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REGULATIONS FOR MODULAR MASTERS DEGREES

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

REGULATIONS FOR MODULAR MASTERS DEGREES

These regulations govern the award of a number of types of taught Masters degrees, such as MA, MBA, MDes, MFA, LLM, MRes and MSc (*including the MA in Education, for which there are no longer separate regulations*).

References in the following paragraphs to a 'project' refers to the "synoptic research or scholarly activity ([The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, October 2014](#)) resulting in the presentation of a body of work, as agreed at validation. This could include, for example, a traditional Masters dissertation or creative works.

General

- 1 These regulations, in addition to Modular Master's Degrees, include the award of the exit qualifications of Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) and Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) - but see also the Appendix to the *Regulations for Postgraduate Certificates and Postgraduate Diplomas*.
- 2 Candidates may qualify for the Cardiff Metropolitan University award of a Modular Masters Degree under these regulations upon successful completion of an approved modular programme of study provided *either* on a full-time *or* on a part-time basis at Cardiff Metropolitan University, or at another institution approved by Cardiff Metropolitan Unit for this purpose. The academic content of a part-time scheme shall be equivalent to that of a full-time scheme.
- 3 The conditions for entry to modular Masters, Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma Programmes are given in the Academic Handbook entries [Admission to Taught Postgraduate Programmes](#) and [Admission to Taught Postgraduate Programmes: Advanced Standing](#)

Enrolment

- 4 All candidates must enrol as students of Cardiff Metropolitan University at the commencement of study and pay the appropriate fee.
5. Where the option exists, students wishing to transfer enrolment from a generic programme title (e.g. MBA) to a programme title including a named specialism (e.g. MBA in Project Management) must submit this intention in writing to Academic Registry three months before the date of the final Examination Board at which the award will be made. Otherwise, the specialism **will not** be recorded on the degree certificate.

Change to Mode of Study/Attendance

- 6 Full-time and part-time postgraduate taught candidates may be permitted to change their mode of attendance prior to the start of their degree programme, provided that it does not contravene rules governing Visas, Sponsorships or Studentships.
- 7 Full-time and part-time candidates may change their mode of attendance within three months of initial enrolment with the approval of the Dean of School or his/her nominee.
- 8 Requests to transfer mode of attendance after three months following initial enrolment must be considered as a special case by the Regulations and Special Cases Committee. Candidates wishing to change their mode of study after the three month deadline above would normally be advised to suspend studies and return the following session and/or seek an extension to candidature. However, with the express support of the Dean of School or his/her nominee a case may be submitted to the Regulations and Special Cases Committee for a change of mode from full-time to part-time or *vice versa* in exceptional circumstances.

Structure

- 9 A candidate shall follow a modular programme of study (see '*Modular Programmes Framework*'), commencing at the appropriate starting date approved for the programme. The programme of study shall include a project within the required period.
- 10 Except as in paragraph 11 below for the MRes, a candidate shall be eligible for the award of a modular Masters degree upon successful attainment of not fewer than 180 credits at Level 7 (former HE Level M), between 40 and 60 of which shall be for the project. A candidate may also be required to complete a period or periods of professional training or practical experience, as specified in the approved Programme Document.
- 11 For the degree of Master of Research (MRes), the total value of the modules shall be equal to 180 credits at Level 7 (HE Level M), with no fewer than 60 credits of taught modules and at least 100 credits comprising the project (e.g. dissertation). For example, a programme might consist of 70 credits (taught modules) and 110 credits (project).
- 12 Except as in 13 below, the structure of Masters degrees shall be based on modules with credit values in multiples of 10 credits. There is no minimum credit value specified for modules, but Cardiff Metropolitan University's expectation is that the majority of modules on a programme shall have a minimum credit value of 20 credits.

- 13 In exceptional cases, 5 or 15 credit modules shall be permitted if agreed at validation and where there is sound justification for such values (e.g. Professional Body requirements, CPPD).
14. There is no requirement for standardization across programmes of the credit value of Research Methods modules, but the minimum credit value of a Research Methods module shall be 20 credits.

