for the modules coordinated by that School. In reviewing grades for individual students, the Modular Examination Committee will have regard for the overall learning outcomes of the module and the students' performance over the range of modules offered by the School and may make appropriate adjustments. Where a School coordinates modules in different subjects, or coordinates a large number of modules, the Head of School may convene a number of separate Modular Examination Committees.
- 4.22** A Modular Examination Committee must have the range of expertise required to properly examine all modules considered by the Committee and should comprise the module coordinators, the Head of Subjects (as appropriate) and others as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. The grades for each module in a given School must be agreed by a Modular Examination Committee as soon as practicable after the completion of the module and its assessments and within such a period of time as the Academic Council may specify.
- 4.23** The final aggregate result of assessments for each student enrolled to a module should be returned as a single letter grade according to the following scheme. The Academic Council has agreed and published detailed [grade descriptors](#).
- 4.24** The following scale should be used for module component grades.

COMPONENT GRADE SCALE	
COMPONENT GRADE	DESCRIPTION
A+	Excellent
A	
A-	
B+	Very good
B	
B-	
C+	Good
C	
C-	
D+	Acceptable
D	
D-	
E+	Fail
E	
E-	
F+	Fail
F	
F-	
G+	Fail
G	
G-	

NM	No grade - work submitted did not merit a grade
ABS	No work was submitted by the student or the student was absent from the assessment component

4.25 Where an assessment component cannot be assessed at this level of detail, the results may be returned as pass/fail and the following scale should be used.

COMPONENT GRADE	DESCRIPTION
P	Pass
F	Fail
NM	No grade- work submitted did not merit a grade
ABS	No work was submitted by the student or the student was absent from assessment

4.26 Where a student receives a provisional failing grade for an assessment component, a student may avail of an in-module repeat opportunity for that assessment component prior to confirmation of the component grade by the Programme Exam Board where in-module repeat of that assessment component is provided for in the module descriptor. In instances of in-module repeats of assessment components, a passing grade awarded for submitted work shall be reduced in accordance with the following scale.

Component Grade Scale for In-Module Repeats of Assessment Components	
WORK GRADED AS:	GRADE AWARDED:
A+	B+
A	B
A-	B-
B+	C+
B	C
B-	C-
C+	D+
C	D
C-	D-
D+	D-
D	D-
D-	D-

4.27 Where a student receives a failing grade for an in-module repeat attempt of an assessment component, the original provisional failing grade for the assessment component is retained.

4.28 The following scale should be used for module grades.

MODULE GRADES		
MODULE GRADE	GRADE POINT	DESCRIPTION
A+	4.2	Excellent
A	4.0	
A-	3.8	
B+	3.6	Very good
B	3.4	
B-	3.2	
C+	3.0	Good
C	2.8	
C-	2.6	
D+	2.4	Acceptable
D	2.2	
D-	2.0	
FM+	0.0	Fail
FM	0.0	
FM-	0.0	
NM	0.0	No grade - work submitted did not merit a grade
ABS	0.0	No work was submitted by the student or the student was absent from assessment

- 4.29 Where module outcomes cannot be assessed at this level of detail, the results may be returned as pass/fail, or distinction/pass/fail, and the following scale should be used.

MODULE GRADE	GRADE POINT	DESCRIPTION
DS	Neutral	Passed with distinction
P	Neutral	Pass
F	0.0	Fail
NM	0.0	No grade- work submitted did not merit a grade
ABS	0.0	No work was submitted by the student or the student was absent from assessment

- 4.30 Where a module grade is awarded as part of a remediation attempt at a module, the grade scales and suffixes outlined in section 6 of the Academic Regulations shall be used.
- 4.31 The following grades may also be approved by the Programme Examination Board to signify particular circumstances or outcomes.

Module Grade	Grade Point	Description
AU	Neutral	<u>Audit</u> : returned where a student audits the module, and, by prior agreement with the Module Coordinator, does not complete some or all of the assessments and does not wish to be graded. No credit is awarded.
W	Neutral	<u>Withdrawn</u> : returned where a student withdraws before the end of week 12 of a trimester, or before the last day of teaching in a trimester, whichever comes sooner. No credit is awarded, and a subsequent attempt at that module is treated as a first attempt.
IM	Incomplete	<p>Incomplete Must Pass (temporary): may be returned at the discretion of a School or Board of Studies when the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the module is a clinical teaching module, a field-based module, or a work placement; b) the component is specified in the module descriptor as a must pass component (see section 4.15); c) the activities required to satisfactorily complete the module, and the time available to do this are clearly communicated in writing to the student by the School or Board of Studies responsible for the module; and d) where a student has passed overall the assessments associated with a module, but has not satisfactorily completed a “must pass” component of assessment where an in-module repeat for that component was not available (Regulation 4.15). <p>Credit will not be awarded unless these assessments or activities, or equivalent assessments or activities prescribed by the School, are satisfactorily completed, within a set period prescribed by the School but not exceeding two trimesters. The IM grade is resolved with one of the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The student satisfactorily completes the outstanding activities, or their equivalent, within the prescribed time. The credit, final grade and the full grade point associated with that grade are awarded; or b) The student does not complete some or all of the required assessments within the prescribed time. The component is graded as a fail (F), and the module grade of FM is recorded.

<p>IA</p>	<p>Incomplete</p>	<p>Incomplete Assessment (temporary): may be returned at the discretion of a School or Board of Studies when the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the module is a clinical teaching module, a field-based module, or a work placement; and b) where a student has been unable to complete a component due to lack of availability of clinical samples, required facilities, professional staff involved in supervision, or the field-based nature of the component of assessment. <p>Credit will not be awarded unless these assessments or activities, or equivalent assessments or activities prescribed by the School, are satisfactorily completed, within a set period prescribed by the School but not exceeding two trimesters. The IA grade is resolved with one of the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The student satisfactorily completes the outstanding activities, or their equivalent, within the prescribed time. The credit, final grade and the full grade point associated with that grade are awarded; b) The student does not complete some or all of the required assessments within the prescribed time. The component is graded as a fail (F), and the resulting module grade is recorded; or c) The student may choose to accept an ABS grade for the assessment component, and the resulting grade is recorded.
<p>IX</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p><u>Incomplete (extenuating circumstances)</u>: returned either (a) on the recommendation of a School and approved by the Programme Examination Board, or (b) on the recommendation of the Programme Examination Board, where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a student has been unable to satisfactorily complete a component (or components) of assessment; and ● the student provides medical or other certification according to a UCD proforma supporting the position that they had an incapacitating illness or circumstance which prevented them from so doing. <p>The student must complete the component (or components) of assessment or complete some equivalent assessment(s) set by the School, within two trimesters of the initial attempt.</p>

		<p>Where the assessments set by the School are completed within the prescribed time the final aggregate grade and the full grade point associated with that grade are awarded, along with the associated credit (provided the final grade is a passing grade). Where the student does not complete some or all of the required assessments within the prescribed time and the Governing Board does not extend the IX grade, the original grade for the component should be reinstated. Where there was no attempt at the component assessment, a component grade of ABS should be returned.</p> <p>Governing Boards should not repeatedly extend IX grades for students but should consider the application of alternative processes in the interest of the student including Leave of Absence, Fitness to Continue in Study and Continuation and Readmission policies and procedures.</p>
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Assessment Feedback

- 4.32** Students shall receive feedback on both formative and summative assessments. Feedback shall:
- a) reflect the discourse and pedagogy of the subject;
 - b) be sufficient and frequent enough to support future learning;
 - c) be specific and encourage the development of autonomous learning;
 - d) be presented so that students can act on it and adapt their approaches; and
 - e) enable students to set and achieve short-term and long-term goals.
- 4.33** Feedback should be clear and understandable, focused on the promotion of learning, and be structured around goals, criteria and standards. Feedback can be derived from many sources – faculty, tutors, student peers, self and others – and may be given in written or oral form, whether formally in a one-to-one meeting or informally in a lecture/tutorial/practical setting.
- 4.34** Students have a responsibility to consider feedback given on their work, to seek to understand it, and to act on it.
- 4.35** Feedback on assessment must be provided according to the specification in the module descriptor and no later than twenty working days after the deadline for submission of each piece of assessed work, excepting work submitted late or submitted as part of the final assessment component of the module.
- a) Where feedback cannot be provided within the time specified in the module descriptor, the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning in the relevant College may grant an exemption based on exceptional circumstances and the module coordinator

must contact students directly, in writing, to inform them when the late feedback will be provided ensuring that it is provided in time for students to make use of it prior to summative assessment.

5 Programme Progression and Completion

Introduction

- 5.1** This section outlines the regulations with reference to progression and completion. Qualifications must only be awarded for the successful completion of programmes. The criteria for progression and the award of a degree must be transparent, clearly defined and fair to all students. Programmes must include regular review points to support and evaluate a student's progress throughout their programme.

Progression

- 5.2** Where the overall credit required to complete a programme is greater than 60 credits, a programme may be structured to require students to progress through the programme in stages. A student may register to modules from a subsequent stage before progressing to that stage provided that all relevant module dependencies are met and the modules from the subsequent stage do not conflict with their ability to take modules as part of their current stage or any previous, incomplete stages.
- 5.3** In programmes with more than one stage, a student completes a stage when the following criteria, as stated in the programme specification, are met:
- a) the student has demonstrated achievement of the learning requirements of that stage; and
 - b) the student has acquired sufficient credit to meet the requirements of that stage.
- 5.4** A student may progress to a subsequent stage without completing the previous stage (an incomplete stage) when the following criteria are met:
- a) the credits required by the student to complete the incomplete stage do not exceed 10 credits;
 - b) the student has completed all preceding stages to the incomplete stage, if preceding stages exist.
- 5.5** When a student progresses to a subsequent stage without completing the previous stage (an incomplete stage), the student may not take any modules as part of the subsequent stage that conflict with their ability to take modules as part of the incomplete stage.
- 5.6** A Governing Board may grant an exemption to a student from sections 5.4 (b) and 5.5 in the following circumstances:
- a) where such an exemption is required to enable the student to avail of a stage or trimester work placement, or a stage or trimester studying abroad; or
 - b) where a student availed of a stage or a trimester work placement or study abroad opportunity and therefore did not have an opportunity to remediate modules from an incomplete stage.

- 5.7** When a student has successfully completed a stage, a stage GPA is awarded. The stage GPA is the weighted average of the grade points awarded upon passing the modules or other credit-bearing learning activities that satisfy the requirements of that stage.
- 5.8** After a stage GPA is awarded it may not be adjusted, save in the case of identified error on the part of the University or fraud.

Continuation and Readmission

- 5.9** A Governing Board shall review the academic performance of a student where:
- a) the student fails to remediate a failed module after three attempts (including in-module resit for the full module, but excluding in-module repeats for assessment components and grades of IM, IA and IX); or
 - b) the student fails to achieve any additional standards for acceptable performance and progression for the programme as defined in the programme specification.
- 5.10** Where a student's performance is deemed to be academically unacceptable by a Governing Board, the Governing Board shall refer the case, with a recommendation and supporting evidence, as a continuation case to the Academic Council or its relevant committee to determine whether the student is or is not eligible to continue in the programme. Where a student is deemed ineligible to continue in the programme by Academic Council or its relevant committee, the student's registration shall be discontinued.
- 5.11** Where a Governing Board receives an application to admit or readmit a person who was previously discontinued, the Governing Board shall refer the application as a Readmission case to the Academic Council or its relevant committee for decision.
- 5.12** Where a student is readmitted to a programme having previously withdrawn or having been previously discontinued, a Governing Board may allow the student to repeat modules that the student had previously passed, failed, or both, during their previous period of registration as equivalent to first attempts upon their subsequent registration. In such cases, the following criteria must be met:
- a) Over two years must have passed since the student was registered to any of the relevant modules.
 - b) The student must start the programme from the beginning.³
 - c) The Governing Board must notify Academic Council or its relevant committee of its decision to treat a student's attempt at modules as first attempts, and provide reasons for this decision.

