# ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2026-2027

Academic Council: 29 April 2026

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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 nine sections:

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

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 students, 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 and definitions 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. |
| **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** | 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 UCD Centre for English and Global Languages or the Institute for Chinese Studies and are not located within Schools and/or Colleges.<br><br>Such additional responsibilities are as follows:<br>• Ensure that procedures are in place for the effective design, delivery and assessment of modules<br>• Ensure that requirements of the Extern Examiner Policy have been fulfilled.<br>• 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.<br>• Ensure establishment of such and so many modular examination committees as necessary to fulfil the following responsibilities:<br>o review and agree the grades for modules<br>o ensure the validity of the grades entered by the module coordinator<br>o ensure grades for the modules are reviewed and agreed<br>o 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. |
| **Derogation** | An approved deviation from the Academic Regulations, often due to the requirements of the subject or of a professional, statutory or regulatory body. Derogations should 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. Derogations are requested at the point of programme approval to ensure clarity and cohesion within programme offerings. |
| **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. A report of all applications for Exemptions based on Exceptional Circumstances shall be considered by the Academic Council or its relevant Committee as required. |
| **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. |
| **Governing Board** | All programmes in the University are overseen by a Taught Programme Board, Graduate Research Board, Board of Studies, or Joint Academic Programme Board (all 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. |
| **Intern Examiner** | The Intern Examiner is a person who has been approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee on the nomination of the Head of School. Faculty |

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| | 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.<br><br>The Academic Regulations refer to a range of module types, including research, dissertation, clinical, professional, internship, studio, fieldwork and project. It is the responsibility of each School to determine the nature of the module offered, based on appropriate disciplinary and subject norms, and to apply the Academic Regulations according to the agreed module type. |
| **Module Size** | 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.<br><br>CPD activity may be delivered in modules of varying credit value.<br><br>Dissertation modules shall bear credit in multiples of 5 credits, and may be 15-25 credits in size in undergraduate programmes and 25 credits or higher in graduate programmes. |
| **Policy** | A committee decision or management directive which sets out the official position of the University on any aspect of the institution's activities. University policies may be academic or operational in nature and outline mandatory provisions to enable decision making. The relevant policy, as published in the University Document Library, should be read in tandem with the Academic Regulations. |
| **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. |
| **Requirement** | A statement of minimum standards or expectations e.g. progression requirements, deadlines. |
| **Professional Accreditation** | The University is responsible for the design and validation of its own degree programmes. Where those programmes are also subject to professional |

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>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.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Special Extern Examiner</td><td>The special extern examiner is a person who has been approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee 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.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Student Effort</td><td>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.<br><br>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 Academic Council or its relevant committee.</td></tr>
<tr><td>UCD Level</td><td>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.<br><br>There are five levels, as follows:
<table>
<tr><th>UCD Level</th><th>NFQ Level</th><th>Description</th></tr>
<tr><td>Level 0</td><td>6</td><td>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</td></tr>
<tr><td>Level 1</td><td>7</td><td>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</td></tr>
<tr><td>Level 2</td><td>8</td><td>have demonstrated specialized knowledge and understanding, underpinned by the more</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

| | | | |
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| | | | 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). | | |

# 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 or its relevant committee shall be required to offer programmes leading to awards other than those set out in the University Awards Table for Taught Programmes and for Research Programmes.

**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 terms of reference approved by Academic Council or its relevant committee. A Governing Board may be responsible for more than one programme.

**1.6** A Governing Board's functions in relation to the programmes it governs, and the students registered to these programmes include, but are not limited to:

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, the Governing Board will follow policies and procedures approved by Academic Council or its relevant committee
n) Overseeing and enhancing the academic quality of programmes and the student learning experience
o) Where applicable, ensuring appropriate supervisory arrangements are in place for research students.

In addition to these high-level functions, the specific responsibilities of each Governing Board are outlined in its terms of reference, as approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**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 are as approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**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 the fulfilment of its terms of reference and the effective delivery of the programmes within its remit. The Governing Board retains responsibility and oversight for any such assigned activities.

**1.9** On the delegated authority of Academic Council, a Governing Board shall establish so many Programme Examination Boards, as subcommittees of the Governing Board, as are required for the taught programmes it governs. Programme Examination Boards shall have terms of reference, as approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**1.10** In considering the grades submitted to it, the Programme Examination 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.

## Programme Specification

**1.12** 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.

**1.13** 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);
o) limitations to the application of Recognition of Prior Learning (if applicable); and
p) available exit strategies.

**1.14** 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 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 in the University Awards Table for Taught Programmes and for Research Programmes.

**2.4** With the exception of grade neutral awards, awards are classified based on an award Grade Point Average (GPA).

## 2.5 University Awards Table – Taught Programmes

Information on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), including NFQ Grid Level Indicators, can be found at https://www.qqi.ie/national-framework-of-qualifications.

| | Award Type | Credit Range | Minimum UCD Level Requirements | GPA Award Classification |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NFQ Level 6** | | | | |
| Certificate of Continuing Education | Special Purpose | 5-15 | | |
| Diploma of Continuing Education | Special Purpose | 20-30 | | Greater than or equal to 3.68 ***Distinction*** |
| **NFQ Level 7** | | | | |
| Certificate of Continuing Education | Special Purpose | 5-15 | | |
| Diploma of Continuing Education | Special Purpose | 20-30 | | 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** | | | | Greater than or equal to 2.00 and less than 2.48 ***Pass*** |
| Certificate of Continuing Professional Development | Supplemental | 5-10 | | |
| 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 | |
| Higher Diploma | Major Award | 60-120 | 30 credits at UCD Level 3 or above | Greater than or equal to 3.68 ***First class honours*** |
| Honours Bachelor's Degree | Major Award | 180-360 | 40 credits at Level 3 or above | 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*** |
| **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 |
| 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 | ***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*** |

**2.6** Previously approved award types which are not included in Table 2.5, but are offered by the University, may continue to be offered subject to review by the Academic Council or its relevant Committee. New programmes should only offer those awards listed in Table2.5

**2.7** The University shall provide for aegrotat and posthumous awards in line with policies and procedures approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**Award GPA Rules**

**2.8** 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.

**2.9** 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).

**2.10** 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.

**2.11** Where it deviates from the above award GPA rules, the award GPA rule for an exit award requires the approval of Academic Council or its relevant committee.

# 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. Teaching and assessment must be conducted in line with these term dates. 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.

**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 and extension over more than one trimester is detailed in the module descriptor:

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 10 credits or greater.

b) The module is a professional or work experience module (for example, studio, internship or work practice preparatory module) where the credit value of the module is 10 credits or greater.

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.

## Workload

**3.6** A programme may not require a student to take more than 30 credits per trimester (including elective credit).

**3.7** A student may not register to more than 40 credits in any trimester, to include resits and repeats. Governing Boards may, on a case-by-case basis, approve an exception to this limit where a student is registering to a single-module resit which causes them to exceed 40 credits.

**3.8** Governing Boards shall monitor student workloads. Where, taking into account a student's profile of engagement and supports offered, it is the opinion of the Governing Board that a student's workload is unsustainable, the Governing Board may require that the student's workload is reduced to what it considers to be sustainable levels.

## Programme Structure

**3.9** 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.

**3.10** 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.

**3.11** 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.

## Subjects

**3.12** Subjects are organised to facilitate learning and teaching, and are offered by Schools. 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.

**3.13** All subjects shall have subject extern examiners, appointed in accordance with university policy as determined by Academic Council.

## Modules

**3.14** Schools and Boards of Studies 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.

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

**3.16** Module Coordinators are members of faculty of the University. The Head of School is responsible for the appointment of Module Coordinators and, in exceptional circumstances, may appoint a non-faculty Module Coordinator. The Head of School will provide an annual report of the non-faculty Module Coordinator appointments to the Academic Council or its relevant committee. This report will include the period of appointment of a non-faculty Module Coordinator.

**3.17** 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.

**3.18** The module descriptor shall detail:

a) the School or Board of Studies responsible for the module;
b) the Module Coordinator responsible for themodule;
c) the purpose and overarching content of themodule;
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. Modules of 2.5 credits are permitted at Level 4 or above.
    ii. Research, project, or work experience modules may bear credit in multiples of 5 credits, up to a maximum of 30 credits.
    iii. Dissertation modules shall bear credit in multiples of 5 credits, and may be 15-25 credits in size in undergraduate programmes and 25 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

**3.19** 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

**3.20** 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 or a minor.

**3.21** 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

**3.22** 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.

**3.23** Undergraduate degree programmes by design must allow students to take a minimum of 25 credits of elective modules.

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

**3.25** 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.

**3.26** 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 as required by Academic Council or its relevant committee and adjusted where possible to meet student demand.