Exit Awards

- 15 Except as in paragraph 16 below for the MRes, a candidate who is admitted to a Master's programme but is subsequently unable, or is not permitted, to progress to completion may, depending upon the number of credits attained at the time of exit, qualify for one of the following awards of Cardiff Metropolitan University:

Postgraduate Certificate

- (i) Except as in (ii) below, a Postgraduate Certificate is awarded to candidates who have successfully completed a minimum of 60 credits at CQFW Level 7 (HE Level M).
- (ii) In exceptional cases, a Postgraduate Certificate may be awarded to candidates who have successfully completed a minimum of 60 credits, of which a maximum of 20 credits may be at CQFW Level 6 (HE Level 3), and a minimum of 40 credits must be at CQFW Level 7 (HE Level M).

Postgraduate Diploma

- (i) Except as in (ii) below, a Postgraduate Diploma is awarded to candidates who have successfully completed a minimum of 120 credits at CQFW Level 7 (HE Level M).
- (ii) In exceptional cases, a Postgraduate Diploma may be awarded to candidates who have successfully completed a minimum of 120 credits, of which a maximum of 30 credits may be at CQFW Level 6 (HE Level 3), and a minimum of 90 credits must be at CQFW Level 7 (HE Level M).

- 16 A candidate who is admitted to an MRes programme but is subsequently unable, or is not permitted, to progress to completion but has successfully completed not fewer than 60 credits at Level 7 (HE Level M) may qualify for the exit award of the Cardiff Metropolitan University Postgraduate Certificate. The Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits at Level 7) is not available as an exit award on an MRes programme.

- 17 Unless otherwise agreed at validation and specified in a Programme Document, an exit award of Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate

Diploma shall be awarded in recognition of achievement of any 60 or 120 credits respectively on the programme; in some cases a candidate may be eligible for an academic named exit award but not professional body recognition if the latter requires a prescribed combination of modules.

- 18 Where a candidate has no further retrieval opportunity, any exit award to which they are entitled shall be awarded automatically by the Examination Board in recognition of the credit achieved, without the candidate having to request it.
- 19 Where retrieval opportunities still exist, Examination Boards' decisions shall be to offer the opportunity to retrieve the failed modules by a stipulated deadline or to accept the relevant exit award; the award of the exit award shall be automatic if the candidate fails to take up the retrieval opportunity by the stipulated deadline.
20. Wherever feasible, the majority of exit awards (PgCert and PgDip) available on Masters programmes shall be validated and established also as stand-alone awards. [This will enable students, in the context of CPPD especially, who just wish to obtain a PgCert (for example) to enrol on the PgCert, rather than having to enrol on the Masters programme and be exited from the Masters programme with a PgCert.]

Assessment

- 21 All assessment shall be in accordance with Cardiff Metropolitan University's [Assessment Regulations](#).
- 22 Modules shall be examined individually, as prescribed in the approved Programme Document. The examination of a module may take the form of an unseen written examination paper or set projects or other programme work assignments. A candidate may also be required to demonstrate satisfactory completion of any period of professional training or practical experience.
- 23 The examiners may require a candidate to undergo an oral examination (*viva voce*) at any stage of the programme.
- 24 There shall be an Examination Board at the point where credit has been accumulated (i.e. normally the first 120 credits), the purpose of which shall be to award the credit and exit awards where appropriate and to have discretionary powers to allow students to continue with their studies.
- 25 The pass mark for a module shall be 50%.
- 26 Compensation for failure in assessment shall be in accordance with Cardiff Metropolitan University's [Assessment Regulations](#).