³ A Governing Board may apply the entry requirements relevant to the year of re-entry.

Completion

- 5.13** A student is deemed to have completed a programme on the first occasion when they have:
- demonstrated achievement of the programme outcomes;
 - accumulated sufficient credit to meet the requirements of the programme;
 - are compliant by subject and level for the relevant award;⁴ and
 - completed the requirements described in the programme specification.
- 5.14** Award GPA is calculated according to the method specified in the programme specification and confirmed at the next relevant Programme Examination Board.
- 5.15** The graduation of a student marks the final completion of their programme. An Award GPA may not be altered following graduation.
- 5.16** A student who is deemed to have completed a programme may, at the discretion of the Governing Board, defer graduation and accumulate additional credit before graduating in order to broaden or deepen their education, or to fulfil additional credit requirements for graduate study or professional accreditation. Such additional credit will be recorded on the student's record but will not contribute to the Award GPA. A student may not defer graduation for more than four trimesters beyond the date on which they were first entitled to graduate.

Assessment Appeals

- 5.17** Assessment appeals are governed by the policies and procedures established by Academic Council or its relevant committee.⁵

⁴ Level requirements are set out in section 2.5, and subject requirements (i.e. for majors and minors) are set out in section 3.42.

⁵ [UCD Assessment Appeals Policy](#)

6 Module Completion and Remediation

Introduction

- 6.1 This section outlines the regulations that determine when a student completes a module and when a student passes a module. It also outlines the opportunities that students may avail of to engage in remediation where it is necessary to make a further attempt to pass a module.

In-module Resit

- 6.2 Where a student receives a provisional failing grade for a module, the student may avail of an in-module resit prior to confirmation of the module grade by the Programme Exam Board where an in-module resit is provided for in the module descriptor. Where a student passes an in-module resit attempt it shall be graded as follows:

MODULE GRADE	GRADE POINT	DESCRIPTION
PR	2.0	Passing Module Grade for Resit Attempt

- 6.3 Where a student receives a failing grade for an in-module resit attempt the original provisional failing grade for the module is retained.

Module Completion and Passing

- 6.4 A module is completed when a student has been academically assessed in all of the assessed components relating to the module and a module grade is confirmed by the Programme Exam Board.
- 6.5 When the Programme Examination Board confirms that a student has achieved the learning outcomes associated with a module or combination of modules by passing all must pass components and being awarded a minimum D-, P or PR module grade, the student:
- is deemed to have passed that module or combination of modules;
 - is awarded credit;
 - is exempt from further assessment of those learning outcomes; and
 - may not repeat the module or resit the assessment
- 6.6 Where a student receives a failing grade (that is, has been awarded a grade of FM, NM, or ABS) they may:
- select another module that is compatible with fulfilling the programme outcomes;
or
 - make a further attempt to pass the module, called a module remediation attempt.

Module Remediation

6.7 The following options for module remediation are available.

- a) **Resit assessment:** A resit assessment offers students a second and separate opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved the major learning outcomes associated with a module. Reattendance is not required. The resit assessment is a simple pass-fail instrument, and need only be the minimum assessment required to determine whether or not the student has satisfactorily achieved the major learning outcomes of the module. The resit assessment does not have to be identical to the assessment associated with the original offering of the module, and may be significantly different, nor do the different components of the assessment need to be reproduced and repeated in full.
- i) There will only be one resit assessment for each offering of a module.
 - ii) A resit assessment will not be available where an in-module resit is offered or where it is possible to repeat the module in one of the two subsequent trimesters.
 - iii) The resit may be a single terminal examination and/or may require the submission of coursework or other assessment tasks at specified times during the trimester.
 - iv) The original assessment and the resit assessment are entirely separate, and grades for components of the original assessment will not carry forward to the resit assessment. However, the resit assessment may take account of learning outcomes already achieved by an individual student.

Where a module grade is awarded as part of a resit attempt at the module the results are returned as pass/fail and suffixed with (R) to indicate it was achieved as a resit attempt at the module. The following grade scale should be used for resit attempts at a module.

MODULE GRADE	GRADE POINT	DESCRIPTION
P(R)	2.0	Passing Module Grade for Resit Attempt
F(R)	0.0	Fail for Resit Attempt
NM(R)	0.0	No grade- work submitted did not merit a grade for Remediation Attempt
ABS(R)	0.0	No work was submitted by the student or the student was absent from assessment for Remediation Attempt

- b) **Repeat the module:** A repeat is the student's opportunity for a second attempt at the module through reattendance when it is next offered. The following grade scale should be used for repeat attempts at a module.

Repeat Grades and Repeat Grade Points	
MODULE GRADE	GRADE POINT
A+(R)	3.6
A(R)	3.4
A-(R)	3.2
B+(R)	3.0
B(R)	2.8
B-(R)	2.6
C+(R)	2.4
C(R)	2.2
C-(R)	2.0
D+(R)	2.0
D(R)	2.0
D-(R)	2.0
FM+(R)	0.0
FM-(R)	0.0
FM-(R)	0.0
NM(R)	0.0
ABS (R)	0.0

- 6.8** Where an in-module resit is not provided, module remediation opportunities must be available within one of the two subsequent trimesters after the module has been delivered unless the module is a clinical teaching module, a field-based module, or a work placement, where remediation within the two subsequent trimesters is not possible.

7 Regulations for Research Degrees

- 7.1** The purpose of these regulations, and any related policies, guidelines and procedures established by the University, is to assure and enhance the quality of education and training of research degree students, and to create a framework that guides and supports the student and their supervisor(s). Research degree students are those pursuing a degree of Doctor of Philosophy or a Research Master's Degree.
- 7.2** The research degree is awarded following successful completion of a programme of supervised research and advanced education and training. The research programme can be pursued on a full-time or a part-time basis. The research degrees are:
- a) **Research Master's Degree** The core of the research master's degree award is a coherent programme of supervised research which requires that the student successfully completes master's-level research, the principal outcome of which is a submitted thesis in acceptable form and deemed to be of a satisfactory standard. The primary purpose of master's level research is to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct research.
 - b) **Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD):** The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy will be awarded only where the outcome of the research makes an original and substantial contribution to knowledge and where the candidate has demonstrated the capacity to pursue original research and scholarship. The research is described in a thesis or similar appropriate format, in accordance with international norms. The thesis forms the basis for the examination for the award of the degree of PhD, and must contain material of a standard and form appropriate for peer-reviewed publication.
- 7.3** Primary responsibility for the (i) approval of research degree candidates (ii) oversight of the design and delivery of research degree programmes, and (iii) the approval of supervisory arrangements and the outcomes of any assessments of progress of research students rests with the relevant School(s) and Governing Board, on the delegated authority of Academic Council or its relevant committee.
- 7.4** A number of committees must be established to support the supervision of research students and to conduct formal assessments during and at the end of the programmes. They include:
- a) Research Studies Panel
 - b) Transfer Assessment Panel for PhD students and for Research Masters students who apply to transfer to PhD
 - c) Examination Committee
- 7.5** Members of the Research Studies Panel must
- a) Have regular contact with the research degree candidate
 - b) Be familiar with University regulations and policies pertaining to graduate research and its supervision

- c) Fulfil their academic responsibilities as Research Studies panel members (Regulation 7.23)

Admission Requirements

- 7.6** A candidate seeking admission to a course of study and research leading to a PhD or research master's degree must be nominated. A candidate must fulfil one of the following criteria:
- a) The candidate has obtained a minimum of an upper second class degree or equivalent in a relevant honours Bachelor's degree;
 - b) The candidate has obtained a relevant master's degree; or
 - c) The candidate has demonstrated other evidence of academic standing and/or relevant professional experience as satisfies the Governing Board of their suitability for admission to the degree programme.
- 7.7** The candidate is nominated by their proposed Principal Supervisor. A nominator shall propose a candidate, and the Head(s) of School shall support a nomination and make a recommendation for admission of the candidate to the Governing Board, when they are satisfied that:
- a) the candidate is appropriately qualified and has the basic skills and competencies required to embark upon a research degree.
 - b) The candidate has met both the University and School-specific English language proficiency requirements
 - c) the appropriate Principal Supervisor and, where relevant, Co-Supervisor(s) are nominated
 - d) a provisional title of the thesis and a short description of the proposed research is provided
 - e) the proposed topic of research is appropriate for the degree and congruent with the research capacity and expertise of the Principal Supervisor
 - f) the resources are available to support the proposed research activity
 - g) where the research is interdisciplinary, and more than one School is involved, all Schools concerned shall co-operate to provide these resources
- 7.8** The decision to admit the candidate to the research programme rests with the Governing Board.

Registration Period

- 7.9** The period of registration for the research master's degree will be not less than three trimesters and not more than six trimesters for a full-time student and not less than six trimesters and not more than twelve trimesters for a part-time student. Retrospective registration is not permitted.
- 7.10** The period of registration for a graduate research programme of study leading to the award of the PhD degree, will not be more than 12 trimesters for a full-time student and 18

trimesters for a part-time student, and will not be less than nine trimesters in duration for a full-time student and fifteen trimesters for a part-time student. Retrospective registration is not permitted.

- 7.11** In certain circumstances, a student may be permitted to present for the degree of PhD following a shorter period of registration, subject to the recommendation of the relevant Governing Board and approval by the Academic Council or their relevant committee. Such circumstances may include instances where a supervisor from another third level institution joins UCD and a PhD student under their supervision follows them. In this case, the student must be registered in UCD within a year of the supervisor's appointment.
- 7.12** Students who do not complete the requirements for the research master's/PhD degree within the maximum time permitted, must apply to the Governing Board, presenting justification, for permission to continue in the programme beyond the prescribed period of registration.

Research Degree Supervision

- 7.13** The Principal Supervisor has primary responsibility for the academic supervision of the research degree student. Where appointed, the Co-supervisor supports the Principal Supervisor in the academic supervision of the student
- 7.14** The Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor must be an active researcher in the broad area of the student's research topic and hold a PhD/doctoral degree or equivalent qualification or experience and be one of the following:
- a) a permanent member of faculty of the University;
 - b) or a member of the adjunct or visiting staff of the University, who has been specifically approved to act as a Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor by the Academic Council or its relevant committee, on the recommendation of a School and with the approval of the Governing Board, and whose name has been entered on the Register of Approved Adjunct and Visiting Supervisors.
 - c) or a full-time member of faculty or Research Fellow on a temporary contract which spans the students registration period two (research master's degree) or four years (PhD degree) or greater who has been approved to act as Principal Supervisor by the Governing Board, provided that there is a Co-Supervisor, who is a permanent member of faculty of the University, identified in advance of the student commencing their studies. The Co-Supervisor will assume the responsibilities of the Principal Supervisor in the event that the student's programme of study exceeds the duration of the initial Principal Supervisor's contract subject to the approval of the relevant board.