## Timetable and Capacity Constraints

**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. Schools and Boards of Studies must provide sufficient module capacity to accommodate repeat students.

## 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. Module dependencies, exclusions and requisites must only be applied exceptionally and for appropriate pedagogical reasons. 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.

## Taught 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 taught degree programmes shall consist of at least one Major. In addition, an undergraduate degree programme may include provision for additional Majors, Minors, 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, 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) Structured Electives – The achievement of a coherent combination of modules, 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. A given module may only be used once whether it be to meet the requirements of a major, minor or structured elective. A student may not be awarded a structured elective in a directly related area to that of their degree. These exclusions are approved in advance by the relevant Governing Board.

## 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. 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 stages. 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 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 the length of a written in-person or online terminal examination shall not exceed two hours. In instances where the length of a written terminal examination must exceed two hours to meet the requirements of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body, this can be approved by the Governing Board and must be detailed in the Module Descriptor. The Academic Council or its relevant Committee may request a report of modules where the terminal examination exceeds the permitted two hours.

**4.12** Module Coordinators must ensure that records of assessment are kept in a safe, accurate and comprehensive manner, in compliance with both established School processes and the University's retention policy and procedures.

**4.13** Module Coordinators must enter 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 or its relevant committee for the final submission of grades for the trimester, whichever comes first.

**4.14** A student is responsible for the academic integrity of any assessment they submit. Module Coordinators shall take all appropriate steps to evaluate 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.

## Grading Overview

**4.15** Assessment in the University shall be graded according to University approved grade scales and procedures.

Where assessment components are objective and quantitative, a suitable numerical scale may be used to establish performance in the component. The outcomes of a module shall be reported as a module grade using the conversion process established by Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**4.16** Grading must 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.

**4.17** The School shall ensure that an appropriate process is in place for grading all forms of assessment. The process shall ensure that all involved in the delivery of the module have an appropriate role in grading.

**4.18** To assure consistency and fairness assessment processes should include internal moderation processes. Where appropriate, this may include second grading. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that there are internal moderation processes in place.

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 the assessment 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 or its relevant committee.

**4.19** Grading of assessments shall be undertaken by an approved intern examiner. Academic Council may delegate the approval of intern examiners to a committee or governing board as appropriate. Where delegated, an annual report will be provided to the Academic Council indicating the number of internal examiners approved.

**4.20** The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that the provisional component grades determined by Module Coordinators for individual modules are subsequently validated by the School within such a period of time as the Academic Council or its relevant committee may specify. Provisional grades are indicative only and should be communicated to students in line with the policies and procedures approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**4.21** Each School will establish a School Modular Examination Committee (SMEC). This Committee is responsible for the review, completeness and validation of all grades for each module provided by that School and may make appropriate adjustments, in accordance with the policies and procedures approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee. 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 SMECs.

A SMEC must have the range of expertise required to properly examine all modules considered by the Committee and should comprise the module coordinators, the Heads of Subject (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 SMEC as soon as practicable after the completion of the module and its assessments and within such a period of time as the Academic Council or its relevant committee may specify.

## Grading of Assessment Components

**4.22** The following regulations apply to assessment components of a module, as outlined in the assessment strategy for that module. Assessment component grades cumulatively contribute to the overall module grade awarded to the student.

The following scale should be used for assessment component grades.

| GRADE SCALE FOR ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS | |
|---|---|
| **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 |

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.

| GRADE SCALE FOR PASS/FAIL ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS | |
|---|---|
| **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** |

**4.23** Where a student receives a provisional failing grade for an assessment component, a student may be offered an additional opportunity for that assessment component prior to confirmation of the component grade by the SMEC. Such an additional assessment opportunity is referred to hereafter as a component repeat (in-module) and must be provided for in the module descriptor.

Where a component repeat (in-module) is availed of, a passing grade awarded for submitted work shall be reduced in accordance with the following scale.

| 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-** |

Where a student receives a failing grade for a component repeat (in module), the original provisional failing grade for the assessment component is retained.

**4.24** A School may require that an assessment activity of a module must be passed to pass that module. Such an activity is described hereafter as 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) a component repeat (in-module) shall be provided prior to confirmation of the grade by the School Modular Examination Committee; and

c) the use of must pass components and the approach to, and timing of, component repeats for those components, must be specified in the module descriptor.

## Grade Scales – Module Grades

**4.25** 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.

The following scale should be used for module grades.

| GRADE SCALE FOR 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 |

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.

| GRADE SCALE FOR PASS/FAIL MODULES | | |
|---|---|---|
| **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** |

Where a module grade is awarded as part of a remediation attempt at a module, the grade scales and suffixes outlined in section 5 of the Academic Regulations shall be used.

## Exceptional Grades Scale

**4.26** The following grades may also be approved by the Programme Examination Board to signify particular circumstances or outcomes. This grade scale applies to overall module grades.

| Module Grade | Grade Point | Description |
|---|---|---|
| **AU** | **Neutral** | Audit: 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. |
| **WN** | **Neutral** | Withdrawn: 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** | Incomplete Must Pass (temporary): may be returned at the discretion of a School or Board of Studies when the following criteria are met:<br>a) a student has passed overall the assessments associated with a module, but has not satisfactorily completed a "must-pass" component of assessment;<br>b) the assessment component is specified in the module descriptor as a must pass component (see section 4.24); and<br>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.<br><br>Credit will not be awarded unless the must-pass component is 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:<br><br>a) The student satisfactorily completes the must-pass component within the prescribed time. The credit, final grade and the full grade point associated with that grade are awarded; or<br>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. |
| **IA** | **Incomplete** | Incomplete Assessment (temporary): may be returned at the discretion of a School or Board of Studies when the following criteria are met:<br>a) the module is a clinical teaching module, a field-based module, applied research module, or a work placement; and<br>b) where a student has been unable to complete a component due to lack of availability of clinical samples, required facilities, staff involved in supervision, or the field-based nature of the component of assessment.<br><br>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:<br><br>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;<br>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. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **IX** | **Neutral** | Incomplete (extenuating circumstances): 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:<br>● a student has been unable to satisfactorily complete a component (or components) of assessment; and<br>● 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.<br><br>The student must complete the component (or components) of assessment or complete some equivalent assessment(s) set by the School, at the earliest reasonable opportunity, but within two trimesters of the initial attempt.<br><br>Where the assessments set by the School are attempted within two trimesters of the initial assessment opportunity, but the student receives a lower grade than their original attempt, the original grade will stand.<br><br>Where the student does not complete some or all of the required assessments within two trimesters of the initial assessment opportunity, the Governing Board 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. If no alternative process is initiated, 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.<br><br>A Governing Board may, in exceptional circumstances, choose to extend an IX grade beyond two trimesters. Such extensions may only be granted for a prescribed period of time deemed appropriate by the Governing Board, and with an agreed strategy for module completion. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **IH** | **Incomplete** | Incomplete Hold (temporary): returned on the recommendation of a School and approved by the Programme Examination Board, where the following criteria are met:<br><br>● all assessment opportunities for the module have been provided to the student; and<br>● the module grade is temporarily unavailable due to the implementation of University procedures or processes, such as those that relate to discipline or complaints; or due to approved inter-institutional agreements with different grading timelines.<br><br>The module grade must be confirmed and captured in university systems as soon as possible and no later than the end of the subsequent trimester. |

## Assessment Feedback

**4.27** 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.

**4.28** 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.

**4.29** Students have a responsibility to consider feedback given on their work, to seek to understand it, and to act on it.

**4.30** 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 Module Completion and Remediation

**5.1** 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 Examination Board.

**5.2** 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:

b) is deemed to have passed that module or combination of modules;
c) is awarded credit;
d) is exempt from further assessment of those learning outcomes; and
e) may not repeat the module or resit the assessment.

**5.3** Where a student receives a failing grade (that is, has been awarded a grade of FM, NM, or ABS) they may:

a) select another module that is compatible with fulfilling the programme outcomes; or
b) make a further attempt to pass the module, called a module remediation attempt.

### Module Remediation

**5.4** The following options for module remediation are available.

**5.5** **a) In-module Resit:** 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 Examination Board if an in-module resit is provided for in the module descriptor.

i) Where a student passes an in-module resit attempt it shall be graded as follows:

| GRADE SCALE FOR IN-MODULE RESIT ATTEMPT | | |
|---|---|---|
| **MODULE GRADE** | **GRADE POINT** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **PR** | **2.0** | Passing Module Grade for Resit Attempt |

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

**b) 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. Re-attendance 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. If a student, for any reason, does not avail of the resit at the time scheduled by the University, the student must then undertake a repeat.
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.

| GRADE SCALE FOR MODULE RESIT ATTEMPT | | |
|---|---|---|
| **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 |

**c) 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** |

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.

