



## Key Changes to Newcastle University Regulations 2016-17

### General Regulations

#### E. ~~Accreditation~~ Credit Transfer and the Recognition of Prior Learning

*Amendments. This section has been rewritten to bring it into line with the University's new policy on Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning and to ensure adequate coverage of PGT awards.*

The University policy on Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applies to any taught modules and taught units in non-modular programmes, including taught modules and units in postgraduate research programmes, subject to specific limitations. All students on these programmes are eligible for credit transfer and RPL, including those students enrolled through partnership programmes and on branch campuses.

Decisions to grant credit transfer and RPL under this policy are academic decisions, based on individual students' applications and academic judgement about whether or not the prior learning maps appropriately onto stated learning outcomes for modules at the University.

19. An applicant who has studied at another institution, or has studied at Newcastle University, may be admitted directly to the second stage of an undergraduate degree programme (the third stage in the case of a four year degree or integrated master's degree or the fourth year of a five year degree) in accordance with the University's policy on Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (available at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-ct-rpl-pol.pdf>) and with the approval of the Degree Programme Director in consultation with the Admissions Tutor. The student will need to make the case that the modules studied elsewhere have been passed, are at an appropriate level and of an appropriate credit value and have resulted in the achievement of equivalent learning outcomes.

20. Students admitted to any degree programme on the basis of credit transfer or RPL will not be required to relinquish any previous Higher Education Certificate or Higher Education Diploma award from this or any other higher education institution.

21. The maximum credit for which credit transfer or RPL can be offered is one third (i.e. 120 credits) of a three year undergraduate degree or one half (i.e. 240 credits) of a four year undergraduate degree or of an integrated master's degree or three-fifths of a five year degree. The maximum credit transfer or RPL allowed on a postgraduate taught award (postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma, master's) is one third of the taught component, unless an individual exemption is approved by the relevant Dean of Postgraduate Studies, in which case the maximum is half of the taught credits. The maximum number of credits for which credit transfer or RPL can be allowed on a taught doctorate or the taught element of an integrated PhD is 40 credits. Any exemptions from this must be approved by the relevant Dean of Postgraduate Studies.

22. In all cases where credit transfer or RPL has been approved, the classification of the award shall be based on the modules studied at Newcastle University, including any credit

transferred in from modules studied at Newcastle University. Where an undergraduate student has been allowed to transfer in credits from another higher education institution or has had prior learning recognised for any stage beyond stage 1, the stage weightings specified in the programme regulations shall apply, but only to those modules studied at Newcastle. This means that the average mark on the reduced number of modules studied at Newcastle University in conjunction with the relevant stage weightings shall be used in the calculation of the weighted average mark and through this the final classification.

23. For Postgraduate Taught awards only, modules studied at Newcastle University will be used to determine the classification of the award, meaning that the weighted average will be based on the reduced number of credits studied at Newcastle, including any Newcastle credits transferred in.

#### I. Tutors and Supervisors

*Amendments (underlined) to clarify that full tutorial support is available to all registered students, but not to those on a leave of absence, who will be advised to contact the academic unit's office in the first instance if they have any enquiries. The office to then redirect them as appropriate.*

401. Every Registered students will have access to tutorial support. The purpose of this is to support students' personal and general academic development through an ongoing personalised point of contact with the University. Further details are provided in the Framework for Personal Tutoring (available at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/quit/assets/documents/qsh-personaltutoring-fwk.pdf> <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds//assets/documents/qsh-personaltutoring-fwk.pdf>). Students who are not technically registered on a programme of study (i.e. leave of absence, intercalating) will not have access to the same level of tutorial or pastoral support. In such cases students should contact the academic unit office in the first instance.

(...)

#### S. Assessment of Incoming Study Abroad, Exchange and Occasional Students

*Amendments (underlined) to clarify the timing of special assessments at the end of Semester 1, which may take place in December after the end of term.*

(...)

679. Non-EU exchange or Study Abroad students studying at Newcastle only for Semester 1 ~~only~~ will normally ~~only~~ be able to take only modules that are made available to Study Abroad students and indicated as such on the module outline form. Where assessment normally takes place before the ~~end of term~~ University closure in December, the module will be assessed in the normal manner. Where assessment normally takes place in January, these students will be provided with an alternative assessment (either at an alternative time, which might be straight after the end of term in December, or in the form an alternative format assessment). Science Without Borders Students or EU exchange students are not entitled to an alternative assessment for these modules, nor are students spending the whole academic year at Newcastle. The most appropriate format of assessment will be determined by boards of studies on a module-by-module basis. Where the introduction of an alternative form of assessment changes the learning outcomes for a module, a new module will need to be created and approved.