- 7.15** It is the responsibility of the Principal supervisor to guide the candidate to conduct their research with integrity and in accordance with the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University and applicable legislation.
- 7.16** Where a Principal Supervisor for any reason is unable to continue to supervise the research, the Head of School shall make appropriate arrangements for the supervision of the student, including, where required, recommending the appointment of a new Principal supervisor to the relevant Governing Board.
- 7.17** The research for the degree shall largely be carried out under the direct supervision of the supervisor(s), which may include short research visits (one trimester or less) to other institutions. The prior approval of the Governing Board must be sought if a substantial proportion or all of the research is to be carried out elsewhere, but the student remains under the general supervision of the supervisor(s).
- 7.18** The Governing Board must approve inter-institutional and co-tutelle supervisory agreements in advance of the student registering for the programme. All such agreements must meet requirements set out by Academic Council or its relevant committee.

External Supervisor

- 7.19** If a research student is based for longer than one trimester off campus in an external organisation including research institutes, industry laboratory or studio, government agency or non-government organisation and an Approved Adjunct Supervisor is not in place, a member of staff of the external organisation must be appointed as an External Supervisor.
- 7.20** An External Supervisor must be specifically approved by the Governing Board on the recommendation of a School, and their name entered on the Register of Approved External Supervisors. All such appointments will be noted by Academic Council or its relevant committee. External Supervisors may not replace a Principal Supervisor or Co-supervisor.
- 7.21** An External Supervisor must:
- a) Be deemed by the relevant Governing Board to be appropriately qualified with sufficient professional and research experience to assist in supervision
 - b) Be a member of the student's Research Studies Panel
 - c) Be made aware of the Universities Academic Regulations, policies, and procedures by the relevant School.
- 7.22** Students carrying out their research external to the University have the same rights and responsibilities as those carrying out their research in the University. They may also be subject to additional rules of the associated institution.

Research Studies Panel (RSP)

- 7.23** The Governing Board will formally constitute a Research Studies Panel within the first trimester of the student's registration. The panel comprises of the principal supervisor/co-supervisor and at least two (but normally no more than four) advisers, one of whom must be a UCD faculty member. The RSP will appoint a chair independent of the supervisor/co-supervisor. The purpose of the RSP is to provide advice, monitor the progress of the student, and support the supervisor(s)-student relationship. The Governing Board will normally act on the recommendations of the Head(s) of School in which the proposed research is to be carried out when appointing advisers.
- 7.24** Research Studies Panel Advisers may include faculty, adjunct, visiting or research staff or relevant professional staff of the University or external to the University.
- 7.25** The duties and obligations of the Principal Supervisor, Co-Supervisors and advisers may not be delegated.

Research Degree Programme Structure

- 7.26** Research degrees are awarded on successful completion of a structured programme of research, study and personal and professional development, directed by the supervisor(s), with the advice of the Research Studies Panel. This programme shall comply with the policies and regulations of the University and such guidelines as may be published by the Governing Board.
- 7.27** **Research Integrity Training:** Graduate research students admitted after 31 August 2019 must satisfactorily complete research integrity training.

Research Master's Degree Programme Structure

- 7.28** A course of study and research leading to the research master's degree is pursued in one stage. The primary purpose of master's research is to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct effective research: it may include experiential research training and does not necessarily result in the creation of new knowledge.
- 7.29** The student, as required or recommended by their Principal Supervisor, may take taught modules relevant to their area of research or professional development. These may include additional educational and training elements which develop the advanced knowledge, skills and competencies required for successful research and/or support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills.
- 7.30** The School in which the research master's student is registered will establish appropriate processes and procedures to monitor the progress of individual research master's students registered in the School. The student, supported by the Research Studies Panel, must document their educational, training and personal and professional development needs,

which, along with the proposed programme of research, will inform the development of a Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP).

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Structure

- 7.31** The distinguishing feature of doctoral research is that it is original research, the outcome of which is an original and substantial addition to knowledge and understanding.
- 7.32** The PhD programme must include educational and training elements, which develop the advanced knowledge, skills and competencies required for successful original research and/or support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills. A programme of study and research leading to the degree of PhD shall include a minimum of 30 taught credits awarded for the successful completion of education and training modules.
- 7.33** In line with University policy, PhD candidates can apply for recognition of prior/concurrent learning for an exemption from a portion of the required minimum of 30 taught credits, subject to the approval of the relevant Governing Board.

PhD Degree Programme Stages

- 7.34** A course of study and research leading to the degree of PhD is pursued in two stages. Stage 1 doctoral studies must be completed by a full-time student within five trimesters from the date of registration and by a part-time student within seven trimesters from the date of registration.
- a) Stage 1 is an initial period of advanced education, training and research.
 - b) Stage 2 is largely dedicated to original doctoral research but may also include advanced education and research and generic training.

Research and Professional Development Plan

- 7.35** The student, supported by the Research Studies Panel, must document their educational, training and personal and professional development needs, which, along with the proposed programme of research, to generate the development of a Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP).
- 7.36** The Research Studies Panel will monitor progress against the prescribed programme of research and study and the RSP will meet at least twice in the first year and at least once a year thereafter.

Transfer from the Research Master's to PhD Degree Programme

- 7.37** Research master's students may transfer to a doctoral programme on successful completion of a transfer assessment following a minimum three trimesters and maximum of six trimesters of registration full-time or a minimum of six trimesters and maximum of twelve

trimesters part time to the research master's degree programme and subject to any policy the University may establish.

- 7.38** In instances where a research master's student wishes to transfer to a doctoral programme, the School will establish an Assessment Panel to assess the progress of the student and their competence and capacity to complete a doctorate. The Assessment Panel must have the experience and disciplinary expertise to conduct the assessment. The Assessment Panel will base its judgement on:
- a) a written statement of progress and a research plan from the candidate;
 - b) review of the student's RPDP
 - c) a written progress report from the Principal Supervisor; and
 - d) an interview with, and presentation by, the candidate.
- 7.39** The Transfer Assessment Panel may interview the Principal Supervisor.
- 7.40** The Assessment Panel will make one of the following recommendations to the Governing Board:
- a) admit the student to Stage 1 of the PhD programme;
 - b) admit the student to Stage 2 of the PhD programme with advanced standing;
 - c) do not admit the student to the PhD programme.

Progression in the PhD Programme

- 7.41** Schools will establish appropriate processes and procedures to monitor the progress of individual PhD students registered in the School, and to assess each student formally at the end of Stage 1 doctoral studies. These processes and procedures will comply with the regulations and policies of the University and such guidelines as may be agreed from time to time by the University or the Governing Board, and should be reviewed at appropriate intervals by the Governing Board.
- 7.42** The School will establish a Stage Transfer Assessment Panel or Panels to assess the progress of the student and their competence and capacity to complete a doctorate at the end of Stage 1 and at any other point in the programme.
- 7.43** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel must have the experience and disciplinary expertise to conduct the assessment. The Panel will normally consist of three members of the permanent faculty of the University. The Assessment Panel may include a member of the adjunct or visiting staff of the University. The student's Principal supervisor and/or Co-supervisor(s) will not be a member of the panel.
- 7.44** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will base its judgement on:
- a) a written statement of progress and a research plan from the candidate;
 - b) review of the student's RPDP
 - c) a written progress report from the Principal Supervisor; and
 - d) an interview with, and presentation by, the candidate.

- 7.45** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will make one of the following recommendations to the Governing Board:
- a) that the student should progress to the next stage or year of the doctoral programme;
 - b) that the student should not progress to the next stage or year of the doctoral programme, and that:
 - i. the student should re-submit for assessment within six months (with an indication of the month/year in which the subsequent formal assessment of progress will take place);
 - ii. the student should apply to transfer to another graduate programme utilising, where appropriate, any credits already accumulated within the doctoral programme;
 - iii. a recommendation be made in line with the University's continuation process to Academic Council or its relevant committee that the student's registration be discontinued
- 7.46** The Governing Board will either approve the recommendation; request that a School reconsider their recommendations or, following consultation with the School, make a decision, which differs from the recommendation. Where the latter occurs, it will be reported to the Academic Council or its relevant committee.
- 7.47** The Governing Board may recommend one or more additional formal assessments of progress and competence within Stage 2 of the structured PhD, or such an assessment may be a normal element of a PhD programme. The Governing Board will recommend the nature and timing of any such assessment.

Responsibilities of Research Degree Candidates

- 7.48** Candidates are required to pursue the programme of research, study and personal and professional development in collaboration with the supervisor(s) and to work with their supervisor(s) to meet the requirements articulated in the Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP).
- 7.49** Candidates are required to:
- a) fulfil all responsibilities that may be reasonably expected to progress and to conduct their research, training and development successfully.
 - b) to ensure that all or any ethical requirements associated with their research are addressed at the appropriate time; and
 - c) comply with best and ethical practice and the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University and applicable legislation in the conduct of their research

Preparation and Submission of Research Thesis for Examination

- 7.50** The candidate must be a registered student of the University at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination

- 7.51** The examination for the research degree is based on a description of the candidate's research in a thesis describing the context, nature, methodology and outcomes of the research, prepared in accordance with international norms. A research master's thesis must demonstrate the attainment of skills and competencies in research. A PhD thesis must contain material of a publishable/peer reviewed standard.
- 7.52** Where a Governing Board has made suitable arrangements to examine theses presented in alternative formats, a candidate may be examined on the basis of:
- a) a collection of papers of publishable/peer reviewed standard describing a coherent programme of research, accompanied by a critical and theoretical overview of the work presented in the papers.
 - b) a substantial collection of original creative material, together with a written thesis which contextualises the work within an academic framework.
- Where the work has been published or prepared in collaboration with others, the candidate must indicate clearly the extent of his/her contribution.
- 7.53** The candidate will prepare a thesis under the direction of the Principal Supervisor and in accordance with any guidelines published by the University, and will submit the thesis for examination.
- 7.54** The thesis shall be prepared and submitted to the University in accordance with such regulations, policies and procedures of the University.
- 7.55** The thesis will be accepted for examination by the University when:
- a) the thesis is accompanied by a statement (included on the Research Degree Examination Form) from the Principal Supervisor that the research has been carried out, and the final draft of the thesis, as submitted, has been prepared for examination under their supervision. Where such a statement is, in the opinion of the candidate, unreasonably withheld, the candidate may appeal to the Head of School in which they are registered, who may provide the statement.
 - b) The research described in the thesis is the original work of the candidate. Research work on the basis of which a degree or other qualification (from University College Dublin, another third level institution, or a professional or other awarding body) has already been obtained will not be accepted for the degree of research master's or PhD. A confirmatory statement to this effect must be signed by the candidate and submitted with the thesis.
 - c) For PhD candidates, the student has been awarded or approved through recognition of prior/concurrent learning the required minimum of 30 taught credits
- 7.56** The thesis cannot be withdrawn from the examination process once accepted for examination.

Examination of the Research Thesis

- 7.57** The University shall establish a Research Degree Examination Committee to assess the student on the basis of the thesis submitted and to make a recommendation on the award (or otherwise) of the Research Degree. There shall be at least one intern examiner and at least one special extern examiner. The Research Degree Examination Committee shall be chaired by the Head of School, or their nominee.

