

Version 2014.1

Approved by Academic Council on 30 June 2014

Dublin City University  
Marks and Standards

## Principles

The principles underlying Marks and Standards were approved by Academic Council on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008:

- i. Marks and Standards shall be consistent with the National Framework of Qualifications.<sup>1</sup>
- ii. The Registrar of the University has ultimate responsibility for the integrity and implementation of Marks and Standards.
- iii. The responsibility for the updating, maintenance and publication of the Marks and Standards document rests with the Registry.
- iv. All amendments and/or additions to Marks and Standards are subject to Academic Council approval regarding both underlying principles and the detailed wording.
- v. Following approval of the revised (2009) Marks and Standards by Academic Council, any future amendments shall be dated, creating a new edition(s). Previous editions of Marks and Standards shall be archived and accessible via the DCU website. A version control document detailing amendments from 2012/13 shall be maintained and accessible via the DCU website.

The following are the approved Marks and Standards which must be applied consistently at all times and to all taught programmes and modules, including taught modules on research programmes; only derogations required by professional bodies will be considered for approval.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.nfq.ie](http://www.nfq.ie)

## Version

**Marks and Standards Document: Version 2014.1**

**First approval by Academic Council on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2009**

**This edition approved by Academic Council on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

## Regulations

**This Marks & Standards document is subject to change. In any given academic session, a student is subject to the Marks & Standards that are approved by Academic Council for that academic session.**

**Programme-specific regulations, which must be compliant with Marks and Standards, are approved by Faculties each Spring, formally approved by the University Standards Committee at its June meeting each year and made available on the Registry website adjacent to Marks and Standards.**

### **Section 1 – Dublin City University (DCU) Awards**

**1.1 AWARD:** An award is that which is conferred or granted by DCU and which records that a student has acquired a specified standard of knowledge, skill and competence. The award is made when the required number of credits has successfully been accumulated, at appropriate levels, from approved modules, and over an appropriate period of time.

**MAJOR AWARD:** A major award is the principal class of award made at a level.

**MINOR AWARD:** A minor award recognises attainment of some of the learning outcomes of a (corresponding) major award.

**SPECIAL-PURPOSE AWARD:** A Special-purpose award is designed to meet specific, relatively narrow focused legislative, regulatory, economic, social or personal learning requirements.

**SUPPLEMENTAL AWARD:** Supplemental awards are for learning which is additional to a previous award. It is designed for education and training with respect to an occupation or profession and may be for updating of education and/or professional development.

**1.1.1** All DCU awards are placed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).<sup>2</sup>

**1.1.2** DCU primarily confers or grants Major Awards at Level 8, Level 9, and Level 10.

**1.1.3** DCU may also confer Minor, Special-Purpose and Supplemental Awards at Level 7, Level 8, Level 9 and Level 10.

Non-major awards are the collective term for awards in the Framework with a smaller volume and more narrow outcomes than major awards. There are three classes of non-major award: minor, special-purpose and supplemental.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.nfq.ie](http://www.nfq.ie)

**Table 1: Awards offered by DCU on the NFQ<sup>3</sup> and Award Credit Accumulation Structure**

DCU Award	NFQ Level	NFQ Award Types	Award Credit Accumulation Structure
Certificate	7	Minor Award Special-Purpose Award Supplemental Award	Minimum of 30 ECTS credits Minimum of 30 ECTS credits Minimum of 30 ECTS credits
Diploma	7	Minor Award	Minimum of 60 ECTS credits
Certificate	8	Minor Award Special-Purpose Award Supplemental Award	Minimum of 30 ECTS credits Minimum of 30 ECTS credits Minimum of 15 ECTS credits
Diploma	8	Minor Award Special-Purpose Award Supplemental Award	Minimum of 60 ECTS credits Minimum of 60 ECTS credits Minimum of 60 ECTS credits
Higher Diploma	8	Major Award	Minimum of 60 ECTS credits
Honours Bachelor Degree	8	Major Award	180 to 240 ECTS credits
Professional Diploma	8	Major Award	Minimum of 60 ECTS credits
Professional Certificate	9	Special-Purpose Award Supplemental Award	Minimum of 20 ECTS credits Minimum of 20 ECTS credits
Professional Diploma	9	Special-Purpose Award Supplemental Award	Minimum of 30 ECTS credits Minimum of 30 ECTS credits
Graduate Certificate	9	Minor Award Special-Purpose Award Supplemental Award	Minimum of 30 ECTS credits Minimum of 30 ECTS credits Minimum of 30 ECTS credits
Graduate Diploma	9	Major Award	Minimum of 60 ECTS credits
Professional Master's Degree	9	Major Award	Minimum of 90 credits
Master's Degree (taught)	9	Major Award	90 to 120 ECTS credits
Master's Degree (research)	9	Major Award	90 to 120 ECTS credits
Doctoral Degree	10	Major Award	240 to 360 ECTS credits

1.1.4 Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate awards exist either as exit awards or as awards without follow-on Master's.