Science Without Borders Students, EU exchange students and (in some circumstances) Study Abroad students ~~who will be in Newcastle until the end of the January assessment period~~ might wish to take modules that are not indicated as available to Study Abroad students on the module outline form, but are marked as 'Contact School'. In such cases students may contact the School or unit owning a module ~~if the module outline form indicates that Study~~

~~Abroad students wishing to take the module should contact the School. In such cases but should note that an alternative assessment (by time or format) may not be available.~~

#### X. Academic Appeals

*New regulation to list circumstances in which students can submit an appeal (to codify existing practice).*

77. Students are entitled to submit an Academic Appeal against the following University decisions:

- a) Board of Examiners decisions
- b) PEC Committee decisions
- c) Unsatisfactory Progress decisions
- d) DPD Request decisions
- e) Termination of Studies due to Breach of Tier 4 visa

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/appeals.htm>

Students are also entitled to submit appeals against University disciplinary sanctions, the outcome of Fitness to Study Panel hearings and the outcome of Fitness to Practise hearings.

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/disciplinary.htm>

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/f2s.htm>

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/fitness.htm>

### **Undergraduate Progress Regulations**

#### G. General Provisions Governing Attendance and Progress

*Addition (underlined) to clarify that for distance learning or online courses 'attendance' is not a valid measure of participation.*

24. Any of the following may constitute failure to make satisfactory progress and all may be taken into account in considering the student's case:

(...)

- c) Failure to attend regularly the programme of study without good cause (see General Regulations A4); for distance learning or online programmes engagement will be measured by alternative means to 'attendance' as determined by the programme owning School.

#### M. Exemptions to these Regulations: ~~MBBS and BDS~~

*Amendment (underlined) to clarify that LTDS register should be referred to for complete list of programme exemptions.*

43. ~~The MBBS and the BDS~~ Certain programmes are exempt from the requirements of the Regulations E, F and H (Patterns of Study, Degree Programme Regulations and Assessment). Alternative arrangements in respect of these programmes are detailed in the degree programme regulations.

Note that referral to each individual set of degree programme regulations for full information on programme exemptions is required. A complete register of exemptions can be found at:

<https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/internal-documents/qsh-regs-variations>

## Undergraduate Examination Conventions

### B. The Board of Examiners

*Amendment (underlined) to clarify that membership of the Board is agreed by the Board of Studies but that the Chair and Secretary should be notified to FLTSEC and the Examinations Office.*

3. The membership of each board of examiners shall be ~~proposed~~ agreed by the relevant board of studies and names of the chair and secretary reported to the appropriate faculty learning, teaching and student experience committee to the examinations office.

### H. Progression from One Stage to Another

*New convention and amendment (all underlined) to clarify calculation of stage and programme averages (see also M53 below). In addition, clarification on how Stage 2 or penultimate year students should be treated with regards to credit failures.*

33. A stage average is defined by the weighted average mark over all modules at that stage, where the weighting reflects the credit value of each module. Degree programme regulations may allow for additional credit value for non-modular aggregated assessment. The stage average shall be calculated and rounded to one decimal place.

- a) When calculating a (non-final) stage average for the purposes of compensation under Convention J35, the calculation must use the best module marks that relate to the given stage, regardless of whether the best marks are from first or second attempts.
- b) When calculating a (non-final) stage average under all other circumstances the marks used shall be:
  - i. The module mark, for modules passed at the first attempt.
  - ii. The pass mark (i.e., a mark of 40 for modules up to level 6 and 50 for level 7 modules) for modules passed by discretion, compensation or on reassessment (Convention N58).
  - iii. The best mark, for modules failed after two attempts (Convention H34).
- c) When calculating a final stage average, the marks used shall be:
  - i. The module mark, for modules passed at the first attempt.
  - ii. The pass mark (i.e., a mark of 40 for modules up to level 6 and 50 for level 7 modules) for modules passed at the second attempt (Conventions N58, P59).
  - iii. The second attempt mark for modules failed after two attempts (Convention P59).

Note that stage averages will need to be recalculated after the application of discretion or compensation and after reassessment.

