X. Progress Regulations for Postgraduate (Taught) Programmes

These regulations apply to all postgraduate students registered in academic year 2018/19 (or in the case of C. General Entrance Requirements, are applying during academic year 2018/19).

These regulations shall be understood in conjunction with requirements laid down in the General Regulations and the Examination Conventions of the University, and shall be read together with any examination conventions specific to the relevant programme, as approved by the relevant faculty education committee.

Variations to these regulations, non-standard stage weightings and exceptions to the Qualifications and Credit Framework can only be agreed by University Education Committee (UEC), except where the power is explicitly vested in the relevant Faculty Education Committee (FEC) or Degree Programme Director (DPD) in the regulations themselves.

A. The Qualifications and Credit Framework

1. Taught Postgraduate programmes are aligned with the *Newcastle University Qualifications and Credit Framework* which is available as part of the Quality and Standards Handbook at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/governance/policies/. This Framework sets out the minimum standards for programmes; programme regulations may exceed these minima. Programme structures should be developed in accordance with *The Qualifications and Credit Framework.*

2. The *Newcastle University Qualifications and Credit Framework* conforms fully to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

3. The Framework stipulates that Taught Masters degrees normally consist of a minimum of 180 credits of which at least 150 credits are studied at Level 7. Postgraduate Diplomas consist of a minimum of 120 credits, of which at least 90 credits are studied at Level 7. Postgraduate Certificates consist of a minimum of 60 credits, of which at least 40 credits are studied at Level 7.

B. Definitions

4. These progress regulations shall apply to full-time and part-time taught postgraduate programmes, including Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates. Where the following terms appear they are to be given the meanings assigned below:

    a) **Apprentice**: An employee of a third party or of the University undertaking approved apprenticeship training offered by the University and commissioned by the apprentice's employer.

    b) **Assessment:** A generic term for a set of processes that measure the students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of knowledge acquired, understanding developed, skills gained and attributes

demonstrated. These assessments may include for example, written, aural and oral examinations, essays, poster or professional skills assessment, other course work, dissertations and practical activity;

c) **Class of award**: a means of distinguishing between the differences in achievement by individual students of the intended learning outcomes for a programme. The classification of a postgraduate entry award, i.e. Pass, Pass with Merit *or* Pass with Distinction as defined in the *University Common Scale* for returning marks;

d) **Compulsory module**: a module which a student is required to study;

e) **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.

f) **Core module**: a module which students must pass*;*

g) **Credit**: A quantitative measure of learning effort. The size of a module, measured by reference to student learning time so that for every 10 credits a student is expected to spend 100 hours in a combination of programmed activities, private study and assessment. Credit is normally awarded for the achievement of a set of specified intended learning outcomes;

h) **Degree programme director**: a member of the University who is responsible for the day-to-day management of a degree, certificate or diploma programme;

i) **Degree programme regulations**: the regulations approved by the University for the programme of study for which a student is registered;

j) **Dissertation**: an exercise in research or scholarship forming part of the programme of study for which the student is registered;

k) **Entry award**: an entry award is the award for which the candidate is registered. It is relevant where students are permitted to register for PG Certificates and PG Diplomas, as opposed to the latter merely being available as exit awards (see below) from a Master's programme.

l) **Exit award**: an exit award may be recommended by the Board where a student does not satisfy the requirements of the award for which s/he is registered, but does meet the requirements of an award at the same level, but requiring fewer credits e.g. an MA/MSc student who is not recommended for a Master's award, but is recommended for a PG Certificate or a PG Diploma.

m) **Module**: A discrete component of a programme of study having stated intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning opportunities designed to achieve those outcomes and assessment tasks designed to enable students to demonstrate achievement of the outcomes. Each module has a credit value specified by the programme regulations;

n) **Non-modular aggregated assessment**: assessment additional to the assessments for each module, having the purpose of assessing a student's cross-modular understanding: *Note: all references in these regulations to assessment shall be construed to include both module assessment and non-modular aggregated assessment.*

o) **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.*

p) **Postgraduate Certificate**: a programme comprising 60 credits in line with the University's *Qualifications and Credit Framework*;

q) **Postgraduate Diploma**: a programme comprising 120 credits in line with the University's *Qualifications and Credit Framework*;

r) **Stage**: a sub-division of a programme, for example into a taught element and a dissertation element, which, if present in a programme, must be clearly defined in the individual programme regulations. Where such stages are defined, the requirements relating to progression from one stage to the next must be stated in the programme regulations;

s) **Taught element**: any part of a taught Masters degree programme other than the dissertation.

t) **Taught Masters degree programme**: a programme comprising at least 180 credits of which not less than half and not more than two thirds comprise the taught element and of which not less than one third and not more than a half comprise the dissertation, as outlined in the University's *Qualifications and Credit Framework*;

u) **University Common Scale**: The scale for the return of marks as set out in *Undergraduate Examination Conventions* and *Postgraduate (Taught) Examination Conventions.* The scale defines the range of marks to be given to represent degree classifications, and is designed to ensure consistency and fairness to students.