## **Section 2 - European Credit Transfer Accumulation System (ECTS) and ECTS Credits**

2.1 **ECTS:** (adapted from Education and Culture DG, 2007): ECTS is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer based on the transparency of learning outcomes and learning processes.

**ECTS CREDITS:** ECTS credits are based on the workload a typical student needs to complete in order to achieve expected learning outcomes.

**ECTS GRADES:** The ECTS grading system translates a grade from one institution to another across Europe.

**WORKLOAD:** Workload indicates the time students typically need to complete all learning activities (such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study and examinations) required to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills and competencies that a typical student is expected to demonstrate upon successful completion of a process of learning.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nqai.ie/awardsframework.html>

## ***Regulations pertaining to ECTS and ECTS credits***

**2.1.1** 60 ECTS credits are typically attached to the workload of two full-time semester periods of formal learning and the associated learning outcomes. One ECTS credit corresponds to 25 hours of work; therefore a student workload equals 1,500 hours per 60 ECTS credits.

**2.2** **ACADEMIC SESSION:** An academic session is the enrolment period covered by the enrolment fee; the maximum duration of an academic session is 12 months.

## ***Regulations pertaining to academic session***

**2.2.1** A 12-month academic session is normally divided into two semesters during which the teaching and assessment take place. The taught programmes of the university will normally be based on two teaching semesters (Semester 1 & Semester 2) per academic session. The teaching, learning and assessment activities associated with a module will normally be completed during one formal semester. However, it is recognised that field work, clinical teaching, professional or work experience and other learning activities may take place outside, or be spread across, the formal semesters, and this will be permitted subject to the approval of Academic Council.

**2.2.2** For programmes operating within the semester-based system, the formal teaching semesters (Semester 1 & Semester 2) will comprise a minimum of 16 weeks of student activity: normally 12 weeks of teaching and learning, 2 study weeks and 2 weeks of assessment.

**2.2.3** Postgraduate student research activity and dissertation work need not be constrained by the dates of the formal teaching semesters; this applies to activities for awards by research and to the research elements for taught postgraduate awards.

**2.2.4** For undergraduate students, the maximum allowable number of ECTS credits in an academic session is 75, and the minimum allowable is 5.

**2.2.5** To permit flexibility and facilitate student choice, students may pursue a greater or lesser number of credits in a single academic session, subject to both feasibility and the approval of the Programme Board.

**2.2.6** The normal workload for a full-time undergraduate student will be 60 ECTS credits in a standard 2-semester academic session. The workload may be greater than this where learning activities continue outside the standard academic semesters –, for example, in international programmes and clinical placement programmes.

**2.2.7** For taught postgraduate students, the normal workload for full-time students is 30 ECTS credits per semester. The workload may be greater than this where learning activities continue outside the standard academic semesters –, for example, in dissertation or practicum activities.

**2.2.8** For taught postgraduate students, the maximum allowable number of ECTS credits in any academic session is 90, and the minimum allowable is 5.

**2.3** For **JOINT or MULTIPLE** awards approved under a duly constituted and processed agreement with one or more approved partner institutions, credit transfer and recognition will be in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between the institutions.

**2.4** For **MAJOR DCU** awards generally (provided the award is worth a minimum of 60 credits), prior learning in the form of ECTS credits achieved, where such learning supports the desired learning outcomes of the award concerned, and where a major award at the same level has not been conferred on the applicant by another institution on foot of those credits, will be recognised subject to a **MINIMUM of 60 ECTS CREDITS AT THE LEVEL OF THE AWARD** being taken at DCU. (Such DCU credits may be taken at DCU, at its linked colleges, or at an approved partner institution).

For **MINOR, SPECIAL-PURPOSE OR SUPPLEMENTAL** DCU awards, prior learning in the form of ECTS credits achieved, where such learning supports the desired learning outcomes of the DCU award concerned, and where an award at the same level has not been conferred on the applicant by another institution on foot of those credits, will be recognised subject to a **MINIMUM OF 50% of the CREDITS** being taken at DCU. (Such DCU credits may be taken at DCU, at its linked colleges, or at an approved partner institution). A minimum of 30 credits must be taken at DCU for minor, special-purpose or supplemental awards.