Appointment of the Examination Committee

- 7.58** The special extern examiner(s), intern examiner and the Examination Committee Chair shall be nominated by the Head of School to the Governing Board and, if agreed by the Governing Board recommended to Academic Council or its relevant committee for approval. The special extern examiner should be a recognised expert in the area of research of the thesis as evidenced in the curriculum vitae of the proposed special extern examiner. The intern examiner must be an active researcher in the broad area of the thesis topic or in a cognate subject and will normally be a member of the faculty of the University. Members of the Research Studies Panel may not normally act as an intern examiner. The Chair will be an active researcher in the broad area of the thesis topic or in a cognate subject and must be a member of the faculty of the University. A member of the candidate's Research Studies Panel may act as Chair.
- 7.59** Where the candidate is a full-time member of faculty or staff of the University, or recognised college of the University, there must be a second special extern examiner. A second special extern examiner may also be appointed where the Governing Board considers it appropriate.
- 7.60** Where a research master's thesis is not being examined by viva voce examination the intern examiner may act as the Chair of the examination committee.
- 7.61** The Principal Supervisor or Co-Supervisor(s) may not be a member of the research degree examination committee. The Principal Supervisor or Co-Supervisor may be invited to attend the *viva voce* examination as an observer, with the consent of the Examination Committee and the candidate.
- 7.62** The examiners must complete separate preliminary examination reports. The Chair of the Examination Committee must arrange for these reports to be exchanged between the examiners. This must take place in advance of the *viva voce* examination, where applicable.

Conflict of Interest

- 7.63** Any conflict of Interest must be addressed in accordance with the University's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Confidentiality

- 7.64** All matters relating to the examination must be treated as confidential by the Examination Committee.

Viva Voce Examination

- 7.65** Candidates for PhD must be examined through a viva voce examination by a PhD Examination Committee. The *viva voce* will normally be held within two months of the receipt of the thesis by the examiners.
- 7.66** Research master's theses are normally examined without a viva voce examination. Only on the request of a Head of School, or at the behest of the examiners, a *viva voce* examination may be arranged for research master's students. The procedure for such a *viva voce* examination shall be equivalent to that employed for a PhD *viva voce* examination.
- 7.67** The special extern examiner shall play the major role in the *viva voce* examination.

Research Degree Examination Committee Recommendation

- 7.68** When the examination is complete, if all examiners are in agreement, the Chair of the Examination Committee, shall compile a joint Degree Report – on behalf of all examiners – on the academic standard of the thesis and if relevant the candidate's performance in the *viva voce* examination. The Degree Report, which shall be submitted by the Chair of the Examination Committee to the Academic Council or its relevant committee, shall include a recommendation to:
- a) Award Degree – no corrections required
 - b) Award Degree – revisions required
 - c) Revise thesis and submit for re-examination
 - d) Do not award Degree – recommendation that the candidate transfer to an appropriate graduate programme
 - e) Do not award Degree
- 7.69** The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the candidate and the Principal Supervisor of the recommendation of the Examination Committee. This recommendation is subject to the approval of the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

Unanimous Recommendation to Award the Degree

- 7.70** Where the examiners recommend award of the degree, the Examination Committee shall submit their joint Degree Report to the Academic Council or its relevant committee indicating their opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based.
- 7.71** In the case of PhD candidates, the examiners should also indicate whether, in their opinion, the thesis, in whole or in part, is worthy of publication. For PhD candidates, the examiners should not recommend award of the PhD degree unless they consider that the research

reported in the thesis, in whole or in part, is worthy of peer-reviewed publication as a work of serious scholarship.

- 7.72** Where, in the opinion of the examiners, corrections to the thesis are required, the Chair of the Examination Committee (or nominee – normally the Intern Examiner) shall be responsible for ensuring that such corrections have been made to the thesis before award of the Research Degree is approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.
- 7.73** When the award of a research degree has been approved by Academic Council or its relevant committee subject to revision, a member of the Examination Committee (usually the intern examiner) shall be responsible for ensuring that such corrections are made. The degree shall not be conferred until such corrections has been satisfactorily completed and a copy of the final thesis submitted as required by the regulations below.

Revise thesis and submit for re-examination

- 7.74** Where the examiners recommend that the student revise the thesis and resubmit for examination, the Examination Committee shall submit their joint Degree Report to the Academic Council or its relevant committee indicating the basis for their recommendation. If the recommendation is accepted by Academic Council or its relevant committee, the student shall be required to maintain his or her registration while the revised thesis is completed. Unless otherwise required by Academic Council or its relevant committee, the revised thesis shall be examined by the same examination committee and, in the case of a PhD, there shall be a viva voce examination.

Unanimous Recommendation Not to Award the Degree

- 7.75** Where the examiners recommend that the degree not be awarded, the Examination Committee shall submit their joint Degree Report to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations indicating their opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based and identifying the areas of weakness which led to the decision not to recommend the award of the degree.
- 7.76** Where relevant, the Examination Committee may recommend that the student transfer to a suitable graduate programme. However, the student must apply to such a programme, meet the requirements of the programme (including fees) and be examined.

No Unanimous Recommendation

- 7.77** Where the examiners are in disagreement and cannot agree a recommendation, the examiners shall submit separate reports to the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

Decision

- 7.78** Academic Council or its relevant committee will decide, on the basis of the submitted reports and, where necessary, clarification or correspondence with the examiners, which outcome (see section 7.68) is appropriate.
- 7.79** A candidate is entitled to a copy of the examiners' degree report(s) following the authorisation or otherwise of the award of the degree by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.

Appeals

- 7.80** A candidate may appeal on specific grounds a decision of the Academic Council or its relevant committee through the assessment appeals process governed by the policies and procedures established by Academic Council or its relevant committee.⁶

Submission of Final Thesis

- 7.81** The final approved version of each thesis shall be submitted to University College Dublin in accordance with the policies and procedures approved by Academic Council or its relevant committee.
- 7.82** All theses remain the property of University College Dublin. All issues relating to intellectual property will be subject to the University's practices and policies.

⁶ [UCD Assessment Appeals Policy](#)

8 Regulations for Professional Doctorate Degrees

8.1 A professional doctorate degree is an NFQ level 10, major award which is awarded following successful completion of a two-stage programme of supervised research, professional practice combined with education and training modules. A professional doctorate degree will be awarded where (a) the outcome of the research makes a significant contribution to knowledge and is deemed publishable in a peer-reviewed journal(s), and (b) where the candidate has demonstrated the capacity to apply knowledge within a professional practice setting.

The professional doctorate degree regulations and any related policies, guidelines and procedures established by the University, refer specifically to

- Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation degree (DVMS)
- Doctor of Educational Psychology degree (DEdPsych)
- Doctor of Clinical Psychology degree (DPsychSc)
- Doctor of Governance degree(DGov)

8.2 The purpose of these regulations, and any related policies, guidelines and procedures established by the University, is to assure and enhance the quality of education and training of professional doctorate degree students and to create a framework that guides and supports the student and their Supervisor(s).

8.3 The Governing Board: on the delegated authority of Academic Council or its relevant committee, have primary responsibility for:

- a) approval of professional doctorate degree candidates onto the programme;
- b) the approval of Supervisor(s),

the Research Studies Panel and the outcomes of any progression assessments for professional doctorate degree students.

8.4 The Governing Board shall appoint a member of faculty as Programme Director, reporting to the Chair of the Governing Board, for the Professional Doctorate it governs. The Programme Director's responsibilities include:

- g) day to day management of the programme;
- h) nomination of professional doctorate degree candidates onto the programme
- i) oversight of the research
- j) nomination of the membership of the Research Studies Panel
- k) nomination of the Thesis Examination Committee
- l) monitoring the progress of the professional doctorate degree candidates
- e) consulting with faculty and staff involved in the delivery of the programme;

8.5 The following committees must be established to support the supervision of professional doctorate degree students' research and to conduct formal assessments during and at the end of the programmes. They include the:

- a) Research Studies Panel (see Section 7.22)
- b) Transfer Assessment Panel (see Sections 7.42;7.43;7.44;7.45);
- c) Thesis Examination Committee (see Section 7,57).

- 8.6** Members of the Research Studies Panel must
- a) have regular contact with the research degree candidate;
 - b) be familiar with University regulations and policies pertaining to graduate research students and their programme.

Professional Doctorate Degree Programme Structure

- 8.7** A Professional Doctorate Degree is awarded on successful completion of a two-stage structured programme. This programme shall comply with the policies and regulations of the University and such guidelines as may be published by the Governing Board.
- a) **Research:** The doctoral research must be original and make a significant addition to knowledge and understanding. The research must be of a publishable / peer-reviewed standard
 - b) **Professional Practice.** The student is required to demonstrate that they have extended knowledge and skills within their professional environment.
 - c) **Education & Training Modules** The student is required to take a programme of educational and training modules which develop the advanced knowledge, skills and competencies required for successful research and support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills.

Admission Requirements

- 8.8** For Specific Admission Requirements for each Professional Doctorate Degree see Appendix 1.
- 8.9** A nominator shall propose a candidate, and the Head(s) of School must support a nomination and make a recommendation for admission of the candidate to the relevant Governing Board. The decision to admit the candidate to the professional doctoral programme rests with the Governing Board.
- 8.10** For the research component of the professional doctorate, the Professional Doctorate Programme Director will ensure within four months of the student registering to the programme, that:
- a) the appropriate Principal Supervisor and, where relevant, Co-Supervisor(s) are nominated;
 - b) a provisional title of the thesis and or a short description of the proposed research is provided;
 - c) the proposed topic of research is appropriate for the degree and congruent with the research capacity and expertise of the Principal Supervisor;
 - d) the resources are available to support the proposed research activity;
- 8.11** The period of registration for a Professional Doctorate Degree will normally be for 9-12 trimesters full-time. Registration will not be more than 12 trimesters for a full-time student and 18 trimesters for a part-time student where this is permitted. Retrospective registration is not permitted.

Professional Doctorate Degree Registration Period

- 8.12** Students who do not complete the requirements for the Professional Doctorate Degree within the maximum time permitted, must reapply to the Governing Board with written support from the School, presenting justification, for permission to continue in the programme beyond the prescribed period of registration

Professional Doctorate Degree Supervision

- 8.13** The Principal Supervisor has primary responsibility for the academic supervision of the Professional Doctorate Degree student's research. Where appointed, the Co-Supervisor supports the Principal Supervisor in the academic supervision of the student.
- 8.14** The Principal Supervisor/Co-Supervisor must be an active researcher in the broad area of the student's research topic and will normally hold a PhD/doctoral degree or equivalent qualification or experience and be one of the following:
- a) a permanent member of faculty of the University or recognised college;
 - b) or a member of the adjunct or visiting staff of the University, who has been specifically approved to act as a Principal Supervisor/Co-Supervisor by the Academic Council or its relevant committee, on the recommendation of a School and with the approval of the Governing Board, and whose name has been entered on the Register of Approved Adjunct and Visiting Supervisors;
 - c) or a full-time member of faculty or Research Fellow on a temporary contract of three years or greater may act as Principal Supervisor with the approval of the Governing Board, provided that there is a Co-Supervisor, who is a full-time member of faculty, identified in advance of the student commencing their studies. The Co-Supervisor must be a member of the Doctoral Studies Panel and will assume the responsibilities of the Principal Supervisor in the event that the student's programme of study exceeds the duration of the original Principal Supervisor's contract subject to the approval of the relevant Governing Board.
- 8.15** It is the responsibility of the Principal Supervisor to guide the candidates to conduct their research with integrity and in accordance with the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University and applicable legislation.
- 8.16** Where a Principal Supervisor for any reason is unable to continue to supervise the research, temporarily or permanently, the Professional Doctorate Director in collaboration with the Head of School shall make appropriate arrangements for the supervision of the student, including, where required, recommending the appointment of a new Principal Supervisor to the relevant Governing Board.
- 8.17** The research activity for the degree shall largely be carried out under the direct guidance of the Supervisor(s), which may include short research visits (one trimester or less) to other institutions. The prior approval of the Governing Board must be sought if a substantial

proportion or all of the research is to be carried out elsewhere, but the student remains under the general supervision of the Supervisor(s).

