

Information for students on taught postgraduate programmes

Issued 12 May 2020

The health and wellbeing of our staff and students is at the heart of everything we are doing during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. We are aware of how uncertain and frightening the current situation is for everyone. We recognise that your lives may be being disrupted in all sorts of ways during this time, and each person's situation will be different. You may have different and unplanned employment or caring responsibilities, you may be a key worker, or you or your family members may become ill.

We are doing everything we can to help you continue and/or complete your studies despite the disruption, and in the light of these exceptional circumstances. Many of our taught postgraduate programmes were designed for distance learning, and so delivery has been less impacted by campus building closures. We have now moved all programmes to teaching and learning online and, developed alternative assessments where existing arrangements were no longer possible.

Q: What is the overall policy?

A: Our policy is to support you on your personal learning journey, whether that is achieving your award, or continuing to the next stage of your studies - and to support you as fully as we can where this is not currently possible.

We will ensure you are assessed fairly, while taking into account the exceptional circumstances that we find ourselves in. We will ensure that we maintain the academic standards of our awards, so you can be confident in the robustness of your qualification.

Q: What happens if I cannot continue studying at the moment?

A: If you cannot study or submit assessments as normally scheduled in May/June, you should submit a mitigating circumstances claim online via the [student portal](#). This will enable you to submit your assessment in August 2020 (or earlier if you are able) and you will not be penalised.

We have relaxed requirements around mitigating circumstances, so that you can self-certificate (no evidence is required). If you do not have internet access, contact your personal academic tutor to do this on your behalf.

Or you can request to suspend your studies, if you anticipate you will need a longer period of time. This could be for one semester (return to study in Jan/Feb 2021, or a full year (return to study in September 2021). You will then be subject to normal academic regulations for assessment. (a question and answer related to academic performance is below)

Q: What academic support will be available to me over the summer?

A: Please note that most academic staff will be on leave during the summer and will not be available to provide academic support after the end of June. You should check with your tutor or supervisor about the dates of their availability.

Q: Will I be charged repeat module fees if I need to take time away from study?

A: No. If your module fees have been paid in respect of Academic Year 2019-20 and you require to complete these modules later due to COVID19 impact, we will not charge a repeat module fee in Academic Year 2020-21.

Q: Will I still be eligible for Distinction if my academic performance may have been affected by COVID19?

If you meet the normal requirements for a postgraduate award with Distinction (postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma or Masters), this will be awarded. See [Academic Regulations Section 14a.30](#).

For Academic Year 2019-20, we will also use a second calculation. This uses two criteria: a minimum number of credits at 70+ AND a mean (average) mark, which will need to be at 67+ for Distinction. We will calculate the mean (average) mark in two ways and **use the higher** of the two mean marks.

This approach allows consideration of students' overall achievement, while taking into account performance in semester 2 (S2) / semester continuous (SC) / semester 3 (S3) modules in Academic Year 2019-20, which may be negatively affected by the disruption caused by COVID-19. Using the two calculations allows for this, without penalising students whose performance is sustained at around the same level or improves in these later modules. Using the higher of the two mean marks in this way is often called a 'no detriment' approach. See examples of student profiles below.

Q: I am a part-time student. Will these arrangements still apply when I graduate?

Yes. For part-time students we will apply these Distinction criteria regardless of when you complete your programme of study, if you were enrolled on any S2/SC/S3 modules during Academic Year 2019-20 and completed them (without taking a suspension of study).

Q: The exceptional arrangements for undergraduates allow for compensation. Does this apply to postgraduate programmes?

A: No. Within postgraduate programmes, you will need to pass all modules to ensure that you fully meet the academic standards of that award. You can use the mitigating circumstances process to defer assessments if you are not able to submit assessments at the current time. The exceptional arrangements for undergraduates enable progression to next level of study, which is not applicable within postgraduate programmes.

Q: I'm not sure what this means for me - who should I speak to for more information?

You should speak to your programme leader if you have questions about your programme or final award.

For other queries, please speak to your personal academic tutor, or raise a query via the [Red Button](#)

Examples of student mark profiles for award of Distinction

Second calculation applicable for students enrolled on any semester 2 (S2) / semester continuous (SC) / semester 3 (S3) modules during Academic Year 2019-20 which may be affected by COVID-19

	Minimum requirements
PG Certificate (60 credits)	Min 20 L11 credits at 70+ AND a mean (average) mark (either A or B as below) at 67+
PG Diploma (120 credits)	Min 40 L11 credits at 70+ AND a mean (average) mark (either A or B as below) at 67+
Masters (180 credits)	Min 60 L11 credits at 70+ AND a mean (average) mark (either A or B as below) at 67+

Notes:

- Mean mark A = mean mark across all modules at SCQF Level 11
- Mean mark B = mean mark across all modules at SCQF Level 11, discounting lowest 20 credits achieved in S2/SC/S3 modules
- Dissertation / Major Project module at 60 credits will count as 3 instances of the same mark. 40-credit modules will count as 2 instances of the same mark.

Student Profile 1

	Mean A	Mean B		
S1	71	71	Distinction grade	
S1	70	70	Distinction grade	
S1	74	74	Distinction grade	
S2	58	excluded		
S2	63	63		
S2	64	64		
Dissertation (60 credits)	65	65		
	65	65		
	65	65		
Mean mark	66.11	67.13		
		Award Distinction		

Student Profile 2

	Mean A	Mean B		
S1	71	71	Distinction grade	
S1	70	70	Distinction grade	
S1	70	70	Distinction grade	
S2	65	65		
S2	63	63		
S2	64	64		
Dissertation (60 credits)	62	excluded		
	62	62		
	62	62		
Mean mark	65.44	65.88		
		Distinction not awarded		

Student Profile 3

	Mean A	Mean B		
S1	62	62		
S1	63	63		
S1	64	64		
S2	71	71	Distinction grade	
S2	72	72	Distinction grade	
S2	70	70	Distinction grade	
Dissertation (60 credits)	66	excluded		
	66	66		
	66	66		
Mean mark	66.67	66.75		
		Award Distinction		