~~334. A student is permitted to proceed from one stage to the next of the programme of study if the student passes, or is deemed to have passed, all the modules in the current stage, or the stage is passed by discretion (exercised under Conventions 4039-4241) notwithstanding failures in specific modules. In this last case, the individual modules are not deemed to have been passed, and any subsequent calculations must use the best actual mark for each. A student may only be permitted to carry fails from Stages 1 or 2 when so permitted by the PEG Committee. In accordance with Conventions 65 and 67, a student not permitted to proceed may be considered for the award of a Higher Education Certificate or Higher Education Diploma.~~

- a) When the stage is passed by discretion, notwithstanding failures in specific modules, the specific modules are not deemed to have been passed, and any subsequent calculations must use the best actual mark for each of the specific modules.

- b) If a student fails up to 20 credits of non-Core modules at Stage 2 after two attempts, it is the normal expectation that the stage will be passed by discretion (in recognition that it is still possible for a student to gain an Honours degree by right). A board of examiners deciding not to exercise discretion in this context must minute a specific reason for not doing so.
- c) A student who has failed a first attempt at one or more modules and has not yet completed a second attempt may not proceed to the next stage unless granted permission by the PEC Committee (in response to the student submitting a PEC form).

In accordance with Conventions 64 and 66, a student not permitted to proceed may be considered for the award of a Higher Education Certificate or Higher Education Diploma.

#### K. Principles of Discretion

*Amendment (underlined) to clarify that examination board can recommend the awarding of a higher award or higher classification of award than that related to average programme mark.*

4039. Notwithstanding the student's results, and without prejudice to the requirements for professional accreditation, the board of examiners may, in its ultimate discretion:

- a) Deem a student to have passed specific modules – including core modules,
- b) Deem a student to have passed the stage of a programme.
- c) Deem a student to have progressed to the next stage of a programme, despite not meeting a specific progress regulation or examination convention.
- d) Recommend a ~~final stage student, or other student eligible to leave the University with~~ for an award, for a higher award or higher degree classification (See Conventions 5655 & 5958). A recommendation for an award, a higher award or higher degree classification is not necessarily limited to the appropriate award or classification related to the student's final programme average.

(...)

#### M. The Award and Classification of Degrees

*Amendment (underlined) to clarify calculation of stage and programme averages (see also H33/34 above) with regards to students not losing their right to an honours degree.*

50. A student is recommended, as of right, for the award of an appropriate Honours degree (according to Convention 54) if all the requirements for the award are met, and

- a) all the modules beyond Stage 1 in the degree programme are passed, or
- b) no more than ~~a maximum of~~ 20 credits beyond Stage 1 are failed and:
- c) the ~~appropriately weighted~~ final programme average, (according to the Degree Programme Regulations) at the end of Stage 3 (calculated as specified in Convention M53) is not less than 40.

(...)

53. The degree programme regulations shall specify the weight to be given to each stage beyond Stage 1. ~~An average shall be calculated to one decimal place for each stage. These averages shall be combined, according to the prescribed weightings, to one decimal place and then rounded to the nearest whole number according to Convention 29. The stage averages (as defined in Convention H33) shall be combined, according to the prescribed weightings, to produce an overall average, which is also rounded to one decimal place. The final programme average is then obtained by rounding the overall average to the nearest whole number according to Convention 29.~~ For a 3-year programme, the weighting Stage 2:

Stage 3 shall be one of 1:1, 1:2; 1:3 unless ULTSEC has approved an exemption. For a 4-year programme (unless Stage 3 is regarded as an intercalating year – see Convention 51) the weighting Stage 2: Stage 3: Stage 4 shall be one of 1:2:2; 1:3:3; or 1:2:3 unless ULTSEC has approved an exemption.

54. Students shall be entitled, as of right, to the class of degree yielded by the ~~weighted average mark for all modules (and all non-modular aggregated assessments) which contribute to degree classification. The mark for a failed module that is used for the purposes of classification (but subject to Examination Convention 49 and 60c (ii)) shall be the best mark obtained by the student on that module.~~ final programme average as defined in Convention M53 and using the appropriate stage average as defined in Convention H33.

55. ~~A final module mark is calculated by using the most recent component marks. In some cases, this may be a combination of second and first attempt component marks, depending on the normal resit arrangements for the module. It is not the case, however, that the best component marks automatically carry forward to the final module mark.~~

#### R. Recommendation of other than an Honours Degree

*Addition (underlined) to clarify that boards of examiners can exercise discretion (even when in reference to core modules) when considering award of HE Certificate or Diploma as requirements of the honours degree do not have to be applied to exit awards.*

64. (...)