- 8.18** The Governing Board must approve inter-institutional and co-tutelle Supervisory agreements in advance of the student registering for the programme.

Research Studies Panel

- 8.19** The Governing Board will formally constitute a Research Studies Panel (RSP) within three trimesters of the candidate's registration (full-time or part-time). The panel comprises of the principal Supervisor/co-Supervisor and at least one (but normally no more than three) advisers, one of whom must be a UCD faculty member. The RSP will appoint a Chair independent of the Supervisor/co-Supervisor. The purpose of the RSP is to provide advice, monitor the progress of the student, and support the Supervisor(s)-student relationship. The Governing Board will normally act on the recommendations of the Head(s) of School in which the proposed research is to be carried out when appointing advisers.

- 8.20** Research Studies Panel Advisers may include faculty, adjunct, visiting or research staff or relevant professional staff of the University or external to the University.

- 8.21** The duties and obligations of the Principal Supervisor, Co-Supervisors and advisers may not be delegated.

Professional Doctoral Degree Programme Stages

- 8.22 Stage 1** is a period of advanced education, supervised applied professional practice plus original doctoral research activity and professional practice leading to the development of a thesis proposal. Stage 1 doctoral studies will normally be completed within 5 trimesters from the date of registration and by a part-time student within 7 trimesters from the date of registration.

- 8.23 Stage 2** includes further advanced education and training and applied professional practice with the remaining work relating to original doctoral research activity.

a) **Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation Degree (DVMS) Stages**

DVMS Stage 1: Stage 1 consists of 20 ECTS of taught modules and 100 ECTS of professional practice.

DVMS Stage 2: Stage 2 consists of supervised professional practice and advanced research amounting to 100 ECTS of professional practice, with the remaining work relating to original doctoral research activity.

b) **Doctor of Educational Psychology Degree (DEdPsych) Stages**

DEdPsych Stage 1: Stage 1 consists of 40 ECTS of taught modules and 40 ECTS of professional practice plus original doctoral research activity

DEdPsych Stage 2: Stage 2 consists of 20 ECTS of taught modules with the remaining work relating to original doctoral research activity and professional practice.

c) **Doctor of Clinical Psychology Degree (DPsychSc) Stages**

DPsychSc Stage 1: Stage 1 consists of 20 ECTS of taught modules and 20 ECTS of professional practice plus original doctoral research activity

DPsychSc Stage 2: This stage shall consist of 40 ECTS of taught modules and 40 ECTS of professional practice, with the remaining work relating to original doctoral research activity and professional practice.

d) **Doctor of Governance (DGov)**

DGov Stage 1: Stage 1 an initial period of advanced education and training and professional practice and includes 70 ECTS of taught modules.

DGov Stage 2: Subsequent to minimum 6 trimesters registration to the programme, students can apply to Stage 2. Stage 2 consists of 20 ECTS of taught modules and 30 ECTS of professional practice, with the remaining work relating to original doctoral research activity.

Research and Professional Development

8.24 The student, supported by the Research Studies Panel, must document their educational, training, and personal and professional development needs, which, along with the proposed programme of research, will inform the development of a Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP).

8.25 The Research Studies Panel will monitor the student's progress against the prescribed programme of education, training, professional practice and research contained within the RPDP. The Research Studies Panel will be required to meet the candidate on a regular basis, but at least twice in the first year and at least once per year thereafter

Progression in the Professional Doctorate

- 8.26** Schools will establish appropriate processes and procedures to monitor the progress of individual professional doctorate degree students registered in the School, and to assess each student formally at the end of Stage 1 doctoral studies. These processes and procedures will comply with the regulations and policies of the University and such guidelines as may be agreed from time to time by the University or the Governing Programme Board, and should be reviewed at appropriate intervals by the Governing Programme Board.
- 8.27** The School will establish a Stage Transfer Assessment Panel or Panels to assess the progress of the student and their competence and capacity to complete a doctorate degree at the end of Stage 1 and at any other point in the programme.
- 8.28** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel must have the experience and disciplinary expertise to conduct the assessment. The student's Principal Supervisor and/or Co-Supervisor(s) will not be a member of the panel.
- 8.29** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will base its judgement on:
- a) grades achieved in taught modules;
 - b) a written statement of progress and a research plan from the candidate;
 - c) review of the student's RPDP;
 - d) a written progress report from the Principal Supervisor and Co-Supervisor if relevant; and
 - e) an interview with, and presentation by, the candidate
- 8.30** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will make one of the following recommendations to the Governing Board:
- a) that the student should progress to the next stage or year of the professional doctorate programme;
 - b) that the student should not progress to the next stage or year of the professional doctorate programme, and that:
 - i. the student should re-submit for assessment within six months (with an indication of the month/year in which the subsequent formal assessment of progress will take place);
 - ii. the student should apply to transfer to another graduate programme utilising, where appropriate, any credits already accumulated within the doctoral programme.
 - iii. a recommendation be made in line with the University's continuation process to the Academic Council or relevant sub-committee that the student's registration be discontinued.
- 8.31** The Governing Board will either approve the recommendation; request that a School reconsider their recommendations or, following consultation with the School, make a decision, which differs from the recommendation. Where the latter occurs, it will be reported to the Academic Council or relevant sub-committee.

8.32 The Governing Board may recommend one or more additional formal assessments of progress and competence within Stage 2 of the Professional Doctorate Degree Programme or such an assessment may be a normal element of a Professional Doctorate Degree Programme .The Governing Board will recommend the nature and timing of any such assessment.

Responsibilities of Degree Candidates

8.33 Candidates are required to pursue the programme of and supervised research activity, applied professional practice and advanced education and training, incorporating taught elements directed by the Principal Supervisor(s) and other members of the Research Studies Panel and to work with their Principal Supervisor(s) and other members of the Research Studies Panel to meet the requirements articulated in the Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP).

8.34 Candidates are required to:

- a) fulfil all responsibilities that may be reasonably expected to progress and conduct their advanced education and training (incorporating taught elements, applied professional practice and supervised research activity), successfully
- b) ensure that all or any ethical requirements associated with their research are addressed at the appropriate time;
- c) comply with best and ethical practice and the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University in the conduct of their research; and
- d) adhere to the University's Fitness to Practice Policy and Fitness to Study Policy where relevant.

Examination

8.34 Examination of Taught Components.

Credit for taught modules is awarded after the candidate has met the stated learning outcomes of the module as determined by the successful completion of the relevant assessment.

8.33 Examination of Professional Practice Element Credit for the supervised professional practice is awarded after satisfactory completion of the practice activity. Assessment of professional practice may include:

- a) review of activities such as placement in a professional setting, development of a Portfolio, generation of a case log, community outreach activities, presentation to peers and the generation of peer-reviewed publications; and
- b) a submitted professional practice report in acceptable form and deemed to be of a satisfactory standard by the Examination Committee

8.34 Following successful completion of all required taught and professional practice elements, the final examination for Professional Doctorate degree is based on a description of the candidate's research in a thesis describing the context, nature, methodology and outcomes of the research, prepared in accordance with international norms for the discipline, which must contain material of a publishable/peer reviewed standard.

Examination of Thesis

- 8.35** Professional Doctorate Degree Candidates must be examined through a viva voce examination by a Thesis Examination Committee.
- 8.36** The examination of the thesis element of the Professional Doctorate Degree Programme should follow procedures outlined in Sections 7.58 – 7.81 of the UCD Academic Regulations.
- 8.37** The Special Extern Examiner for Professional doctorate degree candidates must be a recognised expert in the area of research of the thesis as evidenced in the curriculum vitae of the proposed examiner AND an active professional practitioner in the subject area and/or member of the relevant professional body of the programme. The appointment of the Special Extern Examiner shall usually be for a period of three years and the examiner may examine more than one candidate in any given year.

Appendix I

Specific Admission Requirements for each Professional Doctorate Degree Programme

1.1 Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation Degree (DVMS)

A candidate seeking admission to the DVMS programme must possess a primary degree in veterinary medicine recognised by the Veterinary Council of Ireland and have completed a minimum of 1.5 to 2 years relevant clinical professional experience or one year of a recognised clinical internship in an academic institution or equivalent centre. The candidate must be enrolled in a European Board of Veterinary Specialisation residency programme (or equivalent) for which UCD is an approved provider and is fully accredited

1.2 Doctor of Educational Psychology degree (DEdPsych)

A candidate seeking admission to the DEdPsych programme must hold an honour's Bachelor's degree in psychology recognised by the Psychological Society of Ireland, or international equivalent, and have at least two years professional experience in a related field. Interviews will be held to assess the suitability of candidates.

Candidates may apply for admission directly into Stage 2 of the programme where they hold a Master's Degree in Educational Psychology that constitutes a professional qualification to practise as an Educational Psychologist. In such instances, prior learning credits may be obtained up to a maximum of 80 ECTS (equivalent to the taught and professional practice components of Stage 1 of the DEdPsych) and the candidate must also provide a thesis proposal as part of the application for admission directly into Stage 2.

1.3 Doctor of Clinical Psychology degree (DPsychSc)

A candidate seeking admission to the DPsychSc programme must hold a minimum upper second class honour's Bachelor's Degree in Psychology recognised by the Psychological Society of Ireland, or international equivalent, and have at least one year's professional experience in a related field. Interviews will be held to assess the suitability of candidates.

1.4 Doctor of Governance degree (DGov)

A candidate seeking admission to the DGov programme must possess a primary degree, or equivalent qualification, of at least upper second class honours (2.1) standard and have at least five years full-time (or part-time equivalent) work experience at an appropriate level in a relevant public service profession. Interviews may be held to assess the suitability of applicants.

9 The Degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD)

- 9.1 The degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD) is, in accordance with national and international norms, provided to encourage the development of advanced research skills in medical graduates and the medical profession, and is adapted to the particular circumstances of advanced professional training in that profession. The nature of the preparation for the degree is similar to other research doctoral degrees, but research for the degree is normally completed within a shorter period of time, typically two years of full-time research and study. The primary purpose of the MD level research is to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct effective research and to make a significant contribution to new knowledge and understanding in the theory and/or practice of any area of medicine or medical science.
- 9.2 The purpose of these regulations, and any related policies, guidelines and procedures established by the University, is to assure and enhance the quality of education and training of MD students, and to create a framework that guides and supports the student and their supervisor(s).
- 9.3 Primary responsibility for the approval of candidates for MD studies, oversight of the design and delivery of the MD programme, and the approval of supervisory arrangements and the outcomes of any assessments of progress of MD students rests with the School of Medicine, in consultation with the relevant Governing Board, and on the delegated authority of the Academic Council or its relevant committee and Academic Council. For these purposes, the School of Medicine shall establish a Clinical Research Degree Committee.
- 9.4 The Clinical Research Degree Committee shall be appointed by the Head of the School of Medicine. The Clinical Research Degree Committee shall consist of no fewer than three and no more than six of the permanent faculty of the University, at least two of whom shall be Professors or Associate Professors, and shall include representation from the School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science. The Chair of the Clinical Research Degree Committee shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote.
- 9.5 The Clinical Research Degree Committee, acting on the delegated authority of the Governing Board, shall:
- a) Establish the requirements for the MD programme, consistent with the University's regulations, policies, guidelines and procedures, including guidelines regarding admissions criteria and supervisory arrangements
 - b) Recommend to the Governing Board the admission of students to the MD programme;
 - c) Recommend to the Governing Board the appropriate supervisory arrangements (including nomination of a Principal Supervisor and any second or additional supervisors) for all students registered to the MD programme;
 - d) Monitor the progress of students registered to the MD degree and arrange any and all formal mid-programme assessment which may be part of the requirements of the MD programme and report the outcome to the Governing Board;

- e) Establish the MD Examination Committee by recommending to the Governing Board the appointment of the intern and extern examiner(s) responsible for the final examination of the MD thesis;
- f) Oversee and co-ordinate the conduct of the MD Examination Committee, including receipt of the joint report which is produced by the examiners which describes the outcome of the examination, and submit the joint report to the Academic Council or its relevant committee

9.6 The Governing Board, acting on the delegated authority of Academic Council, shall:

- a) Approve the admission of students to the MD programme;
- b) Approve the appointment of Principal Supervisors and where applicable, Co-supervisor(s),
- c) Review and recommend the appointment of the MD Examination Committee, including the intern and extern examiner(s) for the final examination of the MD thesis to the Academic Council or its relevant committee;
- d) Work with the Clinical Research Degree Committee to develop guidelines and good practice in the structure and delivery of the MD programme;
- e) Work with the Clinical Research Degree Committee to enhance MD studies and the MD student experience.