- 2.5 For any major award a minimum of 60 ECTS credits must be at the NFQ level of the award. If an award has 60 credits or fewer, all ECTS credits must be at the NFQ level of the award.
- 2.6 A student may not present the same ECTS credits as qualification for more than one DCU award. Similarly, a student may not claim exemption in respect of ECTS credits towards one award that have already been presented as qualification for another award.
- 2.7 Module **EXEMPTIONS** may be awarded for prior experiential learning; applications for exemptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with approved university procedures and subject to the minimums indicated at 2.4 above.

The evaluation of prior learning, whether in the form of experiential learning or of ECTS credits awarded, will be carried out in accordance with approved university entry mechanisms for the awards concerned.

### **Section 3: Modules**

- 3.1 **MODULES:** A module is defined as a self-contained unit of teaching and learning activities, the learning outcomes of which are assessed during the academic session and which carries a specified number of ECTS credits, at the appropriate level, i.e. 7, 8, 9 or 10.

**MODULE LEVELS:** The following level indicators describe typical modules offered in DCU:

**Table 2: DCU Module Level Indicators**

<b>Awards</b>	<b>NFQ Level</b>	<b>Module Level(s)</b>
Certificate	7, 8	7, 8
Diploma	7, 8	7, 8
Honours Bachelor Degree	8	8
Professional Certificate	9	9
Professional Diploma	8, 9	8, 9
Graduate Certificate	9	9
Graduate Diploma	9	9
Professional Master's Degree	9	8,9
Master's Degree	9	8, 9
Doctoral Degree	10	9, 10

**MODULE STRENGTH:** module strength indicates the contribution of a module to a specific award. The following strength indicators describe a module’s strength contribution to an award: light contribution (LC), moderate contribution (MC), or full contribution (FC). A module may make contributions of different strengths to different awards.

**Table 3: Module Strength Indicators**

<b>Awards</b>	<b>Module Level</b>	<b>Module Strengths</b>
Certificate	7, 8	LC, MC, FC
Diploma	7, 8	LC, MC, FC
Honours Bachelor Degree	8	LC, MC, FC
Professional Certificate	9	LC, MC, FC
Professional Diploma	8, 9	LC, MC, FC
Graduate Certificate	9	LC, MC, FC
Graduate Diploma	9	LC, MC, FC
Professional Master’s Degree	8,9	LC, MC, FC
Master’s Degree	8, 9	LC, MC, FC
Doctoral Degree	9, 10	LC, MC, FC

### ***Regulations pertaining to Modules***

**3.1.1 MODULE SIZE:** A module will carry of a minimum of 5 ECTS credits. Modules can carry 5 ECTS credits, 7.5 ECTS credits and integer multiples of 5 ECTS credits.

Where dissertations or research projects form part of an undergraduate programme, these modules can carry 5 ECTS credits, 7.5 ECTS credits and integer multiples of 5 ECTS credits, up to a maximum of 30 ECTS.

**3.1.2** Students should participate in all activities associated with all of the modules they register for, including attendance at lectures, laboratories and other teaching and learning activities, in accordance with any approved programme requirements. Any programme-specific attendance requirements are indicated to students in the programme-specific regulations<sup>4</sup>.

## **Section 4: Programmes of Study / Pathways**

**4.1 PROGRAMMES OF STUDY:** programmes of study are approved, academically coherent sets of modules leading to awards of the University and such professional body recognition as may be established from time to time.

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES:** programmes of study leading to awards at Level 8 or below are defined as undergraduate.

**POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES:** programmes of study leading to awards at Level 9 or above are defined as postgraduate.

Programme academic structures and programme-specific regulations specify module dependencies, for example pre-requisites and co-requisites, if applicable.

A programme of study may lead to different awards.

**4.2 PATHWAYS:** An award may be achieved by following different pathways through a programme of study and are supported by temporal, modal and curricular flexibility.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/prog\\_specific\\_regulations.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/prog_specific_regulations.shtml).