Boards of Examiners may use discretion in awarding a Higher Education Diploma in accordance with Conventions K39 – 41. In particular boards may wish to take account of modules that are failed solely because they are core.

66. (...)

Boards of Examiners may use discretion in awarding a Higher Education Certificate in accordance with Conventions K39 – 41. In particular boards may wish to take account of modules that are failed solely because they are core.

#### **Exemptions**

*Section W has been rewritten to mirror changes to Undergraduate Progress Regulations above.*

#### **Foundation Degree Regulations**

*Where appropriate, the Foundation Degree Progress Regulations and Examination Conventions have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Undergraduate sections above.*

#### **Integrated Masters Regulations**

*Where appropriate, the Integrated Masters Examination Conventions have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Undergraduate sections above.*

## Graduate Diploma and Certificate Regulations

Where appropriate, the Graduate Diploma and Certificate Regulations have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Undergraduate sections above.

## Extra Credit, Standalone and Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme Regulations

Where appropriate, the Extra Credit, Standalone and Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme Regulations have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Undergraduate sections above.

## Postgraduate (Taught) Progress Regulations

Where appropriate, the Postgraduate (Taught) Progress Regulations have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Undergraduate sections above. In addition, please note:

### B. Definitions

Addition (underlined) to confirm definition of 'Condoned fail' and clarification of term 'academic year' for online programmes.

(...)

4.

- d) Condoned fail: a decision that a Level 7 module has been failed at the first attempt with a mark in the range 40 – 49, but that a pass on resit is not required in order to maintain eligibility for a Merit or Distinction on a classified programme.

(...)

- n) Postgraduate academic year: the period running from the first day of the first semester to two weeks before the start of the following academic year (September to September; Note: online programmes can have alternative start dates; this necessarily affects the programme end date accordingly.

(...)

## Postgraduate (Taught) Examination Conventions

Where appropriate, the Postgraduate (Taught) Examination Conventions have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Undergraduate sections above. In addition, please note:

### J. Reassessment

Addition and amendment (underlined). A master's student has the right to resit up to 40 credits of a taught programme and more with the Chair of the Examination Board's support. This assumes a 180 credit programme. Clarification given that this does not always apply to programmes with more than 180 credits.

34. A student has the right to one reassessment for each taught module failed at the first attempt provided that:

- a) for a student on a ~~Masters~~ 180 credit master's programme or a postgraduate diploma programme, no more than 40 credits of the taught element failed at the first attempt;

- b) for a student on a Postgraduate Certificate programme, no more than 20 credits of the programme is failed at the first attempt.

NB. A master's programme with more than 180 credits may, in its programme regulations, set a higher number of credits that may be resat if failed at the first attempt, but the proportion of credits available for resit should as much as possible be in line with those on a 180 credit programme. In relation to conventions 34 and 35 a higher number of credits of resit would be allowed in line with the programme regulations.

(...)

#### L. Progression within Taught Postgraduate Programmes

*Amendments. This section has been rewritten to clarify progression issue for students who have failed more than 40 credits at the first attempt.*

38. In addition to a Board of Examiners meeting at the end of a programme, a meeting of the Board will normally be held at the end of the taught component of a Masters programme to consider progression; the Board may also meet to consider progression at other times if appropriate. Internal members of the board of examiners will need to liaise with the external examiner(s) as appropriate.

- a) Students who remain eligible for the entry award on their programme may continue on the programme, subject to the provisions of Conventions J34 and J35.
- b) Students who do not remain eligible for the entry award on their programme, taking account of any rights to reassessment, will not be permitted to continue on the programme.
- c) A Masters student who, at the end of the taught component, is eligible to be reassessed will normally also be permitted to proceed to the dissertation.
- d) A Masters or Postgraduate Diploma student who, when considered at a progression meeting, has failed more than 40 credits at the first attempt and who is not permitted to continue on their original programme, may nevertheless be permitted to be reassessed for the purposes of an exit award; such permission is a matter of discretion for the Board of Examiners. When a student is permitted such reassessment, they will not normally be permitted to continue on their original programme, even if successful in reassessments.