Admission Requirements, Application Procedures and Registration for the MD Degree

9.7 A candidate seeking admission to the MD programme must hold a primary medical degree such as MB BCH BAO or equivalent, and a period of not less than 3 years will have elapsed since the award of the primary degrees. The candidate may be nominated by an individual eligible to supervise MD students, but is normally nominated by their proposed Principal Supervisor. Nomination for admission to the MD programme shall include an outline of the proposed research, information on the provision of the required facilities and resources and an indication of the proposed supervisory arrangements in place in accordance with guidelines issued by the Clinical Research Degree Committee.

9.8 The nomination for admission will be considered by the Clinical Research Degree Committee and, with the support of the Clinical Research Degree Committee, may be recommended to the Governing Board for approval. The recommendation shall specify:

- a) the academic or other achievements of the candidate that indicate they have the capacity to pursue an MD;
- b) the proposed Principal Supervisor and where relevant, Co-supervisor(s);
- c) the provisional title of the thesis.

9.9 A nominator shall propose a candidate, and the Clinical Research Degree Committee and the Head of the School of Medicine shall support a nomination, only when they are satisfied that:

- a) the candidate is appropriately qualified and has the basic skills and competencies required to embark upon an MD;
- b) the proposed topic of research is appropriate for the degree and congruent with the research capacity and expertise of the entity hosting the research;

- c) the resources are available to support the proposed research activity;
- d) appropriate supervisors and supervisory arrangements are in place to oversee the progress of the research.

Registration Period for the MD Degree

9.10 The programme of supervised research leading to the MD degree may be pursued on a full-time or a part-time basis. The period of registration for the MD degree will normally be six trimesters for a full-time student, and twelve trimesters for a part-time student. Retrospective registration is not permitted.

- a) Full-time students who do not complete the requirements for the MD degree within six trimesters, and part-time students who do not complete the requirements for the MD degree within twelve trimesters, must re-apply to the Clinical Research Degree Committee presenting justification for permission to continue in the programme beyond the prescribed period of registration or, where appropriate, seek Leave of Absence or Withdraw in accordance with University policy. The Clinical Research Degree Committee will then make a recommendation regarding the application for permission to continue in the programme, Leave of Absence or Withdrawal to the Governing Board. A student who withdraws can apply to the Clinical Research Degree Committee for re-admission to the programme within a period of 5 years from the point of withdrawal. The Clinical Research Degree Committee may make a recommendation for approval for re-admission to the programme to the Governing Board, and in doing so, may recognise the work previously undertaken by the student upon their re-admission to the programme.

Research Supervision for the MD Degree

9.11 Where a student is carrying out research for their MD degree in UCD or affiliated hospitals, this research shall largely be carried out under the direct supervision of a Principal Supervisor, who shall be a permanent member of the faculty of the University, or a member of the adjunct or visiting staff of the University who has been specifically approved to act as a Principal Supervisor by the Academic Council or its relevant committee, on the recommendation of the Clinical Research Degree Committee and the Governing Board, and whose name has been entered on the Register of Approved Adjunct and Visiting Supervisors.

9.12 The Governing Board will appoint a Principal Supervisor and Co supervisor(s) (if relevant) of the candidate's research upon the recommendation of the Clinical Research Degree Committee. If the Principal Supervisor is not a medically qualified individual, at least one Co-supervisor should be medically qualified and have an active research interest in the broad research area proposed.

9.13 All supervisors will be active researchers in the broad area of the candidate's research topic, with a record of peer-reviewed publication of international standing, and will normally hold a Doctoral degree.

- 9.14 Where a Principal Supervisor retires or resigns from the staff of the University or relevant entity, or for any other reason is unable to continue to supervise the research, temporarily or permanently, the Clinical Research Degree Committee, in consultation with the Head of the School of Medicine , shall inform the Governing Board, and on the recommendation of the Clinical Research Degree Committee, in consultation with the Head of the School of Medicine , the Governing Board shall make appropriate arrangements for the supervision of the student, including, where required, the appointment of a new Principal Supervisor.
- 9.15 The Principal Supervisor will monitor progress against the prescribed programme of research and study on a regular basis. Both the student and the Principal Supervisor are encouraged to familiarise themselves with relevant University policies. Where a conflict may arise between the student and the Principal Supervisor, either the Principal Supervisor or student may inform the Head of the School of Medicine , who will in turn notify the Director of the College Graduate School who will be responsible for making a decision on the most appropriate action in accordance with the relevant University policies.
- 9.16 The duties and obligations of the Principal Supervisor and Co-Supervisor(s) may not be delegated except in circumstances covered in regulation 9.14 above.

MD Degree Structure

- 9.17 The MD degree is awarded on successful completion of a programme of research prescribed by the Principal Supervisor in consultation with the Clinical Research Degree Committee and the Head of the School of Medicine . This programme shall comply with the policies and regulations of the University and such guidelines as may be published by the Governing Board and/or the Academic Council or its relevant committee.
- 9.18 The MD degree will be awarded only where a student has successfully completed a programme of study with a minimum of six trimesters full-time (or twelve trimesters part-time) Doctoral level (UCD Level 5) research activity.
- 9.19 The student, as required or recommended by their Principal Supervisor and as approved by the Clinical Research Degree Committee, may take suitable taught modules relevant to their area of research or professional development. These may include additional educational and training elements which develop the advanced knowledge, skills and competencies required for successful research and/or support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills. A student may undertake such taught modules up to a maximum of 20 credits over the course of the entire programme of study.
- 9.20 Credit for taught modules is awarded after satisfactory completion of the modules and successful completion of any associated assessment.
- 9.21 Where a student has conducted significant research work but does not intend to proceed to completion of the MD degree programme, the student may be provided with the option of

transferring to a Research Masters programme. The requirements for this degree are outlined in the Regulations for Research Degrees (Section7).

Progression in the MD Degree

- 9.22 The Clinical Research Degree Committee will establish appropriate processes and procedures to monitor the progress of students registered to the MD degree, and will arrange a formal mid-programme assessment which is part of the requirements of the MD programme.
- 9.23 Students registered to the MD degree may transfer to stage two of a PhD programme on successful completion of a Transfer Assessment following a minimum three trimester period of registration to the MD degree programme. The Transfer Assessment shall be held in accordance with the same requirements which apply for transfer from the Research Masters to the PhD degree as described in regulations 7.37-7.40 of the Academic Regulation Research Degrees.
- 9.24 All processes and procedures associated with the management of the MD degree programme will operate in accordance with the regulations and policies of the University and such guidelines as may be agreed from time to time by the University, the Academic Council or its relevant committee and/or the Governing Board, and should be reviewed at appropriate intervals by the Academic Council or its relevant committee and the Governing Boards.

Responsibilities of MD Degree Candidates

- 9.25 Candidates are required to fulfil all responsibilities that may be reasonably expected, as articulated in the *Code of Practice for Supervisors and Students*, to progress and conduct their research, training and development successfully.
- 9.26 Candidates are required to comply with best and ethical practice and the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University in the conduct of their research.
- 9.27 The examination for the degree of MD is based on a description of the candidate's research in a thesis describing the context, nature, methodology and outcomes of the research.

Preparation and Submission of the MD Thesis for Examination

- 9.28 The candidate will prepare a thesis under the direction of the Principal Supervisor and in accordance with any guidelines published by the University, and will submit the thesis for examination. The appropriate length of the thesis shall be agreed between the candidate and the Principal Supervisor in accordance with the traditions of the discipline.
- a) The candidate must be a registered student at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination.
- 9.29 The thesis shall be submitted to the University, in accordance with such regulations, policies and procedures of the University.

- 9.30 The thesis will only be accepted by the University if it is accompanied by a statement from the Principal Supervisor that the research has been carried out, and the final draft of the thesis, as submitted, has been prepared for examination under their supervision. Where such a statement is, in the opinion of the candidate, unreasonably withheld, the candidate may appeal to the Head of the School of Medicine.
- 9.31 The research described in the thesis must be the original work of the candidate. Research work on the basis of which a degree or other qualification (from University College Dublin, another third level institution, or a professional or other awarding body) has already been obtained or which has been used by a candidate to gain membership or fellowship of a professional body, or some equivalent recognition, will not be accepted for the degree of MD. A confirmatory statement to this effect must be submitted by the candidate and submitted with the thesis.

Examination of the MD Thesis

- 9.32 **MD Examination Committee:** An MD Examination Committee will be established to assess the candidate on the basis of the thesis submitted and to make a recommendation on the award (or otherwise) of the MD degree. The MD Examination Committee shall be chaired by the Head of the School of Medicine or their nominee, and shall consist of the Chair, one extern examiner and one intern examiner. The Chair is not an examiner.
- a) **Appointment of Intern Examiner:** The intern examiner shall be nominated by the Clinical Research Degree Committee, reviewed and recommended by the Governing Board, and approved and appointed by the Academic Council or its relevant committee. An intern examiner will be an active researcher in the broad area of the thesis topic or in a cognate discipline and must be a member of the faculty or of the adjunct or visiting staff of the University.
 - b) The Principal Supervisor may not act as an intern examiner nor as Chair of the MD Examination Committee. However, in instances where a *viva voce* examination is required, the supervisor may be invited to attend the examination with the consent of the MD Examination Committee and the candidate.
 - c) **Appointment of Extern Examiner:** The extern examiner shall be nominated by the Clinical Research Degree Committee and, subject to the review and recommendation of the Governing Board and approval of the Academic Council or its relevant committee, the extern examiner shall be recommended to and appointed by the National University of Ireland. The extern examiner will be a recognised expert in the area of research of the thesis as evidenced in the curriculum vitae of the proposed extern examiner.
 - d) Where the candidate for the MD degree is a full-time member of the faculty of the University, or another constituent university or recognised College of the National University of Ireland, there must be a second extern examiner. A second extern examiner should be appointed for other MD candidates where the Governing Board considers a potential conflict of interest may arise.

