Taught postgraduate guidelines for credit, grades and awards

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Purpose	These guidelines describe the credit value of modules and the module reporting scale for Postgraduate Taught Masters degrees. In addition, the guidelines include information on St Andrews GPA, Dip-down modules, reassessment and Postgraduate Diploma.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE
GUIDELINES FOR CREDIT, GRADES AND AWARDS

1. Credits and Grades

A student's studies towards a Taught Postgraduate Masters degree are structured in terms of modules, each of which is assigned a credit value, reflecting the proportion of a student's time devoted to that module. A full-time student normally takes 60 credits in a semester; so, for example, a module in a particular School might be worth 20 credits, this would represent one-third of the credits normally taken in a semester. Each module is a self-contained unit of teaching, learning and assessment. For the majority of modules the teaching takes place in one 11-week teaching block and in most cases followed by an examination. Others are concentrated into a shorter period, and some are taught over the whole year. A student's performance in the examination, together with marks for pieces of work submitted during the module, determine whether he or she passes the assessment for the module and, therefore, whether he or she is awarded the credits attached to it. Thus a student who passes the module will have gained both credits, reflecting the workload of the module, and a grade, reflecting the quality of their work.

Postgraduate Taught Masters Grading Sheet (PG Cert, PGDip, MLitt, MSc, MRes)	
Module Reporting Scale (Grade)	**Descriptor**
20	Distinction
19	
18	
17	
16.5	
16	Merit
15	
14	
13.5	
13	Pass
12	
11	
10	
9	
8	
7	
6	Fail (right to reassessment)
5	
4	
3	Fail (no right to reassessment)
2	
1	
0	

2. St Andrews GPA

The St Andrews GPA for taught postgraduate Masters degrees is normally the credit-weighted mean of all grades awarded from both taught and dissertation modules.
The St Andrews GPA is calculated during classification and is displayed at the same time as the degree classification and/or degree award. In common with module final assessments the St Andrews GPA uses the 20-point scale.

3. Dip-down modules

The award of a taught postgraduate Masters degree requires 90 credits of the taught component to be at 5000-level. Students are permitted to 'dip-down' for the remaining credit. The grades achieved for dip-down modules taken at 1000 or 2000-level as part of a taught postgraduate degree are incorporated into the degree only when the subject of the module is required language training. In all other cases, only grades received for 3000 and 4000-level 'dip-down' modules are incorporated into the St Andrews GPA.

4. Reassessment

Where a student fails the assessment for a module, the Board of Examiners shall offer one opportunity for reassessment. Modules passed at reassessment will be capped at 7.0 and this grade will be entered into the algorithm for the classification of awards. Reassessment of the dissertation is not permitted. It is not permitted to retake modules or take additional modules to substitute for failed modules.

5. Postgraduate Diploma

Candidates for the Postgraduate Diploma are required to gain at least 120 credits over two semesters (or the part-time equivalent), of which 90 credits must be at 5000-level, in an approved programme. Failure to gain 120 credits at pass level (Grade 7 or above) within the specified time means that the candidate will not be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma.

6. Distinction or Merit in the Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate

The significance of the St Andrews GPA is as follows:

16.5 - 20.0	Distinction in the Diploma or Certificate may be awarded
13.5 - 16.4	Merit in the Diploma or Certificate may be awarded
7.0 – 13.4	Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate

Results for modules taken, as part of the Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate must be reported by Schools to Registry on the same timescale as undergraduate modules.

7. Taught Postgraduate Masters degrees

Normally a full-time taught postgraduate Masters Student takes modules worth 180 credits during the course of each year, i.e. 60 credits in each semester and 60 credits for the summer dissertation/project. Candidates for the MLitt/MRes/MSc degrees initially follow a programme equivalent to that of the corresponding Postgraduate Diploma, consisting of modules worth 120 credits, after which they submit a dissertation or project for examination. The dissertation has a maximum word limit of 15,000 words (excluding bibliography).

8. Pass in the Taught Postgraduate Masters degree

The Taught Postgraduate Masters degree will be awarded to students who pass 180 credits at grade 7.0 or more including reassessments.

9. Merit in the Taught Postgraduate Masters degree

A credit weighted mean (St Andrews GPA) of 13.5 or more is required over the entire programme (including any reassessment capped at 7.0) for the award of Merit for the degree.

10. Distinction in the Taught Masters degree

A credit weighted mean (St Andrews GPA) of 16.5 or more is required over the entire programme (including any reassessments capped at 7.0) for the award of Distinction for the degree.

11. Dean's List

Students on Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diplomas and Taught Masters programme are eligible for the Dean's List. Students achieving a St Andrews GPA of 16.5 or above are placed on the Dean's List at the point of award or graduation.

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