# 6 Programme Progression and Completion

## Introduction

**6.1** 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

**6.2** 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.

**6.3** 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.

**6.4** A student may progress to the next stage without completing the previous stage (an incomplete stage) if approved by the Governing Board and when the following criteria are met:

a) the credits required by the student to complete the incomplete stages do not exceed 10 credits;
b) the student has satisfied the progression requirements detailed in the programme specification.

**6.5** 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.

**6.6** A Governing Board may grant an exemption to a student from sections 6.4 (b) and 6.5 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.

**6.7** 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.

**6.8** 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.

**6.9** In exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the relevant Governing Board, a student who formally exits a programme prior to its completion may be eligible for another award. Such awards must be listed on the University Awards Table and must be approved programmes of the University. A student who has obtained an exit award at the same NFQ level as their original programme of registration cannot be readmitted to their original programme, unless otherwise permitted by University policy.

## Continuation and Readmission

**6.10** In supporting a student's journey, a Governing Board shall review the academic performance of a student where:

a) the student fails to remediate a failed module after three remediation attempts (this does not include the initial attempt) or
b) the student fails to achieve any additional standards for acceptable performance and progression for the programme as defined in the programme specification.

**6.11** Where a student's performance is deemed to be academically unacceptable by a Governing Board, the Governing Board shall consider the case, in accordance with the University's regulations, policies and procedures relating to continuation. The Governing Board will 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 the Governing Board, they may be awarded another award, or their registration shall be discontinued.

**6.12** Where a Governing Board receives an application to admit or readmit a person who was previously discontinued or who has withdrawn, the Governing Board shall determine whether the person is or is not eligible to be admitted or readmitted to the programme.

**6.13** Where a student is readmitted to a programme 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.
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.

## Completion

**6.14** A student is deemed to have completed a programme on the first occasion when they have:

a) demonstrated achievement of the programme outcomes;
b) accumulated sufficient credit to meet the requirements of the programme;
c) are compliant by subject and level for the relevant award;[4] and
d) completed the requirements described in the programme specification.

**6.15** Award GPA is calculated according to the method specified in the programme specification and confirmed at the next relevant Programme Examination Board.

**6.16** The graduation of a student marks the final completion of their programme. An Award GPA may not be altered following graduation.

**6.17** 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

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

## 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). Additional regulations for the Professional Doctorates are in Section 8, MD regulations for Professional Doctorates are in section 9, which should be read in conjunction with Section 7. 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 student 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.

**7.2** University Awards Table – Research Programmes

| | Award Type | NFQ Level | Registration Period | Taught Credit Requirements |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Master's Degree | Major Award | NFQ Level 9 | 3-6 trimesters (FT)<br>6-12 trimesters (PT) | No taught programme requirement |
| Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) | Major Award | NFQ Level 10 | 9-12 trimesters (FT)<br>15-18 trimesters (PT) | Minimum 30 taught credits |
| Doctor of Medicine Degree (MD) | Major Award | NFQ Level 9 | 6 trimesters (FT)<br>12 trimesters (PT) | Maximum 20 taught credits |
| Doctor of Governance Degree (DGov) | Major Award | NFQ Level 10 | 12-18 trimesters (PT) | Minimum 90 taught credits |
| Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation Degree (DVMS) | Major Award | NFQ Level 10 | 9-12 trimesters (FT) | Minimum 20 taught credits |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Doctor of Educational Psychology Degree (DEdPsych) | Major Award | NFQ Level 10 | 9 trimesters (FT)<br>15 trimesters (PT) | Minimum 60 taught credits |
| Doctor of Clinical Psychology Degree (DPsychSc) | Major Award | NFQ Level 10 | 9 trimesters (FT) | Minimum 60 taught credits |

**7.3** Primary responsibility for the (i) approval of research degree students (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 (RSP);
b) Transfer Assessment Panel for PhD students and for Research Masters students who apply to transfer to PhD;
c) Research Degree Examination Committee.

**7.5** Members of the Research Studies Panel must

a) Have regular contact with the research degree student;
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.

## Admission Requirements

**7.6** A student seeking admission to a course of study and research leading to a PhD or Research Master's degree must fulfil one of the following criteria:

a) The student has obtained a minimum of an upper second-class degree or equivalent in a relevant honours Bachelor's degree;
b) The student has obtained a relevant Master's degree;
c) In certain circumstances, the student 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. These criteria are considered non-standard admission requirements.

**7.7** In all cases, the student is nominated by their proposed Principal Supervisor. A nominator shall propose a student, and the Head(s) of School shall support a nomination and make a recommendation for admission of the student to the relevant School Committee, when

they are satisfied that:

a) The student is appropriately qualified and has the basic skills and competencies required to embark upon a research degree;
b) The student 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; the proposed topic of research is appropriate for the degree and congruent with the research capacity and expertise of the Principal Supervisor;
e) The resources are available to support the proposed research activity;
f) 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 student to the research programme rests with the relevant School Committee for standard admissions. Non-standard admission applications must be recommended by the School to the relevant Governing Board for approval.

## Registration Period

**7.9** The period of registration for the Research Master's degree is normally two years. The student must be registered for a minimum of three trimesters and a maximum of six trimesters for a full-time student and a minimum of six and a maximum of 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 a PhD degree is normally four years. The student must be registered for a minimum of nine trimesters and a maximum of twelve trimesters for a full-time student and a minimum of fifteen trimesters and a maximum of eighteen trimesters for a part-time student. Retrospective registration is not permitted.

**7.11** In certain exceptional circumstances, a student may be permitted to present for the degree of Research Master's or 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 Research Master's or 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 that do not complete the requirements for the Research Master's/PhD degree within the permitted maximum time, must apply to the Governing Board, presenting justification, for permission to extend their registration on the programme beyond the prescribed period of registration allowed by regulations.

## Research Degree Supervision for all Research Degrees

**7.13** The Principal Supervisor has primary responsibility for the academic supervision of the research degree student. Where appointed, the Co-supervisor(s) supports the Principal Supervisor in the academic supervision of the student. A research degree student must actively engage with their supervisor(s) on an ongoing basis.

**7.14** The Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s) 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 faculty of the University, who has been specifically approved to act as a Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s) by the relevant Governing Board, on the recommendation of a School, and whose name has been entered on the Register of Approved Adjunct and Visiting Supervisors. If appointed as Principal Supervisor, a Co-supervisor who is a permanent member of faculty of the University must be 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 adjunct or visiting staff supervisor is unable to continue to supervise the research;

c) Or a full-time member of faculty on a temporary contract which spans the students registration period. If appointed as Principal Supervisor, a Co-supervisor who is a permanent member of faculty of the University, must be 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 students programme of study exceeds the duration of the initial Principal Supervisor's contract subject to the approval of the relevant Governing Board;

d) Or an independently funded Research Fellow with a contractual obligation to act as a Principal Supervisor or Co-supervisor, on a temporary contract which spans the student's registration period who has been approved to act as Principal Supervisor/Co- supervisor by the relevant Governing Board. If appointed as Principal Supervisor, a Co-supervisor who is a permanent member of faculty of the University, must be 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 Governing Board.

**7.15** It is the responsibility of the Principal Supervisor to guide the student 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 every effort to secure alternative arrangements for the supervision of the student with minimal delay, including, where required, recommending the appointment of a new Principal Supervisor to the relevant Governing Board. Where alternative arrangements cannot be secured, the Head of School will submit a report with their recommended course of action to the relevant Governing Board.

**7.17** The research for the degree shall largely be carried out under the direct supervision of UCD approved supervisor(s), which may include short research visits (one trimester or less) to other institutions. If the research is to be carried out elsewhere for more than one continuous trimester, and the student remains under the general supervision of their UCD approved supervisor(s) working with the External Supervisor, this is considered a split-site research degree arrangement and the prior approval of the Governing Board must be sought.

**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 more than one continuous 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 from that organisation has not already been identified, 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(s).

**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 relevant School committee will formally constitute a Research Studies Panel (RSP) within the first trimester of the student's registration. The panel comprises the Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s) 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 Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s). The purpose of the RSP is to provide advice, monitor the progress of the student, and support the supervisor(s)-student relationship. The School committee 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. Membership of the student's RSP and Stage Transfer Assessment Panel should not normally overlap. Any overlap of a student's RSP and Stage Transfer Assessment Panel requires the prior approval of the relevant Governing Board.

**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 and Co-supervisor(s) 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** All graduate research students must satisfactorily complete research integrity training and students admitted after 31st August 2024 must satisfactorily complete research integrity training in advance of their Stage 1 to Stage 2 Transfer Assessment.

## 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 students 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 will normally 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 for all Research Degrees

**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 inform 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 PhD 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 PhD programme, the Head of School or nominee will establish a Transfer Assessment Panel to assess the progress of the student and their competence and capacity to complete a doctorate. The Transfer Assessment Panel must have the experience and disciplinary expertise to conduct the assessment. The Transfer Assessment Panel will base its judgement on:

a) Supporting documentation from the student as determined by the School;
b) Review of the student's RPDP from the most recent RSP meeting;
c) A written progress report from the Principal Supervisor; and
d) An interview with, and presentation by, the student.

**7.39** The Transfer Assessment Panel may interview the Principal Supervisor.

**7.40** The Transfer Assessment Panel will make one of the following recommendations to the Governing Board based on the evidence provided:

a) Admit the student to Stage 1 of the PhD programme;
b) Admit the student to Stage 2 of the PhD programme;
c) Do not admit the student to the PhD programme.

## Progression in PhD

**7.41** The Head of School or nominee 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 Head of School or nominee will establish a Stage Transfer Assessment Panel or Panels to assess the progress of students 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 faculty of the University at least one of whom shall be a permanent member of faculty. The Panel may include a member of the adjunct or visiting staff of the University who has been specifically approved to act as a supervisor and is included on the Register of Adjunct

/Visiting Supervisors. The student's Principal Supervisor and/or Co-supervisor(s) will not be a member of the Panel. Membership of the student's Stage Transfer Assessment Panel and RSP should not normally overlap. Any overlap of a student's RSP and Stage Transfer Assessment Panel requires the prior approval of the relevant Governing Board.

**7.44** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will base its judgement on:

a) Supporting documentation from the student as determined by the School;
b) Review of the student's RPDP from the most recent RSP meeting;
c) For students admitted after 31st August 2024, a formal record of completion of research integrity training;
d) A written progress report from the Principal Supervisor; and
e) An interview with, and presentation by, the student.

**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 or;
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); This option is only available on a maximum of two occasions after which, option (ii) or (iii) must be recommended;
    ii. The student should apply to transfer to another graduate programme utilising, where appropriate, any credits already accumulated within the doctoral programme;
    iii. In line with the University's Continuation Policy and Procedures, a recommendation be made to the Governing Board that the student's registration be discontinued.

**7.46** The Governing Board will either approve the Stage Transfer Assessment Panel recommendation; request that a Stage Transfer Assessment Panel reconsider their recommendation or, following consultation with the Stage Transfer Assessment Panel, 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 Head of School or nominee may recommend one or more additional formal assessments of progress and competence within Stage 2 of the structured PhD to the relevant Governing Board, or such an assessment may be a normal element of a PhD programme. The Head of School or nominee will recommend the nature and timing of any such assessment.

## Responsibilities of Research Degree Students

**7.48** Students 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** Students 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 student 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 student'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 Principal Supervisor has made suitable arrangements for a student to submit a thesis presented in an alternative format, a student 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.

**7.53** The student 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. Where appropriate, the extent to which a candidate has contributed to collaborative work included in the thesis will be described. Similarly, if Generative AI has been used to support the conduct of any of the research presented in the thesis and/or the preparation of the thesis itself, this will be articulated within the thesis.

**7.55** The thesis will be accepted for examination by the University when:

a) The Principal Supervisor confirms, through the University examination system, that the research has been carried out and the final draft of the thesis, as submitted, has been prepared for examination under their guidance. Where such a confirmation is, in the opinion of the student, unreasonably withheld, the student 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 student. 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. The research described in the thesis has been conducted in compliance with relevant UCD policies. A confirmatory statement to this effect must be submitted with the thesis;

c) The student has met all requirements outlined in the programme specification as set out by the Governing Board including, in the case of PhD students, a required minimum of 30 taught credits that have been awarded, or approved through recognition of prior/concurrent learning. [1]

**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 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 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 the Academic Council or its relevant committee for approval.

a) The Extern Examiner should be a recognised expert in the area of research of the thesis as evidenced in the submitted curriculum vitae of the proposed special Extern Examiner.

b) 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.

c) 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. Adjunct /Visiting staff may not chair the Examination Committee. A member of the student's Research Studies Panel may act as Chair of the Examination Committee. Where the student is a full-time member of faculty or staff of the University, or recognised college of the University, there must be a second Extern Examiner. A second Extern Examiner may also be appointed where the Governing Board considers it appropriate.

[1] As of September 2026, the most relevant policies are those included in the extended thesis declaration; the Academic Integrity, the Research Integrity and the Research Degree Examination policies.

**7.59** 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.

**7.60** The Principal Supervisor or Co-supervisor(s) may not be a member of the Research Degree Examination Committee. The Principal Supervisor or Co-supervisor(s) may be invited to attend the *viva voce* examination as an observer, with the consent of the Examination Committee and the student.

**7.61** 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

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

### Confidentiality

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

### *Viva Voce* Examination

**7.64** Students 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.

**7.65** 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.

**7.66** The Extern Examiner(s) shall play the major role in the *viva voce* examination.

### Research Degree Examination Committee Recommendation

**7.67** 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 student's performance in the *viva voce* examination. The Degree Report, which shall be submitted by the Chair of Examination Committee to the Academic Council or its relevant committee, shall include a recommendation to:

a) Award degree – no revisions required;
b) Award degree – revisions required;
c) Revise thesis and submit for re-examination;

d) Do not award degree – recommendation that the student transfer to an appropriate graduate programme;
e) Do not award degree.

**7.68** The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the student 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. The Academic Council or its relevant Committee can accept the recommendation of the Examination Committee or can ask the Examination Committee to reconsider its decision.

### Unanimous Recommendation to Award the Degree

**7.69** 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.

**7.70** In the case of PhD students, the examiners should also indicate whether, in their opinion, the thesis, in whole or in part, is worthy of publication. For PhD students, 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.

**7.71** Where, in the opinion of the examiners, revisions to the thesis are required, the Chair of the Examination Committee (or nominee – normally the Intern Examiner) shall be responsible for ensuring that such revisions have been made to the thesis before award of the Research Degree is approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**7.72** 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 revisions are made. The degree shall not be conferred until such revisions have been satisfactorily completed and a copy of the final thesis submitted as required by the regulations below.

### Revise Thesis and Submit for Re-examination

**7.73** 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

**7.74** Where the examiners recommend that the degree not be awarded, 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 and identifying the areas of weakness which led to the decision not to recommend the award of the degree.

**7.75** 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

**7.76** 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

**7.77** Where no unanimous decision is reached, 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 7.67) is appropriate.

**7.78** A student 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

**7.79** A student 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.

### Submission of Final Thesis

**7.80** 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.

**7.81** All issues relating to intellectual property will be subject to the University's practices and policies.

## 8. Regulations for Professional Doctorate Degrees

**Additional regulations on research programmes in UCD are also detailed in Section 7 of this document.**

**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 student 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 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, on behalf of the professional doctorate programme include:

a) Day to day management of the programme;
b) Approval of Professional Doctorate degree students onto the programme, that have met the requirements of the Professional Doctorate degree Programme;
c) Oversight of the research;
d) Approval of the membership of the Research Studies Panel;
e) Nomination of the Thesis Examination Committee;
f) Monitoring the progress of the Professional Doctorate degree students;
g) Consulting with faculty and staff involved in the delivery of the programme.

**8.4** The Governing Board, on the delegated authority of Academic Council or its relevant committee, has primary responsibility for:

a) Approval of Professional Doctorate degree students onto the programme, whose qualifications are non-standard upon nomination by Programme Director;
b) Oversight of Professional Doctorate degree students onto the programme;

c) Oversight of Supervisor(s), the Research Studies Panel and the outcomes of any progression assessments for Professional Doctorate degree students.

**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;
b) Transfer Assessment Panel;
c) Thesis Examination Committee.

**8.6** Members of the Research Studies Panel must:

a) Have regular contact with the research degree student;
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.

8.7.1 **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.

8.7.2 **Professional Practice:** The student is required to demonstrate that they have extended knowledge and skills within their professional environment.

8.7.3 **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 C.

**8.9** A nominator shall propose a student, and the Head(s) of School must support a nomination and make a recommendation for admission of the student to the relevant Governing Board. The decision to admit the student 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.

## Professional Doctorate Degree Registration Period

**8.11** The period of registration for a Professional Doctorate degree is between nine and twelve trimesters depending on the programme. The student must be registered for a minimum of nine trimesters and a maximum of twelve trimesters for a full- time student and a minimum of fifteen trimesters and a maximum of eighteen trimesters for a part-time student where part time registration is allowed. Retrospective registration is not permitted.