- e) **Conflict of Interest:** The Clinical Research Degree Committee should take appropriate steps to avert a situation where the examiner(s) would be required to examine the work of family, friends or associates, or where the examiner(s) may otherwise be closely associated with the candidate and/or any other member of the School in which the candidate is registered, including candidates who are related to or associated with the examiner's colleague(s). All examiners should be careful to exercise objectivity towards all candidates, in particular any candidate who is related to or associated with a colleague.
- 9.33 **Confidentiality:** All matters relating to the examination must be treated as confidential. Examiners are not permitted to divulge the content of previously unpublished material contained in a candidate's thesis until such time as the thesis has been deposited in the library and is publicly available. Examiners are not permitted to divulge any information relating to the examination, to colleagues who have family members, friends or associates who are examination candidates in other Schools or Colleges. Such staff should refrain from making enquiries about these examinations and/or examination grades from their colleagues.
- 9.34 **VIVA VOCE Examination:** While a *viva voce* examination is not normally required, on the request of the Clinical Research Degree Committee, or at the behest of the examiners, a *viva voce* examination may be arranged. The *viva voce* examination will normally be held within two months of receipt of the thesis by the examiners. The Principal Supervisor may be invited to attend the *viva voce* examination with the consent of the MD Examination Committee and the candidate. The procedure for such a *viva voce* examination shall be equivalent to that employed for a PhD *viva voce* examination.
- 9.35 Assessment, UCD Registry, shall forward a copy of the thesis to each member of the MD Examination Committee.

MD Examination Committee Decision and Responsibilities

- 9.36 The Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall arrange for the exchange of reports from each examiner, which should include a judgement as to whether or not the thesis is of a suitable standard for the award of the MD degree. The extern will normally send their report to the intern examiner, who will compile the joint Degree Report. The joint Degree Report must be reviewed and signed by all members of the MD Examination Committee, and shall be submitted by the Chair of the MD Examination Committee to the Clinical Research Degree Committee for forwarding to the Academic Council or its relevant committee, and shall include a recommendation to:
- a) Award the MD degree – no corrections required
 - b) Award the MD degree – corrections required
 - c) Award the MD degree – revision without re-examination
 - d) Revise thesis and submit for re-examination
 - e) Do not award the MD degree – recommendation that the candidate transfer to an appropriate graduate programme
 - f) Do not award the MD degree

Unanimous Recommendation to Award the Degree

- 9.37 Where the examiners unanimously recommend award of the degree, the Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall submit the joint Degree Report to the Clinical Research Degree Committee, which will forward this report to the Academic Council or its relevant committee. The joint Degree Report will indicate the examiners' opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based.
- 9.38 Where, in the opinions of the examiners, corrections to the thesis are required, the Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that such corrections have been made to the thesis before the award is approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee. The Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall inform the candidate and the Principal Supervisor that the Clinical Research Degree Committee has submitted the recommendation for the award of the MD degree for the approval of the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

Unanimous Recommendation not to Award the Degree

- 9.39 Where the examiners unanimously recommend that the MD degree not be awarded, the Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall submit the joint Degree Report to the Clinical Research Degree Committee, which will forward this report to the Academic Council or its relevant committee. The joint Degree Report will indicate the examiners' opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based, also indicating the areas of weakness which led to the decision not to recommend the award of the MD degree.
- 9.40 The Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall inform the candidate and the Principal Supervisor that the MD Examination Committee has not recommended award of the MD degree and that the candidate should revise and submit the thesis for re-examination or transfer to another programme.

No Unanimous Recommendation

- 9.41 Where the examiners are in disagreement and cannot unanimously recommend that the MD degree be awarded, the Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall submit the separate Degree Reports from each examiner to the Clinical Research Degree Committee for forwarding to the Academic Council or its relevant committee. In such instances, the views of the Clinical Research Degree Committee will also be sought by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.
- 9.42 The Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall inform the candidate and the Principal Supervisor that the MD Examination Committee has not made a unanimous decision on the award of the degree and that the matter has been recommended to the Academic Council or its relevant committee for adjudication.

Decision

- 9.43 The Academic Council or its relevant committee will decide, on the basis of the Degree Report(s) and, where necessary, clarification or correspondence with the examiners and/or the Chair of the MD Examination Committee and/or the Chair of the Clinical Research Degree Committee, to authorise or not authorise the award of the degree. A candidate is entitled to a copy of the examiners' degree report(s) following the authorisation or otherwise of the award of the degree by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

Appeals

- 9.44 A candidate may appeal a decision of the Academic Council or its relevant committee on the award of an MD degree through the UCD Assessment Appeals route.

Submission of Revised Theses

- 9.45 Where the MD Examination Committee has not recommended and the Academic Council or its relevant committee not authorised the award of an MD degree, the candidate may, if so allowed, submit a revised thesis for re-examination subject to the conditions set out by the Governing Board and the Clinical Research Degree Committee. Submission of a revised thesis requires a statement from the Principal Supervisor that the thesis has been revised under their supervision.
- 9.46 A printed and electronic copy of each thesis on the basis of which the MD degree has been awarded shall be submitted to the librarian of University College Dublin for deposition in the library. At the time of submission of the thesis, candidates will be required to indicate, whether the copy should be deposited and available immediately under conditions laid down by the University, or whether access to it should be deferred so that it is not available for consultation for a period determined by the University.
- 9.47 All theses remain the property of University College Dublin. All issues relating to intellectual property will be subject to the University's practices and policies.

Definitions

Award GPA	The award GPA rule controls how the grade points from modules completed in different stages are weighted when calculating the overall award GPA for a student. The different award GPA rules used by the University are set out in section 2.7. Appendix A provides examples for each rule.
Board of Studies	<p>A Board of Studies is a Governing Board with additional responsibilities, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that procedures are in place for the effective design, delivery and assessment of modules • Ensure that requirements of the Extern Examiner Policy have been fulfilled. • Review and approve the composition of the modular examination committee, ensuring the appropriate range of expertise required to properly examine all modules considered by the Committee. • Ensure establishment of such and so many modular examination committees as necessary to fulfil the following responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ review and agree the grades for modules ○ ensure the validity of the grades entered by the module coordinator ○ ensure grades for the modules are reviewed and agreed ○ ensure grade distributions for modules are reviewed, anomalies identified and addressed appropriately ○ ensure that module grades for students with notified and approved extenuating circumstances have been reviewed and addressed appropriately
Credit	The number of credits awarded for passing a module is referred to as that module's credit value. These credits align to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The credit value of a module corresponds to the approximate number of hours of student effort required to achieve the learning outcomes of a module by taking that module, such that one credit equals approximately 25 hours (20-30 hours) of student effort. Therefore, a 30 credit trimester of 15 weeks implies approximately 40-60 hours of student effort per week.
Extern Examiner	An Extern Subject Examiner is a person appointed according to the university's policy on Subject Extern Examiners and for the purposes outlined in that policy.
Intern Examiner	The Intern Examiner is a person who has been approved by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations on the nomination of the Head of School. Faculty are Intern Examiners by virtue of their appointment by the University.
Module	A module is a coherent and self-contained unit of learning expressed in terms of learning outcomes. The module design provides a structured means of achieving the specific learning outcomes of the module. Assessment (summative) is used to ensure that the learning outcomes have been achieved prior to the award of the appropriate credit. The volume of educational activity is expressed in hours of student effort which is linked directly to the credit value of the module.

Module Size	<p>Modules (excluding research and dissertation modules) may be delivered in sizes of 5, 7.5, 10, or 15 credits. Research, project, or work experience modules may bear credit in multiples of 5 credits, up to a maximum of 30 credits. Modules of 2.5 credits are permitted for specific educational purposes, only at Level 4 or above.</p> <p>CPD activity may be delivered in modules of varying credit value.</p> <p>Dissertation modules shall bear credit in multiples of 5 credits, and may be 15-30 credits in size in undergraduate programmes and 30 credits or higher in graduate programmes.</p>						
Must Pass Component	<p>An assessment component that must be passed to pass a module is called a must pass component. If a student fails a must pass component in a module, they cannot be awarded a passing grade for that module unless they successfully remediate that assessment component. Where a module contains a must pass component or components, this will be indicated in the module descriptor.</p>						
Professional Accreditation	<p>The University is responsible for the design and validation of its own degree programmes. Where those programmes are also subject to professional accreditation, the University and the Governing Board shall endeavour to have the requirements of the accrediting body stated in terms of programme outcomes rather than specified curricular content.</p>						
Special Extern Examiner	<p>The special extern examiner is a person who has been approved by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations on the nomination of the Head of School to participate in the examination of a research degree as a recognised expert in the area of research of the relevant thesis.</p>						
Student Effort	<p>Student effort includes all contact hours, all work required on, time spent in independent study or research, on compulsory clinical or professional placements, in completing assignments and projects, in revising for and completing assessments and any additional time and effort expected of a student enrolled to that module.</p> <p>Time spent on compulsory clinical or professional placements may also be assigned credit, based on criteria reflecting equivalent international standards as recommended by the relevant School and approved by the relevant Governing Board in consultation with the College, subject to review by the University Programmes Board.</p>						
UCD Level	<p>Modules are assigned a level. The level of a module is an indication of the difficulty of the learning outcomes to be achieved and the material that will be encountered. The level broadly indicates the stage in an academic career when a student is likely to attempt the module.</p> <p>There are five levels, as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="432 1921 1430 1962"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="432 1921 587 1962">UCD Level</th> <th data-bbox="587 1921 742 1962">NFQ Level</th> <th data-bbox="742 1921 1430 1962">Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	UCD Level	NFQ Level	Description			
UCD Level	NFQ Level	Description					

	Level 0	6	have demonstrated basic knowledge and understanding, underpinned by the basic theories, concepts or methods of the field of study, at a level appropriate to at the transition from secondary to tertiary education and which is typically at a level supported by introductory third level textbooks
	Level 1	7	have demonstrated basic knowledge and understanding, underpinned by the basic theories, concepts or methods of the field of study, that builds upon secondary education and which is typically at a level supported by introductory third-level textbooks
	Level 2	8	have demonstrated specialized knowledge and understanding, underpinned by the more advanced theories, concepts or methods of the field of study, have begun to show some awareness of the limitations of current knowledge and the sources of new knowledge, and which is typically supported by intermediate and advanced textbooks
	Level 3	8	have demonstrated specialized, detailed or advanced knowledge and understanding, underpinned by advanced theories, concepts or methods, which includes a clear awareness of the limitations of current knowledge and the sources of new knowledge, which is supported by advanced textbooks, but includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge at the forefront of the field of study
	Level 4	9	have demonstrated specialized, detailed or advanced theoretical and conceptual knowledge and understanding, which is based consideration of current debate and controversy at the forefront of the field and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context
	Level 5	10	have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in an advanced theoretical or conceptual framework, a systematic understanding of the problems at the forefront of knowledge and potential approaches and solutions, and mastery of skills and methods of research associated with the field of study.
University Systems	University systems refers to the information technology used to store, retrieve, and transmit information on students' academic performance, i.e. the Student Information System (SIS).		

A Stage Grade Point Average (Stage GPA) and Award Grade Point Average (Award GPA)

A.1 Stage Grade Point Averages (Stage GPA) and award Grade Point Averages (Award GPA) are displayed correct to two decimal places. A grade of X.XX5 or higher is rounded up, so that a grade point of 2.225 would be reported as 2.23, and a grade point of x.xx4 is rounded down, so that a grade of 2.224 would be reported at 2.22.

Stage GPA

A.2 Stage GPA is the average of the grade points awarded upon passing the modules or other credit bearing learning experiences to satisfy the requirements of the stage. The grade point for each module or learning experiences is weighted by its credit value.

- a) The modules to be used for the purpose of calculating stage GPA are determined.
- b) The grade points for each module are multiplied by the credit values of those modules.
- c) These values are then added for a total sum.
- d) The total sum is divided by the number of credits used to calculate the stage GPA.