## ***Regulations pertaining to Programmes of Study***

- 4.3 Normally, undergraduate and taught postgraduate students may not be registered on more than one programme within DCU. Exceptions to this regulation must be approved by the University Standards Committee.
- 4.4 Each programme of study will have a **PROGRESSION and AWARD BOARD (PAB)** to determine the progression or award outcomes of the students registered for that programme. The Progression and Award Board will meet after the appropriate assessment process for the programme has taken place. The membership of the Progression and Award Board will include appropriate examiners, both internal and external.
- 4.5 The Progression and Award Board will recommend, for the approval of Academic Council, an overall result in respect of each student's performance. .

## **Section 5: Registration Period**

- 5.1 **REGISTRATION PERIOD:** A registration period is the total time that a student is enrolled on a programme of study; this includes any transfers from a related programme taken at the same level in DCU. All academic sessions from the date of first registration contribute to the overall registration period irrespective of whether or not the student is registered for such sessions (excluding approved leave of absence).

A student undertaking a taught award of 180 credits or more is subject to a maximum registration period of 8 years.

A student undertaking a taught award of less than 180 credits is subject to a maximum registration period of 4 years.

Maximum and minimum registration periods for research degrees are as provided for in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis<sup>5</sup>.

## ***Regulations pertaining to Registration Period***

- 5.1.1 Where a registered student is undertaking an award of 180 credits or more and a maximum registration period of 8 years is exceeded, any ECTS credits achieved are held in perpetuity. The currency of ECTS credits towards the final award will be evaluated by the Progression & Award Board when considering the possibility of an extension to the maximum registration period and/or alternative exit awards.
- 5.1.2 Where a registered student is undertaking an award of less than 180 credits and a maximum registration period of 4 years is exceeded, any ECTS credits achieved are held in perpetuity. The currency of ECTS credits towards the final award will be evaluated by the Progression & Award Board when considering the possibility of an extension to the maximum registration period and/or alternative exit awards.
- 5.1.3 Where a leave of absence has been granted it will extend the maximum registration period by one year.
- 5.1.4 Where a deferral of an academic session or examinations/assessment has been granted, it will not extend the maximum registration period.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.dcu.ie/registry/regulations/postgraduate\\_regulations.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/registry/regulations/postgraduate_regulations.shtml)



## **Section 6: Assessment & Module Marks**

- 6.1 MODULE ASSESSMENT:** Module assessment normally comprises two assessment components - continuous assessment and a final examination assessment.

### ***Regulations pertaining to Assessment***

- 6.1.1** The weighting of each assessment component for the overall module assessment can range from 0% to 100% as specified in the module descriptor.
- 6.1.2** The continuous assessment component may contain multiple elements.
- 6.1.3** For all assessment components and component elements, the assessment methodology, set of assessment criteria and weightings are provided in advance to students.
- 6.1.4** The workload associated with the assessment components of a module will reflect the number of ECTS credits carried by the module.
- 6.1.5** The maximum duration of a final examination component for a module of 5 ECTS credits is 2 hours. The maximum duration of a final examination component for a module of more than 5 ECTS credits is 3 hours.
- 6.1.6** Students are expected to attempt all elements of a module assessment within the academic session and in accordance with the assessment schedule as outlined in the module descriptor. Failure to attempt an element or component of assessment will result in a value of zero for that element or component.

- 6.2 MODULE MARKS:** Student performance in a module can be marked on a scale 0 - 100 or allocated a Pass / Fail grade as described in the approved module descriptor.

### ***Regulations pertaining to Module Marks***

- 6.2.1** In a marked module, the final mark will be calculated in accordance with the assessment breakdown outlined in the approved module descriptor. The required pass mark in such a module is 40% of the maximum marks available.
- 6.2.2** Where different components of assessment within a module (continuous assessment and final examination assessment) contribute to the final mark, there will be no requirement that a minimum mark be obtained in any one component.
- 6.2.3** A module, once passed, cannot be retaken.
- 6.2.4** Deferral of an overall module mark will be considered where there are extenuating circumstances. A module is then deferred to the next available opportunity; this is determined by the academic structure of the programme.

## **Section 7: Progression**

**7.1 PROGRESSION:** Progression is defined as the permission granted by a Progression and Award Board to a student to register in the subsequent academic session for the next diet of modules within his/her programme of study.

**COMPENSATION:** Compensation is defined as the process by which a student, who fails to satisfy some of the regulations for credit in a specific module, is nevertheless recommended for credit award on the grounds that the failure is offset by his/her performance in other modules of his/her programme of study.

**PREVIOUS YEAR CONTRIBUTION:** A previous year contribution is defined as an element which contributes towards the final award. This is usually a previous study period weighted average mark but may in some cases be a module mark. Previous year contributions are not applicable to programmes with continuous mode of study.