**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(s) supports the Principal Supervisor in the academic supervision of the student. A research degree student must actively engage with their supervisor(s) on an ongoing basis

**8.14** The Principal Supervisor/Co-Supervisor(s) 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;

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 relevant Governing Board , on the recommendation of a School, and whose name has been entered on the Register of Approved Adjunct and Visiting Supervisors. If appointed as Principal Supervisor, a Co-supervisor, who is a permanent member of faculty of the University must be 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 Adjunct or Visiting staff supervisor is unable to continue to supervise the research;

c) Or a full-time member of faculty on a temporary contract which spans the students registration who has been approved to act as Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor by the Governing Board. If appointed as Principal Supervisor, a Co-supervisor , who is a

full-time member of faculty, must be 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 original Principal Supervisor's contract subject to the approval of the relevant Governing Board

d) Or an independently funded Research Fellow with a contractual obligation to act as a Principal Supervisor or Co supervisor on a temporary contract which spans the students registration who has been approved to act as Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor by the Governing Board. If appointed as Principal Supervisor, a Co-supervisor , who is a full-time member of faculty, must be 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 original Principal Supervisor's contract subject to the approval of the relevant Governing Board. It is the responsibility of the Principal Supervisor to guide the student to conduct their research with integrity and in accordance with the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University and applicable legislation.

**8.15** 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 every effort to secure alternative arrangements for the supervision of the student with minimal delay, including, where required, recommending the appointment of a new Principal Supervisor to the relevant Governing Board. Where alternative arrangements cannot be secured, the Head of School will submit a report with their recommended course of action to the relevant Governing Board.

**8.16** 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 the research is to be carried out elsewhere for more than one continuous trimester, but the student remains under the general supervision of the Supervisor(s). This is considered a split site research degree arrangement.

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

## External Supervisor

**8.18** If a research student is based for more than one continuous 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.

**8.19** 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(s).

**8.20** 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.

**8.21** 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

**8.22** The Programme Director, on behalf of the professional doctorate programme will formally constitute a Research Studies Panel (RSP) within three trimesters of the student's registration (full-time or part-time). The panel comprises of the Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s) 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(s). The purpose of the RSP is to provide advice, monitor the progress of the student, and support the supervisor(s)-student relationship. The Programme Director 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. Membership of the student's RSP and Stage Transfer Assessment Panel should not normally overlap. Any overlap of a student's RSP and Stage Transfer Assessment Panel requires the prior approval of the relevant Governing Board.

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

**8.24** The duties and obligations of the Principal Supervisor and Co-supervisor(s) may not be delegated.

## Professional Doctoral Degree Programme Stages

**8.25** **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 five trimesters from the date of registration and by a part-time student within seven trimesters from the

date of registration.

**8.26** **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.

**8.27** All professional doctorate students must satisfactorily complete research integrity training. and students admitted after the 31st August 2024 must compete research integrity training in advance of their Stage 1 to Stage 2 Transfer Assessment.

## Research and Professional Development

**8.28** 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).

**8.29** 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 student on a regular basis, but at least twice in the first year and at least once per year thereafter.

## Progression in the Professional Doctorate

**8.30** The Head of School or nominees 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.

**8.31** The Head of School or nominee 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.

**8.32** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel must have the experience and disciplinary expertise to conduct the assessment. The Panel should normally consist of three members of faculty of the University at least one of whom shall be a permanent member of faculty. The Panel may include a member of the Adjunct or Visiting staff of the University who have been specifically approved to act as supervisors and are included on the Register of Adjunct /Visiting supervisors. The student's Principal Supervisor and/or Co-supervisor(s) will not be a member of the panel. Membership of the student's Stage Transfer Assessment Panel and RSP should not normally overlap. Any overlap of a student's Stage Transfer Assessment Panel and RSP requires the prior approval of the relevant Governing Board.

**8.33** The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will base its judgement on:

a) Grades achieved in taught modules;
b) Supporting documentation from the student as determined by the professional doctoral degree programme;
c) Review of the student's RPDP; from the most recent RSP meeting;
d) For students admitted after 31st August 2024, a formal record of completion of research integrity training;
e) A written progress report from the Principal Supervisor and Co-supervisor(s) if relevant; and
f) An interview with, and presentation by, the student.

**8.34** 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); This option is only available on a maximum of two occasions after which, option (ii) or (iii) must be recommended;
   ii) The student should apply to transfer to another graduate programme utilising, where appropriate, any credits already accumulated within the doctoral programme;
   iii) In line with the University's Continuation Policy and Procedures, a recommendation be made to the Governing Board that the student's registration be discontinued.

**8.35** The Governing Board will either approve the recommendation of the Stage Transfer Assessment Panel; request that a Stage Transfer Assessment Panel reconsider their recommendation or, following consultation with the Stage Transfer Assessment Panel, make a decision, which differs from the recommendation. Where the latter occurs, it will be reported to the Academic Council or relevant sub-committee.

**8.36** 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 Students

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

**8.38** Students 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

**8.39** Examination of Taught Components: Credit for taught modules is awarded after the student has met the stated learning outcomes of the module as determined by the successful completion of the relevant assessment.

**8.40** 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.

**8.41** 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 student'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

**8.42** Professional Doctorate degree students must be examined through a *viva voce* examination by a Professional Doctorate Examination Committee.

**8.43** The examination of the thesis element of the Professional Doctorate Degree Programme should follow procedures outlined in Regulations for Research degrees, (Section 7 of the UCD Academic Regulations).

**8.44** The Extern Examiner for Professional Doctorate degree students 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 Extern Examiner shall usually be for a period of three years and the examiner may examine more than one student in any given year.

# 9 Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD)

**Additional regulations on research programmes in UCD are detailed in Section 7 of this document**

**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 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 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 students 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, and the Governing Board on delegated authority of the Academic Council or its relevant committee. 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 at professorial level 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, 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) Approve the admission of students to the MD programme;

c) Approve the appointment of a Principal Supervisor and any Co-supervisor(s);

d) Approve the membership of the Research Studies Panel;

e) Monitor the progress of students registered to the MD degree and arrange formal mid-programme assessment and report the outcome to the Governing Board;

f) 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;

g) Oversee and co-ordinate the conduct of the MD Examination Committee.

**9.6** The Governing Board, shall:

a) Oversee the admission of students to the MD programme;
b) Oversee the appointment of Principal Supervisor and, where applicable, Co- supervisor(s);
c) Oversee the membership of the Research Studies Panel;
d) 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;
e) Work with the Clinical Research Degree Committee to develop guidelines and good practice in the structure and delivery of the MD programme;
f) Work with the Clinical Research Degree Committee to enhance MD studies and the MD student experience.

**9.7** 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 MD students who apply to transfer to PhD;
c) MD Examination Committee.

## Admission Requirements, Application Procedures and Registration for the MD Degree

**9.8** A student seeking admission to the MD programme must hold a primary medical degree such as MB BCh BAO or equivalent.

**9.9** A nominator shall propose a student, 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 student 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.

**9.11** Students who do not complete the requirements for the MD degree within the maximum time permitted must apply to the Governing Board with the recommendation of the Clinical Research Degree Committee presenting justification for permission to continue within the programme beyond the prescribed period of registration.

## Research Supervision for the MD Degree

**9.12** The Clinical Research Degree Committee will approve the appointment of a Principal Supervisor and any Co- supervisor(s) of the student's research. If the Principal Supervisor is not a medically qualified individual, at least one Co-supervisor should be medically qualified. The Principal Supervisor has primary responsibility for the academic supervision of the research degree student. Where appointed, the Co-supervisor(s) supports the Principal Supervisor in the academic supervision of the MD student. A research degree student must actively engage with their Supervisor(s) on an ongoing basis.

**9.13** The Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s) will be an active researcher in the broad area of the student's research topic, with a record of peer-reviewed publication of international standing, and will normally hold an MD or PhD degree and be one of the following:

a) A permanent member of the faculty of the University, or

b) 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 approval of the Governing Board, and whose name has been entered on the Register of Approved Adjunct and Visiting Supervisors. If appointed as Principal Supervisor, a Co-supervisor who is a permanent member of faculty of the University must be identified in advance of the student commencing their studies. The Co- supervisor(s) will assume the responsibilities of the Principal Supervisor in the event that the adjunct or visiting staff supervisor is unable to continue to supervise the research.

**9.14** Where a student is carrying out research for their MD degree in an entity not affiliated to UCD, for more than one continuous trimester, a member of staff of that organisation must be appointed as an External Supervisor.

**9.15** An External Supervisor must be approved by the Governing Board on the recommendation of the Clinical Research Degree Committee and their name entered on the Register of Approved External Advisors. All such appointments will be noted by Academic Council or its relevant committee. An External Supervisor may not replace a Principal Supervisor or Co- supervisor.

**9.16** An External Supervisor must:

a) Be deemed by the relevant Governing Board to be appropriately qualified with sufficient professional academic, research and supervisory experience to assist in supervision, and

b) Be a member of the student's Research Studies Panel;
c) Be made aware of the University's Academic Regulations, policies and procedures by the Clinical Research Degree Committee.

**9.17** 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.

**9.18** Where a Principal Supervisor retires or resigns from the staff of the University, 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 make every effort to secure alternative arrangements for the supervision of the student with minimal delay including, where required, the appointment of a new Principal Supervisor. Where alternative arrangements cannot be secured, the Head of School will submit a report with their recommended course of action to the relevant Governing Board.

## Research Studies Panel

**9.19** The Clinical Research Degree Committee formally constitutes a Research Studies Panel (RSP) within the first trimester of the student's registration. The panel will comprise the Principal Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s) and at least one (but normally no more than three) advisers. The RSP will appoint a Chair independent of the Supervisor/Co-supervisor(s). 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 Clinical Research Degree Committee when appointing advisers.

**9.20** Research Studies Panel Advisers may include faculty, Adjunct, Visiting or Research staff or relevant professional staff of the University or external to the University.

**9.21** The duties and obligations of the Principal Supervisor and Co-supervisor(s) may not be delegated.

## MD Degree Structure

**9.22** The MD degree is awarded by the Academic Council or its relevant committee 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.

**9.23** 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.

**9.24** Students on the MD programme admitted after 31 August 2019 must satisfactorily complete Research Integrity training.

**9.25** 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 applying to transfer to an appropriate degree programme.

### Research and Professional Development Plan

**9.26** The student, supported by the Research Studies Panel, must document their educational, training and personal and professional development needs. This, in conjunction with the proposed programme of research will generate the student's Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP).

### Progression in the MD Degree

**9.27** The Clinical Research Degree Committee will establish appropriate processes and procedures to monitor the progress of students registered to the MD degree including the submission of a formal mid-programme report from each student outlining the context, methodology and outcomes of the research to date.

**9.28** Students registered to the MD degree may apply to 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 requirements which apply for transfer from the Research Masters to the PhD degree.

### Responsibilities of MD Degree Students

**9.29** Students are required to fulfil all responsibilities that may be reasonably expected for research degree students outlined in the Regulations for Research Degrees (Section 7).

### Preparation and Submission of the MD Thesis for Examination

**9.30** The examination for the degree of MD is based on a description of the student's research in a thesis describing the context, nature, methodology and outcomes of the research. The MD Thesis must contain material of a publishable/peer reviewed standard.

**9.31** The preparation and submission of the MD thesis should follow procedures outlined in Regulations for Research Degrees (Section 7).

## Appointment of the MD Examination Committee

**9.32** An MD Examination Committee will be established to assess the student 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. 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 will be a recognised expert in the area of research of the thesis as evidenced in the curriculum vitae of the proposed Extern 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 normally be a member of the faculty. Members of the RSP may not act as an Intern Examiner.

**9.33** Where the student for the MD degree is a full-time member of the faculty of the University, there must be a second Extern Examiner. A second Extern Examiner can be appointed for other MD students where the Governing Board considers it appropriate.

## Conflict of Interest

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

## Confidentiality

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

## *Viva Voce* Examination

**9.36** MD 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 MD students. The procedure for such a *viva voce* examination shall be equivalent to that employed for a PhD *viva voce* examination (Section 7).

## MD Examination Committee Recommendation

**9.37** The Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall arrange for the exchange of reports from each examiner, which will 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 forwarded to the Academic Council or its relevant Committee, and shall include a recommendation to:

a) Award the MD degree – no revisions required;
b) Award the MD degree – revisions required;
c) Revise thesis and submit for re-examination;
d) Do not award the MD degree – recommendation that the student transfer to an appropriate graduate programme;
e) Do not award the MD degree.

The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the student 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

**9.38** Where the examiners unanimously recommend award of the degree, the Chair of the MD Examination Committee shall submit the Joint Degree 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.

**9.39** Where, in the opinions of the examiners, revisions to the thesis are required, the Intern examiner of the MD Examination Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that such revisions have been made to the thesis before the award is approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

**9.40** Where the examiners recommend the student to revise the thesis and submit for re-examination, 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.

### Unanimous Recommendation not to Award the Degree

**9.41** 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 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.

## No Unanimous Recommendation

**9.42** 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 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.

**9.43** The Academic Council or its relevant committee will decide, on the basis of the Degree Reports 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 which outcome is appropriate.

**9.44** A student is entitled to a copy of the examiners' Degree Reports following the authorisation or otherwise of the award of the degree by the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

## Appeals

**9.45** A student 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.

## Submission of Final Thesis

**9.46** 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.

**9.47** All issues relating to intellectual property will be subject to the University's practices and policies.

# Appendix A

**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 2.22**5** would be reported as 2.23, and a grade point of x.xx4 is rounded down, so that a grade of 2.22**4** 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 penultimate stage are multiplied by three and quality points for modules from the final stage are multiplied by seven, 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 GPAcredits**.

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 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** |

# Appendix B

## Grade Neutral Trimesters and Stages and Award GPA

**B.1** It is stated in section 2.9 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<br>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% |

## Remediation Worked Examples

The Academic Regulations relating to 'Assessment, Grading and Feedback' (Section 4) and 'Module Completion and Remediation' (Section 5) apply to all taught modules and all taught students, irrespective of stage or mode of study. The below worked examples intend to provide additional clarity to faculty members when making decisions about the design of their assessment strategy, the application of exceptional grades (such as IX), and the design of their remediation strategy for taught modules.

Further supporting information on Assessment can be found in the UCD Assessment Code of Practice.

Abbreviations are used throughout as follows:

- School Modular Examination Committee (SMEC)
- Programme Examination Board (PEB)
- Certified Additional Considerations Grade (IX)
- Additional Considerations Approvals Committee (ACAC)
- Exceptional Change of Grade (ECOG)

These scenarios are intended to be illustrative examples, but they do not account for all assessment scenarios or outcomes. Therefore, this document should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the Academic Regulations, which provide additional information and clarification.

In all instances, students are not permitted to reattempt an assessment component that they have already successfully completed in order to improve their grade. The below scenarios refer only to where a student has been unsuccessful in their attempt (or has not attempted) an assessment component.

## Completion of an Assessment Component with Certified Additional Considerations *(Ref. Section 4 of the Academic Regulations)*

This section outlines different approaches to completing an assessment component where a student has been granted Certified Additional Considerations. In this circumstance, the student is not considered to have 'failed' the assessment component. There is no grade penalty where a student subsequently completes the assessment component.

| Scenario | When is this approach most appropriate? | Description | What happens next? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Completion of an assessment component with Certified Additional Considerations within the trimester - Local Resolution** | For assessment components that are scheduled well in advance of the confirmation of final grades and where a local resolution is approved by the ACAC and carried out by the Module Coordinator. | a. Student does not complete an assessment component (e.g. essay, mid-trimester report).<br>b. The student has applied for and been granted certified additional considerations by the ACAC. Therefore, the student has not 'failed' the assessment component . Rather, they have an outstanding assessment component to complete. The ACAC approves that a 'local resolution' is the most appropriate approach.<br>c. The Module Coordinator liaises with the student to arrange an alternative assessment, prior to the confirmation of grades by the PEB. | a. If the student successfully completes the assessment component, the Module Coordinator enters their passing grade for the component into University systems. No grade penalty is applied. No further action is required.<br>b. If the student completes the assessment component, but does not meet the learning outcomes, a fail grade will be entered for the component.<br>c. If the student does not attempt the assessment component, they will receive an ABS grade.<br>d. If a local resolution proves to be unfeasible due to continuing |

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| | | | additional considerations, the student can refer their case back to the decision-making committee, in this case the ACAC, seeking the application of an IX grade. |
| **Completion of IX Grade Following a Programme Examination Board** | For assessment components or terminal examinations where there is insufficient time within the trimester (i.e. ahead of the PEB) for the student to complete the assessment, or where the student is unable to complete the assessment within the agreed IX completion time. | a. Student does not complete an assessment component (e.g. essay, terminal exam).<br>b. The student has applied for and been granted extenuating circumstances by the ACAC and an IX grade is applied. The student has not 'failed' the module. Rather, they have yet to complete the module.<br>c. An IX grade is entered into University systems. | a. The student must complete the assessment component within one of the two subsequent trimesters. This includes the autumn, spring and summer trimester.<br>b. If the student successfully completes the assessment component, the Module Coordinator enters a passing grade for the component into University systems through an ECOG. No grade penalty is applied.<br>c. If the student does not successfully complete or attempt the assessment component, they will receive a fail grade or an ABS grade for the component and the overall module grade will be calculated on the basis of the grades entered for each assessment component. |
| **Completion of IX Grade Beyond Two Trimesters, as** | The extension of an IX grade beyond two trimesters should be used sparingly, and only in | a. In this case, an IX grade has previously been entered into University systems. | a. If the student successfully completes the assessment component within the agreed timeframe, the Module Coordinator enters a passing grade |

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| **approved by a Governing Board** | instances where a student's certified additional considerations are ongoing - noting that an alternative university process might better support the student (e.g. Leave of Absence, Fitness to Continue in Study, Retrospective Withdrawal). | b. Normally, the student would be required to complete the assessment component within one of the two subsequent trimesters. This includes the autumn, spring and summer trimester.<br>c. However, the student's certified additional considerations have continued and the Governing Board agrees to extend the IX grade for a further period of time e.g. one or two trimesters. | for the component into University systems through an ECOG. No grade penalty is applied.<br>b. If the student does not successfully complete or attempt the assessment component, they will receive a fail grade or an ABS grade for the component and the overall module grade will be calculated on the basis of the grades entered for each assessment component. If this results in a fail grade for the module, the module remediation strategy now applies. |

## Completion of Assessment Components *(Ref. Section 4 of the Academic Regulations)*

This section outlines different approaches that can be taken to support a student in completing an assessment component *prior* to the confirmation of grades at the SMEC.

The completion of assessment components applies where a student has *not been granted extenuating circumstances, and has not successfully completed an assessment component prior to the confirmation of final grades.* A grade penalty will apply where a student is offered an additional chance to complete an assessment component within the trimester.

| Scenario | When is this approach most appropriate? | Description | What happens next? |
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| **Providing an Additional Opportunity to Complete an Assessment Component** | Where the Module Descriptor states that students who have been unsuccessful in an assessment component will be offered an additional opportunity to complete the component prior to the meeting of the SMEC, called a "component repeat (in-module)".<br><br>This option is available for an individual assessment component and prior to the confirmation of any final grades. | a. Student does not complete (or attempts and is unsuccessful in) an assessment component (e.g. essay, quiz), resulting in a provisional failing grade for the assessment.<br>b. Based on the assessment strategy, the student is entitled to an additional opportunity to complete the assessment component, prior to confirming any grades at the SMEC.<br>c. This attempt is referred to as a "component repeat (in-module)". | a. If successful in this attempt, the student will have their grade slightly reduced for this assessment component (as per the grade scale in 4.23).<br>b. If the student is unsuccessful in this attempt, the original provisional failing grade will stand. |
| **Completing a 'must-pass component' of a module** | When an assessment component has been designated in the Module Descriptor as a 'must-pass component' (Reg. 4.24). | a. Student does not complete (or attempts and is unsuccessful in) a **must-pass** assessment component, resulting in a provisional failing grade for the component.<br>b. As the assessment component has been | a. If successful in this attempt, the student will have their grade slightly reduced for this assessment component (as per the grade scale in 4.23).<br>b. If the student is unsuccessful in this attempt, the original provisional fail grade will stand. |

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| | | designated 'must-pass', the Module Coordinator *is required* to give the student an additional opportunity to complete the must-pass component, prior to confirming any grades at the SMEC.<br>c. This attempt is referred to as a "component repeat (in-module)". | c. As the component has been designated as 'must-pass', the student has now failed the module overall.<br>d. The student must now *remediate* the module in accordance with the module remediation strategy. |

## Remediating a Failed Module *(Ref. Section 5 of the Academic Regulations)*

This section outlines the different approaches that may be used in a module's remediation strategy.

The term 'remediation' and the application of the remediation options outlined in Section 5 of the Academic Regulations apply only where the student has received a provisional or confirmed 'fail' grade *for the module overall.*

| Scenario | When is this approach most appropriate? | Description | What happens next? |
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| **Application of an 'in-module resit'** | Prior to the confirmation of module grades at the PEB. | a. Student has received a provisional fail grade for the module. | a. If the student passes this attempt, their overall grade for the module will be 'PR', and will be capped at a grade point of 2.0. |

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| (*Regulation 5.5a)* | | b. The module descriptor states that where a student receives a provisional fail grade for the module overall, they may avail of an additional attempt to pass the module prior to the confirmation of their final grade at the PEB.<br>c. The Module Coordinator liaises with the student on the completion of the required assessment component(s). | b. If this student is not successful in this attempt, the original fail grade will stand and will be confirmed at the PEB. The only option remaining to the student after this is to re-attend and repeat the module when it is next offered. |
| **Application of a 'resit' assessment** *(Regulation 5.5b)* | When the Module Coordinator has provided for this remediation option within the Module Descriptor, and following confirmation of module grades at the PEB.<br><br>A 'resit' is not permitted when an 'in-module resit' is offered, or when the module is offered in one of the two subsequent trimesters.<br><br>A 'resit' can only be undertaken once on each offering of a module. | a. Student has received an overall fail grade for the module.<br>b. The Module Descriptor does not allow an 'in-module resit', described above. Therefore, the fail grade is confirmed at the PEB and communicated to the student.<br>c. The module is not available within the next two trimesters, and a resit opportunity is provided for in the Module Descriptor. The student does not need to re-attend the module. | a. The student undertakes the agreed resit, which may or may not be the same as the original assessment.<br>b. If successful, the student will receive a P(R) grade, capped at a grade point of 2.0.<br>c. If unsuccessful in this attempt, the student will receive a F(R), NM(R) or ABS(R) depending on the circumstances. The only option remaining to the student after this is to re-attend and repeat the module when it is next offered. |

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| **Application of a 'repeat'** *(Regulation 5.5c)* | When the Module Coordinator has provided for this remediation option within the Module Descriptor, and following confirmation of module grades at the PEB.<br><br>A 'repeat' is the only further option available when a student has failed an in-module resit or a resit.<br><br>If an in-module resit is not offered, and the module is available within two trimesters of the initial attempt, a repeat is again the only option available. | a. Student has received an overall fail grade for the module. This grade is confirmed at the PEB.<br>b. The Module Descriptor does not allow an 'in-module resit' and the module is available again with two trimesters. Therefore the only option is for the student to re-attend and repeat the module in full. | a. The student re-attends and repeats the module. If successful, they will receive a slightly reduced grade, suffixed with an 'R' as per the grade scale in 5.5c.<br>b. If unsuccessful, the remediation strategy of the module applies. |

# Appendix C

## Specific Admission Requirements for each Professional Doctorate Degree Programme

### C.1 Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation Degree (DVMS)

A student 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 student 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.

### C.2 Doctor of Educational Psychology Degree (DEdPsych)

A student 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 students.

Students 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 student must also provide a thesis proposal as part of the application for admission directly into Stage 2.

### C.3 Doctor of Clinical Psychology Degree (DPsychSc)

A student 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 students.

### C.4 Doctor of Governance Degree (DGov)

A student 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.

## Appendix D

### Role Description: Programme Director (Taught Programmes)

**Appointed by:** Governing Board under which the relevant programme is governed.

**Term of Appointment:** Three years. Programme Directors will be eligible for re-appointment.

**Eligibility:** Any member of faculty may be appointed as a Programme Director.

**Reporting to:** Chair of the Governing Board.

**Scope of Role:** A Programme Director may be associated with a single programme, multiple programmes, a stage of a programme, a stream or aspect of a programme that is deemed, by the Governing Board, to require an academic lead as described in this document.1

**Role Description:** The role of the Programme Director is to oversee the academic management of the programme in question, encompassing, at a minimum, the below principal duties and responsibilities.

*Programme Management*

- Develop the overall programme structure, including modules, learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment strategies, and graduate attributes associated with the programme.
- Oversee, from an academic perspective, the alignment of the programme with the University's policies and procedures.
- Undertake regular curriculum review.

*Faculty and Staff Coordination*

- Serve as the primary academic liaison between the Governing Board and faculty/academic staff involved in the programme, facilitating effective collaboration on academic matters.
- Liaise as applicable with Heads of Subject.

*Academic Oversight*

- Monitor the assessment and feedback strategies of the programme.
- Provide information to the Governing Board, or its relevant subcommittee (including the Programme Examination Board), on the assessment, grading and performance of students registered to the programme.
- Monitor and maintain standards for student satisfaction and engagement, addressing any arising issues with constituent modules.
- Support the Governing Board in making decisions on individual admissions as applicable, including applications for RPL, to the relevant programme.

*Student Welfare and Progress Monitoring*

- Identify and address academic concerns affecting students registered to the programme(s) under their remit, escalating issues and/or providing reports to the Governing Board as appropriate. This includes, but is not limited to:
    - Proactively managing student workload in collaboration with other roles e.g. Programme Manager, Student Advisers;
    - Monitoring and updating the Governing Board on the application of University policies relating to student capacity;
    - Engage in a regular review process to support and evaluate a student's progress throughout the programme.
    - Engage with student representatives to identify and address general concerns of students under their remit.
    - With due consideration for confidentiality, and where permitted, engage with student representatives in the case of a specific student issue/concern.

*Recruitment and Outreach*

- Liaise with marketing managers and provide information on the programme for the purposes of student recruitment.
- Participate in outreach events.