- 27 A candidate who is absent from the whole or part of a written examination or who fails to submit work for assessment by the published submission deadline shall be deemed to have failed that particular assessment element and thus the module in question. In the case of illness or other exceptional circumstances the Examination Board may grant an extension to submission dates or permit a supplementary examination to be held (see [Assessment Regulations](#) and [Mitigating Circumstances Procedure](#))
- 28 Candidates may be permitted up to a maximum of two attempts to retrieve a module (three attempts at a module overall) at the discretion of the Examination Board and within the overall time-limits for completion of studies. Re-assessment shall be in accordance with Cardiff Metropolitan University's [Assessment Regulations](#). No candidate may retrieve a module until and unless permitted so to do by an Examination Board. At the discretion of the Examination Board, a candidate may be required to submit for examination new work on a topic different from that which originally failed to satisfy the examiners.
- 29 The appropriate re-examination fee must be paid to Cardiff Metropolitan University in respect of each module which a candidate fails and in which he/she is re-assessed.

Project

- 30 The project (research based element) should normally be at or near the end of the programme. This may take the form of a traditional Masters dissertation. Any prerequisites shall be matters for decision at individual programme level through the validation process. It shall be a matter of discretion for the relevant Examination Board whether a student might progress to the project (research based element) trailing one or more failed taught modules.
- 31 Where a dissertation embodies the methods and results of a research project, the Regulations for Submission of Dissertations set out in the appendix to these regulations shall apply.

Award and Classification

- 32 Except as in 33 below, a modular Masters degree (including MRes) is awarded to candidates who have successfully completed a minimum of 180 credits at CQFW Level 7 (HE Level M).
- 33 In exceptional cases, a modular Masters degree (including MRes) may be awarded to candidates who have successfully completed a minimum of 180 credits, of which a maximum of 30 credits may be at CQFW Level 6 (HE Level 3), and a minimum of 150 credits must be at CQFW Level 7 (HE Level M).

34 The overall mark for the Masters degree shall be calculated on the basis of the average of the marks for all modules weighted according to the credit values of those modules.

35 In respect of determining the overall mark (and classification) for Masters degrees, final Examination Boards after the start of 2009/10, must apply 9.1 of the Assessment Regulations, as follows:

"Examination Boards may exercise discretion where the extant regulations are less advantageous to a student than those at the time of enrolment."

36 The classifications of Pass, Merit or Distinction shall be applied only to the overall Masters degree and to both exit awards of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma, but not to individual modules.

(i) In order to gain a Master's Degree with Distinction overall, a candidate shall achieve an overall mark of not less than 70%.

(ii) In order to gain a Master's Degree with Merit overall, a candidate shall achieve an overall mark between 60% and 69%

37 Borderline cases shall be considered as follows:

(i) If the deficit in the overall final rounded mark is not greater than 1%, an Examination Board is empowered, taking the student's overall performance into account, to raise the overall mark into the next classification (Merit/Distinction) category, in normal circumstances.

(ii) If the deficit in the overall final rounded mark is not greater than 2%, an Examination Board is empowered to raise the mark into the next classification (Merit/Distinction) category in normal circumstances, on the basis of factors such as: preponderance of credits (if the student has 50% or more credits at Level 7 in the higher classification); and/or performance on the project module(s).

Time Limits for Completion of Studies

38 Taught modules shall be completed as prescribed in the Programme Document. The full degree programme shall be completed within the following periods from the date of initial enrolment:

	Maximum Period
Full-time candidates (one-year programmes)	Two years

Full-time candidates (two-year programmes*)	Three years
Part-time candidates	Five years

*Such programmes shall normally incorporate a professional practice element or internship.

- 39 The following shall apply in respect of determining the time limits for completion of studies in cases where students join a Masters programme at Cardiff Metropolitan University with RPL after the normal entry point:
- (i) where a student joins a Masters programme with RPL after the normal starting point, the period for completion of studies is taken from what would have been the normal entry point had the student undertaken the whole Masters programme at Cardiff Metropolitan University;
 - (ii) where a student enrolls at Cardiff Metropolitan University after completion of the 120 credits, the equivalent of a Postgraduate Diploma, elsewhere, the deadline for completion of studies shall be 12 months from initial enrolment at Cardiff Metropolitan University.
- 40 A candidature shall lapse if all assessments and re-assessments have not been completed within the above maximum period. The time limit for completion of studies may be extended in exceptional cases only. A reasoned application, supported by appropriate independent evidence, must be submitted by the School Deputy/Associate Dean (L&T) to the Academic Registry for consideration by Cardiff Metropolitan University's Regulations and Special Cases Committee.