**PRECISION MARK:** the precision mark is normally defined as the overall weighted average for the first full presentation of marks for an academic session. For continuous programmes, the precision mark is defined as the overall average weighted mark for the first full presentation of marks for an award.

Where all modules for an academic session are marked as Pass/Fail only (e.g. year- long INTRA), then no precision mark will be calculated. The overall classification for the academic session in such cases will be recorded as 'Pass with Honours' or 'Fail'.

Where an individual module is marked as Pass/Fail only, it will have no impact on the precision mark.

When calculating the precision mark for the purposes of determining classification, the following rules apply:

A precision mark with a decimal place value of 0.5 or more will automatically be rounded up to next integer value, or where a precision mark is no more than 1% below a classification threshold and the unrounded precision mark has a decimal place value of less than 0.5, this precision mark will automatically be rounded up to the threshold value if one half or more credits are made up of modules with marks at or above the threshold value. Previous year contributions are excluded when rounding the precision mark for classification purposes.

**RESIT:** A resit assessment offers students another opportunity within an academic session to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes associated with a module. A resit is normally triggered by a deferral or a module mark of less than 40% (any exceptions are noted in approved programme-specific regulations) <http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations>

It does not require that a student resits all the assessment components of the module; the overall resit module mark is determined according to the approved programme- specific regulations. The maximum number of resit opportunities in any one academic session is one.

The resit assessment does not have to be identical to the original assessment.

**REPEAT:** An opportunity to repeat a failed or a deferred module requires that a student registers for that module (or its equivalent) in the next academic session. It also requires that a student retakes all the assessment components of the module; component marks from previous attempts are not carried forward. Only one repeat opportunity per module is allowed.

## **Regulations pertaining to Progression, Compensation and Repeats for Undergraduate Programmes**

- 7.1.1** Progression is determined according to the approved academic requirements of the programme of study<sup>6</sup>
- 7.1.2** A programme of study may contain specified, approved modules to which compensation cannot be applied. Details of non-compensatable modules are outlined in the programme-specific regulations.
- 7.1.3** A programme of study may contain specified, approved modules, the credits for which may not be counted for the application of compensation; in such cases, compensation is applied on a *pro-rata* basis
- 7.1.4** Compensation is applied only when all of the following conditions are met:
- i. the modules are being attempted for the first time, i.e. a full set of module marks is presented for the first time; compensation is not applied in relation to modules being attempted at a second or subsequent sitting
  - ii. a minimum precision mark of 45% has been obtained
  - iii. a maximum of 1/6 of the available ECTS credits have been failed in the academic session (regardless of the semester in which the failure(s) occur or of how these ECTS credits are made up in terms of modules).
  - iv. the marks obtained in the individual failed module(s) is/are 35% or greater.
- 7.1.5** A Progression and Award Board may in exceptional circumstances, which are explicitly recorded, recommend that a decision on a student's progression be postponed to enable the student to complete specific outstanding credit requirements of the programme.
- Any postponement of a decision in relation to a student's result shall be for a limited time, not exceeding one academic session.
- 7.1.6** Where a student has failed or deferred a module, he/she may, in order to acquire the credits for the module, repeat the module (or its equivalent) in the next academic session or resit the assessment for that module in the current academic session, if a resit is offered. The following conditions apply:
- i. only one repeat academic session is allowed and only one repeat opportunity per module is allowed
  - ii. a student may be required to register for an alternative module to a failed or deferred module in the next academic session if the original module is not available provided the alternative can meet the required award learning outcomes.
  - iii. if the original module is not available to repeat in subsequent academic sessions and the required learning outcomes cannot be achieved by taking an alternative module the student will be required to wait until an appropriate module is next available.

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<sup>6</sup> ([http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/prog\\_specific\\_regulations.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/prog_specific_regulations.shtml))

- 7.1.7** Any resit must take place within the academic session, and the results are recorded as an additional opportunity.

Where a module has a final examination assessment component, a resit of the examination assessment component must be offered within the academic session.

Where a module has a continuous assessment component, a resit of the continuous assessment may not be feasible within the academic session in all cases.

Resit arrangements are defined according to the Resit Category of the module which are published in the module descriptor. Resit Categories are as follows:

- Category 1:** A resit is available for both components of the module
- Category 2:** No resit is available for a 100% continuous assessment module
- Category 3:** No resit is available for the continuous assessment component.

Marks for all attempts by a student at a module, including resit assessments and repeat attempts, in the course of a programme of study must be recorded in the transcript.