#### M. Discretion

*Addition (underlined). To allow boards, at their discretion, to condone first attempt fails in up to 20 credits of modules with marks between 40 – 49 (10 credits in a PG Cert). These would still count as fails but would not debar a student from gaining a merit or distinction as of right.*

39. Notwithstanding the student's results, and without prejudice to the requirements for professional accreditation, the board of examiners may, in its ultimate discretion:

- a) Deem a student to have passed specific modules – including core modules.
- b) Deem first attempt failures on one or more Level 7 modules on a classified programme to be 'condoned fails', provided that the relevant marks are in the range 40 – 49 and provided that a student does not accumulate more than 20 credits in condoned fails (10 credits for students registered for a Postgraduate Certificate). A condoned fail will be treated as a fail for the purposes of Conventions J34 and K37, but a condoned fail will not diminish eligibility for a Merit or Distinction under Convention P45.
- c) Deem a student to have passed the stage of a programme.



- d) Deem a student to have progressed to the next stage of a programme, despite not meeting a specific progress regulation or examination convention.
- e) Recommend a final stage student, or other student eligible to leave the University with an award, for a higher award or degree classification.

(...)

*In addition, new conventions added to clarify the calculation of stage and programme averages.*

### **Stage and Programme Averages**

42. A Stage average is defined as the weighted average mark over all modules at that stage, where the weighting reflects the credit value of each module. Degree programme regulations may allow for additional credit value for non-modular aggregated assessment. The stage average shall be calculated and rounded to one decimal place. When calculating a stage average the marks used shall be:

- iv. The module mark, for modules passed at the first attempt.
- v. The pass mark (i.e., a mark of 40 for modules up to level 6 and 50 for level 7 modules) for modules passed by discretion, compensation or on reassessment (Convention N44).
- vi. The best mark, for modules failed after two attempts (Convention N44).

Note that stage averages will need to be recalculated after the application of discretion and after reassessment.

43. For programmes with a single stage, the **final programme average** will be obtained by rounding the stage average to the nearest whole number according to Convention 28. For programmes with more than one stage the **overall average** shall be calculated according to the programme regulations and shall also be rounded to one decimal place. The **final programme average** is then obtained by rounding the overall average to the nearest whole number according to Convention 28.

### **Exemptions**

*Section W has been rewritten to mirror changes to Undergraduate Progress Regulations and Examination Conventions above.*

### **Postgraduate Research Masters Progress Regulations**

Where appropriate, the Postgraduate Masters Progress Regulations have been amended to mirror the changes notes in the Postgraduate Taught sections above.

A new Section F. Study Undertaken Outside the University has been added outlining the process to be followed and approval required if a Research Masters student needs to study outside the University.

### **Postgraduate Research Masters Examination Conventions**

Where appropriate, the Postgraduate Masters Progress Regulations have been amended to mirror the changes notes in the Postgraduate Taught sections above and the Doctor of Philosophy Examination Conventions with regard to examination of the Dissertation.

### **Master of Philosophy Degree Regulations and Examination Conventions**

Where appropriate, Master of Philosophy Progress Regulations and Examination Conventions have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Doctor of Philosophy sections below.

## **Doctor of Philosophy Progress Regulations**

### Section C7a: Admission as a Staff Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

A change of wording to C7a from 'A research proposal' to 'A description of proposed research as specified by the Faculty', to provide greater clarity on what staff candidates are expected to provide as the admissions stage.

### Section H: Study Outside the University

Additional note added to indicate that students who are Tier 4 visa holders are required to inform the University if they are studying away from Newcastle as a condition of their visa sponsorship.

### Section J18d: Attendance and Progress

Clarification provided to indicate that students who are Tier 4 visa holders are required to record supervisory meetings throughout their entire registration (in candidature and under examination) as a condition of their visa sponsorship.

### Section J25: Attendance and Progress

Additional text added to emphasise that if a doctoral student is downgraded to MPhil as a result of a progress panel decision, there is no expectation of an upgrade back on to the Doctor of Philosophy.

Other minor wording changes have been made for clarification.

## **Doctor of Philosophy Examination Conventions**

### Section B6: Appointment of Examiners

Additional text added to indicate that the Independent Chair (where appointed) is required to be present for the duration of the oral examination.

### Section B8: Appointment of Examiners

Additional text added to indicate that candidates will be kept informed of the progress of their examination at monthly intervals, should the examination process extend beyond the normal ten week period.

### Section D: Personal Extenuating Circumstances

Addition of a new section to outline how personal extenuating circumstances for PGR students are considered during the examination process.

### Section H42: Provision to the Candidate of Information about Corrections/Revisions Required or Resubmission

Text updated to provide a clearer statement in relation to the requirement for examiners to provide the candidate with detailed feedback and/or statement of required corrections following the oral examination.

Other minor wording changes have been made for clarification.