Regulations for Submission of Dissertations

- A1 Where a dissertation embodies the methods and results of a research project, its length shall not exceed 15,000 words for a 40 credit module, 20,000 words for a 60 credit module, or 40,000 words for a 100-120 credit module on the MRes programme.
- A2 A candidate is at liberty to publish the whole or part of the work produced during the candidate's period of registration prior to its submission as a whole, or as part of a dissertation, provided that in the published work it is nowhere stated that it is in consideration for a higher degree. Such published work may later be incorporated in the dissertation submitted for examination.
- A3 A candidate may not amend, add to or delete from the dissertation after it has been submitted for examination. However, an Examination Board may require a candidate to make typographical or minor corrections to a dissertation, which has been approved, before deposit in the libraries.
- A4 For every Masters degree Examination Board there shall be a Convenor and Secretary who shall be responsible for ensuring that the correct administrative procedures for the submission and examination of the dissertation are carried out. The Dean of School may act as Convenor and Secretary or may delegate this function to a senior member of the academic staff of the School.
- A5 An electronic copy of the dissertation shall be submitted electronically via the University's VLE facility. Students should not additionally be required to submit a hard copy version of the dissertation. The dissertation shall contain a statement that it is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree.
- A6 Each copy of the dissertation shall include:
- (i) a summary of the dissertation not exceeding 300 words in length;
 - (ii) the required statement and declaration signed by the candidate (see Regulation A8 and A10 below);
- A7 Every candidate in submitting a dissertation shall state to what extent it is the result of his/her independent work or investigation, and shall indicate any portions for which he/she is indebted to other sources. Explicit references should be given, and a full bibliography should be appended to the work.

A8 Every candidate in submitting a dissertation shall certify that it has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

A9 A dissertation submitted for a higher degree of Cardiff Metropolitan University shall normally be openly available and subject to no security classification or restriction of access. However Cardiff Metropolitan University may place a bar on photocopying of and/or access to a dissertation for a specified period of up to five years. It shall be the responsibility of the candidate's project supervisor to make an application to the Academic Registry as soon as is reasonably practicable.

A10 On submission, a candidate shall be required to incorporate a signed statement within the work to indicate *either*:

- (i) that the dissertation, if successful, may be made available for inter-library loan or photocopying (subject to the law of copyright), and that the title and summary may be made available to outside organisations; *or*
- (ii) that the dissertation, if successful, may be made so available after expiry of a bar.

The title and summary of the dissertation shall normally be freely available.

A11 All copies of every dissertation approved by the examiners shall become the property of Cardiff Metropolitan Unit.

A12 If a dissertation is deemed by the examiners to be of particular value, one bound copy shall be deposited by the Convenor and Secretary in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. A dissertation shall be deemed to be of particular value in the following cases:

- (i) where it has been awarded a mark of 70% or more; AND/OR
- (ii) where it is of particular relevance to Wales.

A13 The other bound copy of the dissertation shall be deposited in the Cardiff Metropolitan University or Collaborative Partner's library of the Campus at which the scheme of study has been pursued if it has been awarded a mark of 60% or more.

A14 The electronic copy of the dissertation shall be deposited in Cardiff Metropolitan University's Institutional Repository in the following cases:

- (i) where it has been awarded a mark of 60% or more; AND

- (ii) where it has been submitted to Plagiarism Detection Software and no prima facie case of unfair practice has been established.

A15 If a dissertation is approved by the examiners but not deemed to be of particular value, the School shall retain the copies for the prescribed period for the retention of assessed work.

A16 Where, under an approved programme, an alternative form to that of a dissertation is defined (e.g. creative works), an appropriate record shall be stored in a container suitable for storage on a library shelf. The container shall carry the same information that is required on the spine of a dissertation, and shall be readable in its stored position.