- 7.1.8** Where exceptional circumstances are made known to a Progression and Award Board, the Board has discretion to approve one further repeat academic session.

### ***Regulations pertaining to Progression, Compensation and Repeats for Taught Postgraduate Programmes***

- 7.1.9** Progression is determined according to the approved academic requirements of the programme of study<sup>7</sup>.

- 7.1.10** Compensation is not permitted for taught postgraduate programmes.

- 7.1.11** A Progression and Award Board may in exceptional circumstances, which are explicitly recorded, recommend that a decision on a student's progression be postponed to enable the student to complete specific outstanding credit requirements of the programme.

Any postponement of a decision in relation to a student's result shall be for a limited time, not exceeding one academic session.

- 7.1.12** Where a student has failed or deferred a module, he/she may, in order to acquire the credits for the module, repeat the module (or its equivalent) in the next academic session or resit the assessment for that module in the current academic session, if a resit is offered. The following conditions apply:

- i only one repeat academic session is allowed and only one repeat opportunity per module is allowed.
- ii a student may be required to register for an alternative module to a failed or deferred module in the next academic session if the original module is not available provided the alternative can meet the required award learning outcomes.
- iii if the original module is not available to repeat in subsequent academic sessions and the required learning outcomes cannot be achieved by taking an alternative module the student will be required to wait until an appropriate module is next available.

- 7.1.13** Any resit opportunity must take place within the academic session, and the results are deemed as an additional attempt.

Where a module has a final examination assessment component, a resit of the examination assessment component must be offered within the academic session.

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<sup>7</sup> ([http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/prog\\_specific\\_regulations.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/prog_specific_regulations.shtml)).

Where a module has a continuous assessment component, a resit of the continuous assessment may not be feasible within the academic session in all cases.

Marks for all attempts by a student at a module, including resit assessments and repeat attempts in the course of a programme of study, must be recorded in the transcript.

**7.1.14** Where exceptional circumstances are made known to a Progression and Award Board, the Board has discretion to approve one further repeat academic session

**7.1.15** Students registered for a Qualifier Programme to a Master's Programme who have successfully obtained the Qualifier Programme credits with minimum mark of 50% in every Level 8 module and/or a minimum pass mark in every Level 9 module will be allowed to transfer to the associated Master's award.

## **Section 8: Award Classification**

**8.1** Progression and Award Boards may consider candidates eligible for an award when they have met all the requirements of the programme of study leading to that award.

An award will not be granted to any student who is disqualified in any way by the University.

### ***Regulations pertaining to the classification of a Level 8 Award by the University***

**8.1.1 Level 8 Bachelor Degree:** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Level 8 Bachelor Degree, a student must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Award Descriptor. The mark to be used to determine the grade of classification is the precision mark based on the first attempt at the relevant, approved modules. Where the original precision mark is less than 40%, and the student subsequently successfully completes the requisite credits, the student will be awarded a Third Class Honours degree irrespective of the final marks achieved.

The overall precision marks achieved across some or all years of the programme of study may contribute to the classification of the award.

Where a precision mark is calculated, the student's results will be classified in accordance with the standards set out below.

**Table 4: Level 8 Honours Bachelor Degree Award Classification**

<b>Precision Mark</b>	<b>Award</b>
Greater than or equal to 70%	First Class Honours
Between 60% and 69% inclusive	Second Class Honours, Grade I
Between 50% and 59% inclusive	Second Class Honours, Grade II
Between 40% and 49% inclusive	Third Class Honours

**8.1.2 Level 8 Certificate or Diploma:** To be eligible for consideration for the award of Level 8 Certificate or Diploma, a student must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Award Descriptor. The mark to be used to determine the grade of classification is the precision mark based on the first attempt at the relevant approved modules. Where the original precision mark is less than 40%, and the student subsequently successfully completes the requisite credits, the student will be awarded a Pass classification, irrespective of the final marks achieved.

Where a precision mark is calculated, the students' results will be classified in accordance with the standards set out below.

**Table 5: Level 8 Certificate or Diploma Award Classification**

Precision Mark	Award
Greater than or equal to 70%	Distinction
Between 60% and 69% inclusive	Credit
Between 40% and 59% inclusive	Pass

### ***Regulations pertaining to the classification of a Level 9 Award by the University***

**8.1.3 Classification of Level 9 Awards Taught Master's Degree:** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Level 9 Master's Degree, a student must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Award Descriptor. A taught Master's award consists of a minimum of 60 ECTS credits of taught modules and a maximum of 30 ECTS credits for the dissertation/practicum. The mark to be used to determine the grade of classification is the precision mark based on the first attempt at the relevant, approved modules. Where the original precision mark is less than 40%, and the student subsequently successfully completes the requisite credits, the student will be awarded a Pass classification, irrespective of the final marks achieved.