C. Postgraduate Entrance Requirements

5. An applicant may be approved for admission as a candidate for a Masters degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate by the relevant degree programme director where the applicant:

a) is a graduate of this or another approved University or degree-awarding body or holds other qualifications approved by the relevant dean of postgraduate studies; *and*

b) satisfies such additional requirements for admission as may be set out in the relevant programme regulations or otherwise published by the University and approved by the relevant dean of postgraduate studies.

D. Preconditions to the Award of a Masters Degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate

6. Before being awarded a Masters degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate, a student must

a) register for and make satisfactory progress in the relevant full-time or part-time programme of study as prescribed by the programme regulations; *and*

b) satisfy the examiners under the relevant programme regulations

c) where there are programme specific regulations which define progress leading to the dissertation element of the programme, satisfy these conditions before progressing. Such programme specific regulations shall be approved by the relevant faculty education committee.

E. Patterns of Study

7.   Degree programme directors have discretion to permit a student to commence the programme at the start of Semester 2 and complete the programme in the following academic year.

8.   At the discretion of degree programme directors, a student may be permitted to transfer from full-time to part-time study (and vice versa). This is subject to specific arrangements being agreed by the degree programme director to accommodate the part-time study pattern and should be reported to the board of studies and graduate school administrator.   This is also subject to the student having appropriate immigration status. For international students, advice should be sought from the Visa Team http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/visa/.

9.   Degree programme directors may permit a student to transfer programme during the academic year where programmes are in the same subject area and where there is considerable overlap in the taught modules. Such transfers shall be reported to the board of studies.

   Note: All transfer arrangements are subject to the student having the appropriate immigration status; evidence of appropriate academic qualifications is required by the Home Office and a transfer to another degree programme may affect the validity of the visas of international students. Further advice should be sought from the Visa Team in any case involving an international student http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/visa/.

10. Degree programme directors may permit a student to select modules in substitution for modules specified in the programme regulations. Such permission shall not override the provisions of *General Regulation C* (registration of module choice). All such variations shall be reported to the board of studies.

11. No student may be permitted to select modules of more than 70 credits in either semester one or semester two.

12. No student may be permitted to register for a module that is a substitution for a module previously studied.

F. Attendance and Progress

Length of Study

13. A full-time student on a taught postgraduate programme is normally expected to complete the programme in 1 year and a part-time student on a taught postgraduate programme is normally expected to complete the programme in 2 years.

14. Where there are no programme-specific regulations regarding length of study, the normal maximum time for a part-time student to complete is 4 years.

Satisfactory Progress

15.   The student is required to make satisfactory progress in the relevant programme of study and, during each semester, the student's progress shall be reviewed in all modules by the degree programme director.

16.   Failure to make satisfactory progress may be grounds for:

a) further monitoring the progress of the student, or requiring the submission of written work in addition to that required by the programme regulations where there is a clear academic rationale;

b) delay of the student's attempt at the whole assessment for the module(s) concerned to the August/September resit examinations in the same academic year. Where such a delay is imposed, the student's attempt shall be the second attempt;

c) interruption or termination of the student's programme of study.

Evidence of Failure to make Satisfactory Progress

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

a) failure to attend for interview with the tutor, or other academic staff, as required.

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-personaltutoring-fwk.pdf ;

b) failure to attend for interview with the personal tutor, DPD or other academic staff as required in connection with failure to attend programme of study or failure to make satisfactory progress;

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

d) failure to perform adequately, or satisfy the examiners, in work prescribed for the programme of study;

e) failure to submit at the required time written work prescribed for the taught programme of study (whether or not such work counts for assessment purposes);

f) failure to attend examinations or to satisfy the examiners in the examinations prescribed under the programme regulations; in serious cases provisional examination results may be used as such evidence;

g) failure to attend as required for dissertation supervision, failure to submit evidence of progress as required by the dissertation supervisor or to submit the dissertation by the date stipulated;

h) failure to attend English language assessment and attend in-sessional English language classes as directed by the degree programme director;

i) failure to attend briefings relating to health and safety, especially as they apply to laboratory work, and to pass any assessments in relation to these briefings

that are designed to ensure that students are safe to operate in the environment to which such briefings apply.

For an international student who is in breach of their visa conditions, please refer to General Regulations U73.

Students are expected to acquaint themselves with the attendance and submission requirements for lectures, seminars, tutorials, practicals, laboratory work, language classes, performances, fieldwork and examinations as well as with dissertation supervisions for their programme of study.

Note: Where a student has failed to attend or failed to complete satisfactorily an INTO pre-sessional programme, General Regulation D17 will apply.

Procedure for Dealing with Unsatisfactory Progress

18.　A student whose progress is considered unsatisfactory by the degree programme director shall be notified in writing of the reasons for this opinion, invited to make a written response and given the opportunity of an interview with the director or nominee. Following this notice and any interview, and taking account of all known circumstances, the degree programme director may:

   a) take further action under Regulation F16 (a) or (b);

   b) take further action under Regulation F16 (c) in consultation with Student Progress Service, provided that the student was invited to attend an interview, including notice that the interruption or termination of the student's programme of study was likely to be considered, and advised to bring details of any medical or personal circumstances (with evidence) relevant to the student's progress

Appeals against Penalties for Unsatisfactory Progress

19.　A student appealing against action taken under Regulation F16 may do so by submitting a Level 1 Academic Query within 14 calendar days of the written notification of the action. The Academic Queries and Appeals procedure applies; http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/appeals.htm.

Note. Notwithstanding any ongoing discussion and correspondence with a student about unsatisfactory progress, the University may be obliged to report to the Home Office any International student who has failed to attend lectures, classes or seminars. The report to the Home Office may necessitate termination of the student's studies at the University under General Regulation U.

G. Assessment

20.　There is one final mark for each module but, where module outlines specify, a student may be required to meet a prescribed threshold in specific components of a module in order to be deemed to have passed the module overall. The module outline must indicate components for which such thresholds apply and must make clear the consequence of failing to meet the threshold: either failure in the module with a fail mark returned, or a deferred pass in which the component failure may be redeemed as part of the same attempt. In addition, module outlines may specify 'zero weighted pass/fail assessments', i.e. assessments that do not contribute to the module mark but that must be passed in order to pass the module.

21.　All modes of assessment permitted are outlined in the programme regulations and handbook. Rules to be observed by students regarding, for example, size, form

and submission dates for examinable coursework, also regarding retention and recall of work are specified in the programme handbook.

22.   Any late submission of an assessment or dissertation shall be considered in line with the University's Submission of Work Policy, available at; http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/governance/policies/.

H.   The Award of a Masters Degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate

23.   The *Postgraduate Taught Examination Conventions* detail the performance standards necessary to obtain a Masters degree, postgraduate diploma or postgraduate certificate.

J.   Interruption of Progress

Exclusion for delayed progress

24.   The following students shall be automatically excluded from further study unless given special permission by the PEC Committee. The PEC Committee shall be advised by the Degree Programme Director on any quality and accreditation issues relevant to the degree programme in question and on whether the student has met the learning outcomes of the programme as currently delivered. The PEC Committee shall specifically consider the needs of disabled students where the disability leads to delays in progress and shall take into account any recommendations from the Student Health and Wellbeing Service along with any recommendations arising from the Support to Study Procedure;

   a) a full-time student following a one-year programme who is more than one year in arrears in the programme;

   b) a full-time student following a programme longer than one year who is more than two years in arrears in the programme; *and*

   c) a part-time student who is more than two years in arrears in the programme.

Interruption and resumption of normal progress

25.

   a) Subject to Regulation 24, the degree programme director may give permission for a student to interrupt normal progress within the programme;

   b) When a student resumes normal progress, the student shall proceed with the programme of study only under the regulations then applicable. Any variation in module selection made necessary by the interruption shall be considered as set out in Section E (Patterns of Study), with PEC Committee approval required if assessments need to be varied or set aside.

26.   A student may only be permitted to repeat a period of tuition with the express approval of the PEC Committee. The PEC Committee may also consider the setting aside of previous assessment attempts (See Examination Convention B13)

27.   Any student repeating a period of tuition, either at first attempt or resit, will be required to pay tuition fees for the additional period of registration.

Assessment Requirements for Students Returning after an Interruption of Study

28. Where a student is permitted by the degree programme director to interrupt the programme of study at any time during a stage and is required to resume those studies at the same point during a subsequent academic year, any assessments completed prior to the date of interruption shall be carried forward to the end of that stage.

K. Miscellaneous General Provisions

Approval of Study at Another Institution

29. A student may be allowed to follow an approved course of study at another institution, in whole or part substitution for one or more stages of the programme, in accordance with standing arrangements for collaborative provision in the relevant programme regulations or with the permission of the degree programme director. For international students, this is subject to the student having appropriate immigration status. Advice should be sought from the Visa Team - http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/visa/.

30. Where standing arrangements governing study at another institution are specified in programme regulations, those regulations and the relevant examination conventions shall govern how the student's performance is to be assessed during any such period of study and the manner in which this is to contribute to assessment of the student's overall performance.

31. Where no standing arrangements exist, and a student's period of study at another institution is specifically approved by the degree programme director, the student's performance during this period shall be assessed in accordance with the arrangements approved by the degree programme director in granting permission.

L. Applications from Members of Staff of the University

32. Members of staff of the University may apply to undertake a part-time postgraduate programme in order to enhance their ability to carry out their current or agreed future work within the University provided that they hold an appointment which extends to cover the prescribed period of registration for the programme.

33. The relevance of the programme to the work (or agreed future work) of the member of staff will be determined by the relevant head of school/service and dean of postgraduate studies (or relevant pro-vice-chancellor in the case of staff who are not attached to faculties) before the academic suitability of the applicant is considered by the relevant degree programme director. Appeals against the decision of the head of school and dean of postgraduate studies (or pro-vice-chancellor) concerning the relevance of the programme will be determined by the chair of the Staff Committee.

34. A member of staff may be permitted to register for a postgraduate programme in his/her own school, but in such a case all work must be externally assessed.

35. A member of staff registered for a Masters postgraduate programme shall not normally be permitted to teach or examine in any aspect of the programme or to take part in discussion relating to the assessment of students in the programme.