*Quality Assurance and Enhancement*

- Make recommendations in relation to quality assurance and programme improvement to the Governing Board to maintain and enhance educational outcomes.
- Provide documentation and review programmes as necessary in response to the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.
- Where required, identify and liaise with Extern Examiners.

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[1] Where a programme director is appointed to a stage / aspect / stream of a programme, it is expected that the duties and responsibilities outlined in this document will be applied (where relevant) to the stage / aspect / stream for which that programme director is responsible.

# Appendix E

**Exceptions to Academic Regulations for Overseas Provision**

The UCD Academic Regulations outline the regulations that are applicable to all UCD taught and research programmes and to all students, 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. Appendix E covers the application of these regulations to programmes offered by collaborative provision with a partner at the partner University.

## Appendix E.1: Exceptions to Academic Regulations for China Joint Colleges

Appendix E.1 details adjustments to specific UCD Academic Regulations to meet the requirements of collaborative programme delivery at UCD's three joint colleges in China.

UCD collaborates with three partner universities (PUs) to run the following three joint international colleges:

- Beijing-Dublin International College (BDIC)
- Chang'an Dublin International College (CDIC)
- Guangzhou Dublin International College (GDIC)

Students registered to all programmes have dual registration with UCD and a PU.

| **Exceptions to Academic Regulations for China Joint Colleges** | |
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| **1.** | **Governance** |
| Reg. 1.6 | In order to align with UCD Academic Governance, and respect the contractual agreements with UCD's PUs the following has been agreed with UCD Governing Boards:<br>i) those responsibilities of a Governing Board listed under Item 1.6, with the exception of any items covered by (e), approving the structure and content of the programme and any special regulations relating to the programme, which require UPB approval, are delegated to the respective joint colleges Academic Committees.<br>ii) the Academic Committee will report annually, to the Governing Board, in respect of actions and decisions taken under delegated authority |
| **3.** | **Academic Calendar, Modules and Programme Structure** |
| Reg. 3.2 | The Joint College's (JC's) academic sessions are structured into two semesters, Semester 1 and Semester 2 (each of 19-20 weeks duration). |
| Reg. 3.3 | For each Joint College the PU sets, and publishes in advance, the semester dates. |
| Reg. 3.4 | The teaching on taught programmes will generally be in Semester 1 and Semester 2. |

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| Reg. 3.5 | The teaching, learning and assessment activities associated with a module or other learning experiences will be completed during a single semester unless one of the following criteria are met and extension over more than one semester is detailed in the module descriptor:<br><br>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 10 credits or greater.<br><br>b) The module is a professional or work experience module (for example, studio, internship or work practice preparatory module) where the credit value of the module is 10 credits or greater.<br><br>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.<br><br>d) The module requires block delivery. |
| Reg. 3.6 | A programme may not require a student to take more than 35 credits per semester. |
| Reg. 3.7 | A student may not register to more than 10 extra credits, including repeats but excluding resits, in any semester.<br><br>The Joint College Academic Committee may, on a case-by-case basis at a student's request, approve an exception to this limit, up to a maximum of 45 credits per semester, where this would allow the student to complete their studies in that academic year. |
| Reg. 3.14 | UCD Schools and PU Schools or Colleges offer individual modules to programmes. They are responsible for the design, delivery and assessment of these modules and the quality of the teaching provided in these modules. |
| Reg. 3.16 | UCD Module Coordinators are members of faculty of the University (UCD) appointed by their Heads of Schools.<br><br>PU Module Coordinators are members of faculty of their University, appointed by their Heads of Schools or Colleges. |
| Reg. 3.17 | UCD Schools shall approve, and review as necessary, a module descriptor for each module it offers according to the requirements set down by Academic Council.<br><br>PU Schools or Colleges shall approve, and review as necessary, a module descriptor for each module it offers following their own institutional requirements. |

| 4. | Assessment Grading and Feedback |
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| Reg. 4.1 | This section outlines the regulations with reference to assessment, grading, and feedback. UCD and PU module coordinators, College, 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. |
| Reg. 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 semester or semesters. |
| Reg. 4.6 | A module should make use of an appropriate range of methods of assessment. Where end- of-semester examination is used as a means of assessment, an appropriate balance between formal end-of-semester examinations and in-semester assessment should be achieved. |
| Reg. 4.7 | In developing formative assessment, UCD Module Coordinators shall ensure that students have opportunities to:<br>a) self-monitor and/or learn from other students;<br>b) receive feedback; and; practice assessments, and see examples of unfamiliar tasks – e.g. software, virtual learning environment (VLE) functionality, question type – prior to submission.<br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.8 | The assessment strategy for a UCD 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.<br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.11 | The volume of assessment should be appropriate to the learning outcomes and the length of a written in-person or online terminal examination shall not exceed two hours. In instances where the length of a written terminal examination must exceed two hours to meet the requirements of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body, this can be approved by the Academic Committee and must be detailed in the Module Descriptor. The Academic Council or its relevant Committee may request a report of modules where the terminal examination exceeds the permitted two hours. |
| Reg. 4.12 | UCD Module Coordinators must ensure that digital records of assessment are kept in a safe, accurate and comprehensive manner, in compliance with |

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| | both established School processes and the University's retention policy and procedures.<br><br>The PI Academic Affairs Office must ensure that records of assessment are kept in a safe, accurate and comprehensive manner. |
| Reg. 4.13 | UCD Module Coordinators must enter 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 or its relevant committee for the final submission of grades for the trimester, whichever comes first.<br><br>PI modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.14 | A student is responsible for the academic integrity of any assessment they submit. UCD Module Coordinators shall take all appropriate steps to evaluate 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.<br><br>PI modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.15 | Assessment of UCD modules shall be graded according to University approved grade scales and procedures.<br>Where assessment components are objective and quantitative, a suitable numerical scale may be used to establish performance in the component. The outcomes of a module shall be reported as a module grade using the conversion process established by Academic Council or its relevant committee.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.17 | UCD Schools shall ensure that an appropriate process is in place for grading all forms of UCD assessment. The process shall ensure that all involved in the delivery of the module have an appropriate role in grading.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.18 | For UCD modules, to assure consistency and fairness assessment processes should include internal moderation processes. Where appropriate, this may include second grading. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that there are internal moderation processes in place.<br><br>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 the assessment 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 or its relevant committee.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.19 | For UCD modules, grading of assessments shall be undertaken by an approved intern examiner. Academic Council may delegate the approval of intern examiners to a committee or governing board as appropriate. The |
| | Governing Board will provide an annual report to Academic Council or its relevant committee indicating the number of internal examiners approved.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |

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| Reg. 4.20 | The UCD Heads of Schools and the PU Vice Principal for Academic Affairs (a PU faculty member dedicated to the joint college) are responsible for ensuring that the provisional component grades determined by Module Coordinators for individual modules are subsequently validated by their Schools within such a period of time as the Academic Committee may specify. |
| Reg. 4.21 | Each UCD School and the PU will establish a School Modular Examination Committee (SMEC). This Committee is responsible for the review, completeness and validation of all grades for each module provided by that School/PU and may make appropriate adjustments, in accordance with the policies and procedures approved by the each institutions relevant committee.<br><br>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 SMECs.<br><br>A SMEC must have the range of expertise required to properly examine all modules considered by the Committee and should comprise the module coordinators, the Heads of Subject (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 SMEC as soon as practicable after the completion of the module and its assessments and within such a period of time as the Academic Committee may specify. |
| Reg. 4.22 | The following regulations apply to assessment components of a UCD module, as outlined in the assessment strategy for that module.<br>Assessment component grades cumulatively contribute to the overall module grade awarded to the student.<br><br>The scale in Reg. 4.22 should be used for assessment component grades. PU modules adhere to<br><br>their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.23 | Where a student receives a provisional failing grade for an assessment component, in a UCD module, a student may be offered an additional opportunity for that assessment component prior to confirmation of the component grade by the SMEC. Such an additional assessment opportunity is referred to hereafter as an in-module repeat of an assessment component and must be provided for in the module descriptor.<br><br>Where an in-module repeat of assessment component is availed of, a passing grade awarded for submitted work shall be reduced in accordance with the scale in Reg. 4.23.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.27 | For UCD modules, students shall receive feedback on both formative and summative assessments. Feedback shall:<br>a) reflect the discourse and pedagogy of the subject;<br>b) be sufficient and frequent enough to support future learning;<br>c) be specific and encourage the development of autonomous learning;<br>d) be presented so that students can act on it and adapt their approaches; and enable students to set and achieve short-term and long-term goals.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |

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| Reg. 4.28 | For UCD modules, 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.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |
| Reg. 4.30 | For UCD modules, 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.<br><br>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.<br><br>PU modules adhere to their related institutional regulation. |