**Table 6: Level 9 Taught Master's Degree Classification**

Precision Mark	Award
Greater than or equal to 70%	First Class Honours
Between 60% and 69% inclusive	Second Class Honours
Between 40% and 59% inclusive	Pass

**8.1.4 Master's Degree (Research):** The degree of Master's (Research) is a Major Level 9 award and is awarded without classification<sup>8</sup>.

**8.1.5 Level 9 Certificate or Diploma:** To be eligible for consideration for the award of Level 9 Certificate or Diploma, a student must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Award Descriptor. The mark to be used to determine the grade of classification is the precision mark based on the first attempt at the relevant, approved modules. Where the original precision mark is less than 40%, and the student subsequently successfully completes the requisite credits, the student will be awarded a Pass classification, irrespective of the final marks achieved.

**Table 7: Level 9 Certificate and Diploma Classification**

Precision Mark	Award
Greater than or equal to 70%	Distinction
Between 60% and 69% inclusive	Credit
Between 40% and 59% inclusive	Pass

<sup>8</sup> Further details on Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research And Thesis are available at [http://www4.dcu.ie/registry/regulations/postgraduate\\_regulations.shtml](http://www4.dcu.ie/registry/regulations/postgraduate_regulations.shtml)

## **Regulations pertaining to the classification of a level 10 Award by the University**

- 8.1.6** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Level 10 (Doctoral) degree, a student must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis.
- 8.1.7** A level 10 (Doctoral), degree is awarded without classification..

## **Regulations pertaining to the classification of Minor, Special-Purpose, Supplemental and Level 7 Awards by the University**

- 8.1.8** To be eligible for consideration for a Minor, Special-Purpose or Supplemental DCU Award a student must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the award descriptor. The mark to be used to determine the grade of classification is the precision mark based on the first attempt at the modules approved for the award. Where the original precision mark is less than 40%, and the student subsequently successfully completes the requisite credits, the student will be awarded a pass irrespective of the final marks achieved. The overall precision marks achieved across all modules of the award will contribute to the classification of the award. Where a precision mark is calculated, the student's results will be classified in accordance with the standards set out in Table 9.
- 8.1.9 Level 7 awards:** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Level 7 Certificate or Diploma, a student must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Award Descriptor. The mark to be used to determine the grade of classification is the precision mark based on the first attempt at the relevant, approved modules. Where the original precision mark is less than 40%, and the student subsequently successfully completes the requisite credits, the student will be awarded a pass irrespective of the final marks achieved.

The overall precision marks achieved across some or all years of the programme of study may contribute to the classification of the award.

Where a precision mark is calculated, the student's results will be classified in accordance with the standards set out below.

**Table 8: Level 7 Certificate and Diploma Classification**

<b>Precision Mark</b>	<b>Award</b>
Greater than or equal to 70%	Distinction
Between 60% and 69% inclusive	Credit
Between 40% and 59% inclusive	Pass

## **Regulations pertaining to Stand-Alone Modules (SAM)**

- 8.2 STAND-ALONE MODULE:** A Stand-Alone Module (SAM) is a module that can be registered for without reference to any award. They may be articulated as Continuous Professional Development (CPD) modules which support individuals in employment in their profession.
- 8.2.1** An accumulation of SAM credits does not automatically entitle the holder to an award. SAM credits and learning outcomes may be recognised and counted towards an existing award.
- 8.2.2** SAMs are subject to the same Marks & Standards as described in the relevant sections above.
- 8.2.3** Compensation is not permitted between SAMs.