In the following example, a sample 30 credit stage GPA calculation is illustrated.

STAGE	MODULE	GRADE	GRADE POINT (GP)	CREDITS	GP X CREDITS
1	A	B+	3.60	5	18
1	B	B	3.40	5	17
1	C	B+	3.60	5	18
1	D	B	3.40	5	17
1	E	B-	3.20	5	16
1	F	A-	3.80	5	19
				Credit Total =	30
				GP Total =	105
STAGE GPA		GP Total ÷ Credit Total (105 ÷ 30) =			3.5

Award GPA

A.3 For any programme, Award GPA may be determined on the basis of final stage only. This includes single-stage programmes.

A.4 Final stage only - The award GPA is the average of the grade points awarded for the final successful attempt at those modules or other learning experiences which have been completed and passed to satisfy the requirements of the final stage, and is calculated using

the same method as stage GPA. The grade point for each module or credit bearing learning experiences is weighted by its credit value.

- a) The modules to be used for the purpose of calculating award GPA are determined.
- b) The grade points for each module are multiplied by the credit values of those modules.
- c) These values are then added for a total sum.
- d) The total sum is divided by the number of credits used to calculate the award GPA.

In the following example, a sample 30 credit Final Stage Only award GPA calculation is illustrated.

STAGE	MODULE	GRADE	GRADE POINT (GP)	CREDITS	GP X CREDITS
1	A	B+	3.60	5	18
1	B	B	3.40	5	17
1	C	B+	3.60	5	18
1	D	B	3.40	5	17
1	E	B-	3.20	5	16
1	F	A-	3.80	5	19
				Credit Total =	30
					GP Total = 105
AWARD GPA	GP Total ÷ Credit Total (105 ÷ 30) =				3.5

Multi-Stage Award GPA

A.5 For multiple stage programmes, the Award GPA will be determined by the Programme Examination Board using any of the following approaches:

- a) **Final stage only (outlined above)**
- b) **Final and penultimate stages**
- c) **Final and penultimate stages (stage-weighted)**
- d) **Three-stage weighted**

A.6 Final and penultimate stages - The award GPA is the average of the grade points awarded for the final successful attempt at those modules and other credit bearing learning experiences which have been completed and passed to satisfy the requirements of the final and penultimate stages. The grade point for each module or learning experiences is weighted by its credit value.

- a) The modules to be used for the purpose of calculating award GPA are determined.
- b) The grade points for each module are multiplied by the credit values of those modules, giving a value for **quality points**.
- c) The **quality points** are added together for a **total sum of quality points**.
- d) The total sum of weighted quality points is divided by the total sum of award GPA credits.
- e) The resulting figure is the **award GPA**.

In the following example, a sample final and penultimate stage award GPA calculation is illustrated, where the programme has three stages and both the final and penultimate stages each have 60 credits.

STAGE	MODULE	GRADE	GRADE POINT (GP)	CREDITS	QUALITY POINTS (GP X CREDITS)
2	A	A	4.00	10	40
2	B	A-	3.80	10	38
2	C	B	3.40	10	34
2	D	D+	2.40	10	24
2	E	A	4.00	10	40
2	F	B	3.40	10	34
3	G	B-	3.20	10	32
3	H	A	4.00	10	40
3	I	A-	3.80	10	38
3	J	A	4.00	10	40
3	K	B-	3.20	5	16
3	L	C	2.80	5	14
3	M	C+	3.00	5	15
3	N	C-	2.60	5	13
Total sum of quality points =					418
Total sum of award GPA credits =				120	
AWARD GPA	Total sum of quality points (418) ÷				
	Total sum of weighted GPA credits (120) =				3.48

A.7 Final and penultimate stages (stage-weighted) - The award GPA is the weighted average of the grade points awarded for the final successful attempt at those modules and other learning experiences which have been completed and passed to satisfy the requirements of the final and penultimate stages where the grade points of final stage modules or credit bearing learning experiences are weighted by a factor of seven and those of penultimate stage modules are weighted by a factor of three.

- a) The modules to be used for the purpose of calculating award GPA are determined.
- b) The grade points for each module are multiplied by the credit values of those modules, giving a value for **quality points**.
- c) The credit values for each module are multiplied by the relevant factor of weighting, so credits for modules from the penultimate stage are multiplied by three and credits for modules from the final stage are multiplied by seven, giving a value for **weighted GPA credits**.
- d) The weighted GPA credits are added together for a **total sum of weighted GPA credits**.
- e) The quality points for each stage are further multiplied by the relevant weighting, so quality points for modules from the from penultimate stage are multiplied by seven and quality points for modules from the final stage are multiplied by three, giving values for **weighted quality points**.

- f) The weighted quality points are then added together for a **total sum of weighted quality points**.
- g) The total sum of weighted quality points is divided by the total sum of weighted GPA credits.
- h) The resulting figure is the **award GPA**.

In the following example, a sample final and penultimate (stage-weighted) award GPA calculation is illustrated, where the programme has four stages and both the final and penultimate stages each have 60 credits.

STAGE	MODULE	GRADE	GRADE POINT (GP)	CREDITS	WEIGHTED GPA CREDITS	QUALITY POINTS (GP X CREDITS)	WEIGHTED QUALITY POINTS (QUALITY POINTS X WEIGHT)
3	A	A	4.00	5	15	20	60
3	B	A+	4.20	5	15	21	63
3	C	A-	3.80	5	15	19	57
3	D	A-	3.80	5	15	19	57
3	E	C+	3.00	5	15	15	45
3	F	A	4.00	5	15	20	60
3	G	B+	3.60	5	15	18	54
3	H	C+	3.00	5	15	15	45
3	I	A	4.00	5	15	20	60
3	J	B	3.40	5	15	17	51
3	K	A	4.00	5	15	20	60
3	L	B+	3.60	5	15	18	54
4	M	B+	3.60	5	35	18	126
4	N	A	4.00	5	35	20	140
4	O	A+	4.20	5	35	21	147
4	P	B+	3.60	5	35	18	126
4	Q	C+	3.00	5	35	15	105
4	R	A-	3.80	5	35	19	133
4	S	B+	3.60	5	35	18	126
4	T	A+	4.20	5	35	21	147
4	U	A-	3.80	5	35	19	133
4	V	B	3.40	15	105	51	357
Total sum of weighted quality points =							2206
Total sum of weighted GPA credits =					600		
AWARD GPA	Total sum of weighted quality points (2206) ÷						
	Total sum of weighted GPA credits (600) =						3.68

A.8 Three-stage weighted – The award GPA is the weighted average of the grade points awarded for the final successful attempt at those modules and other credit bearing learning experiences which have been completed and passed to satisfy the requirements of the final three stages of a programme, weighted by a factor of five for the final stage, by a factor of three for the penultimate stage, and by a factor of two for the antepenultimate stage.

- a) The modules to be used for the purpose of calculating award GPA are determined.

- b) The grade points for each module are multiplied by the credit values of those modules, giving a value for **quality points**.
- c) The credit values for each module are multiplied by the relevant factor of weighting, so credits for modules from the antepenultimate stage are multiplied by two, credits for modules from penultimate stage are multiplied by three and credits for modules from the final stage are multiplied by five, giving a value for **weighted GPA credits**.
- d) The weighted GPA credits are added together for a **total sum of weighted GPA credits**.
- e) The quality points for each stage are further multiplied by the relevant weighting, so quality points for modules from the antepenultimate stage are multiplied by two, quality points for modules from penultimate stage are multiplied by three and quality points for modules from the final stage are multiplied by five, giving values for **weighted quality points**.
- f) The weighted quality points are then added together for a **total sum of weighted quality points**.
- g) The total sum of weighted quality points is divided by the total sum of weighted GPA credits.
- h) The resulting figure is the **award GPA**.

In the following example, a sample three-stage weighted award GPA calculation is illustrated, where the programme has four stages and the final, penultimate, and antepenultimate stages each have 60 credits.

STAGE	MODULE	GRADE	GRADE POINT (GP)	CREDITS	WEIGHTED GPA CREDITS	QUALITY POINTS (GP X CREDITS)	WEIGHTED QUALITY POINTS (QUALITY POINTS X WEIGHT)
2	A	C	2.80	5	10	14	28
2	B	C+	3.00	5	10	15	30
2	C	D-	2.00	5	10	10	20
2	D	A	4.00	5	10	20	40
2	E	C+	3.00	5	10	15	30
2	F	D-	2.00	5	10	10	20
2	G	B	3.40	5	10	17	34
2	H	B+	3.60	5	10	18	36
2	I	C	2.80	5	10	14	28
2	J	B-	3.20	5	10	16	32
2	K	A+	4.20	5	10	21	42
2	L	C	2.80	5	10	14	28
3	M	D	2.20	5	15	11	33
3	N	C	2.80	5	15	14	42
3	O	B+	3.60	5	15	18	54
3	P	C	2.80	5	15	14	42
3	Q	D-	2.00	5	15	10	30
3	R	B	3.40	5	15	17	51

3	S	A	4.00	5	15	20	60
3	T	B-	3.20	5	15	16	48
3	U	C	2.80	5	15	14	42
3	V	C-	2.60	5	15	13	39
3	W	B+	3.60	5	15	18	54
3	X	A	4.00	5	15	20	60
4	Y	D-	2.00	5	25	10	50
4	Z	B	3.40	5	25	17	85
4	AA	B	3.40	5	25	17	85
4	AB	A	4.00	5	25	20	100
4	AC	C-	2.60	5	25	13	65
4	AD	D-	2.00	5	25	10	50
4	AE	C+	3.00	5	25	15	75
4	AF	D	2.20	5	25	11	55
4	AG	B	3.40	5	25	17	85
4	AH	C	2.80	5	25	14	70
4	AI	C+	3.00	5	25	15	75
4	AJ	A	4.00	5	25	20	100
Total sum of weighted quality points =							1818
Total sum of weighted GPA credits =							600
AWARD GPA	Total sum of weighted quality points (1818) ÷						
	Total sum of weighted GPA credits (600) =						3.03

B Grade Neutral Trimesters and Stages and Award GPA

B.1 It is stated in section 2.8 that:

Where grades are weighted across multiple stages, grade neutral credit shall not alter the stages that contribute to the calculation of award GPA nor the weightings of the GPA rule (see appendix B for examples).

B.2 This means that grade neutral credit, which might be included in relation to a trimester or a year abroad or a work placement, shall:

- a) be included in the calculation of the credit totals for the stage in which it was taken; and
- b) not contribute to the calculation of the award GPA.

B.3 No preceding stage shall be used to substitute for a bloc of grade neutral credit.

B.4 The following examples illustrates what this would mean for a student registered to a four-stage programme with a three-stage weighted award GPA rule, who takes one trimester of grade neutral credit in stage 3.

Three-stage weighted (5:3:2)			
	Weighting	Credits	Equivalent percentage of Award GPA (if stage GPA of all award stages is equal)
Stage 1	-	60	-
Stage 2	2	60	23.53%
Stage 3	3 (1 Neutral Trimester)	30 Neutral 30 Weighted	17.65%
Stage 4	5	60	58.82%

B.5 The following examples illustrates what this would mean for the same student if the entirety of stage 3 consisted of grade neutral credit.

Three-stage weighted (5:3:2)			
	Weighting	Credits	Equivalent percentage of Award GPA (if stage GPA of all award stages is equal)
Stage 1	-	60	-
Stage 2	2	60	28.57%
Stage 3	3 (Neutral)	60 Neutral	0%
Stage 4	5	60	71.43%