## Section 9: Appeals

- 9.1 **APPEAL:** Students have the right to appeal the decisions of a Progression and Award Board. Such appeals will be processed in accordance with the procedures detailed by Academic Council<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/regulations.shtml#14>

## **Glossary**

1. **ACADEMIC SESSION:** An academic session is the enrolment period covered by the fee; the maximum duration of an academic session is 12 months.
2. **AWARD:** An award is that which is conferred or granted by Dublin City University and which records that a student has acquired a specified standard of knowledge, skill and competence. The award is made when the required number of credits has been successfully accumulated, at appropriate levels, from approved modules, and over an appropriate period of time
3. **COMPENSATION:** Compensation is defined as the process by which a student, who fails to satisfy some of the regulations for credit in a specific module, is nevertheless recommended for credit award on the grounds that the failure is offset by his/her performance in other modules of his/her programme of study.
4. **ECTS:** ECTS is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer based on the transparency of learning outcomes and learning processes.
5. **ECTS CREDITS:** ECTS credits are based on the workload a typical student needs to complete in order to achieve expected learning outcomes.
6. **ECTS GRADES:** The ECTS grading system translates a grade from one institution to another across Europe.
7. **LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills and competencies that a typical student is expected to demonstrate upon successful completion of a process of learning.
8. **LEAVE OF ABSENCE:** A Leave of Absence is applicable only to students who have already completed and availed of the deferral process in the previous academic session and have documentation to support their request. An approved leave of absence will extend the maximum registration period by one year. [http://www.dcu.ie/registry/application\\_forms.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml)
9. **MAJOR AWARD:** A major award is the principal class of award made at a level. [www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame\\_action/levels.html](http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame_action/levels.html)
10. **MINOR AWARD:** A minor award is for the partial completion of the outcomes of a major award. [www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame\\_action/levels.html](http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame_action/levels.html)
11. **MODULES:** A module is defined as a self-contained unit of teaching and learning activities, the learning outcomes of which are assessed during the academic session and which carries a specified number of ECTS credits, at the appropriate level, i.e. 7, 8, 9 or 10.
12. **MODULE ASSESSMENT:** Module assessment normally comprises two assessment components: continuous assessment and a final examination assessment.
13. **MODULE SIZE:** Modules can carry 5 ECTS credits, 7.5 ECTS credits and integer multiples of 5 ECTS credits.
14. **PATHWAYS:** An award may be achieved by following different pathways through a programme of study and are supported by temporal, modal and curricular flexibility.
15. **POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES:** programmes of study leading to awards at Level 9 or above are defined as postgraduate.

- 16 PRECISION MARK:** the precision mark is normally defined as the overall weighted **average** for the first full presentation of marks for an academic session. For continuous programmes, the precision mark is defined as the overall average weighted mark for the first full presentation of marks for an award.
- 17 PREVIOUS YEAR CONTRIBUTION:** A previous year contribution is defined as an element which contributes towards the final award. This is usually a previous study period weighted average mark but may in some cases be a module mark. Previous year contributions are not applicable to programmes with continuous mode of study.
- 18 PROGRAMMES OF STUDY:** Programmes of study are approved, academically coherent sets of modules leading to awards of the University and such professional body recognition as may be established from time to time.
- 19 PROGRESSION:** Progression is defined as the permission granted by a Progression & Award Board to a student to register in the subsequent academic session for the next diet of modules within his/her programme of study.
- 20 REGISTRATION PERIOD:** A registration period is the total time that a student is enrolled on a programme of study; this includes any transfers from a related programme taken at the same level in DCU.
- 21 REPEAT:** An opportunity to repeat a failed or deferred module requires a student registers for that module (or its equivalent) in the next academic session. It also requires that a student retake all the assessment components of the module; component marks from previous attempts are not carried forward. Only one repeat opportunity per module is allowed.
- 22 RESIT:** A resit assessment offers students another opportunity within an academic session to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes associated with a module. A resit is normally triggered by a deferral or a module mark of less than 40% (any exceptions are noted in approved programme- specific regulations It does not require that a student resit all the assessment components of the module; passed assessment component marks are carried forward. The resit assessment does not have to be identical to the original assessment.
- 23 SPECIAL-PURPOSE AWARD:** A Special-purpose award is made for specific, relatively narrow purposes. [www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame\\_action/levels.html](http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame_action/levels.html)
- 24 STAND-ALONE MODULE:** A Stand-Alone Module (SAM) is a module that can be registered for without reference to any award. They may be articulated as Continuous Professional Development (CPD) modules which support individuals in employment in their profession.
- 25 SUPPLEMENTAL AWARD:** Supplemental awards are for learning which is additional to a previous award. [www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame\\_action/levels.html](http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/frame_action/levels.html)
- 26 UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES:** programmes of study leading to awards at Level 8 or below are defined as undergraduate.
- 27 WORKLOAD:** Workload indicates the time students typically need to complete all learning activities (such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study, and examinations) required to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

All forms referred to in these regulations are available on the Registry website  
[http://www.dcu.ie/registry/application\\_forms.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml)