

Quality Assurance Committee

Updates to the Code of Practice on Assessment for PGT students

Date of Meeting: [15/04/2026]

1. Purpose of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is to:

- Consider and approve the proposed changes to the Code of Practice on Assessment for PGT students.
- Discuss and approve the proposal that the revised Code applies to PGT students entering their studies in or after September 2026, and retrospectively also to those who commenced in January 2026, noting that the proposed changes are not detrimental to students compared to the current Code.

2. Previous Consideration by / Further Approval Required

The PGT Policy Review Task and Finish Group (TFG) has met twice to discuss the PGT Code of Practice on Assessment. The first time, in October 2025, was to share feedback from Schools in order to inform the updates to this Code. The second time was to consider the input received from the Education Committees and Senate, and agree a final version of this document. Additional feedback was also received as part of the recent “PGT Experience Event” organised by the Centre for Academic Development.

The table below shows the Committees that have considered and discussed the amendments to the Code of Practice on Assessment (PGT) to date, and targets that we are currently aiming for to approve the changes:

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/ discussed by	Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)	[11/12/2025]
	Student Support and Experience Committee (SSEC)	[12/02/2026]
	Academic Policy and Regulations Group (APRG)	[13/02/2026]
	Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)	[18/02/2026]
	University Education Committee (UEC)	[24/02/2026]
	Senate (discussion)	[18/03/2026]
	APRG (approval)	[31/03/2026]
Further consideration/ approval required by	QAC (approval)	[15/04/2026]
	UEC (approval)	[21/04/2026]
	Senate (approval)	[13/05/2026]
	Court (approval)	[24/06/2026]

3. Recommended Action

The Committee is invited to **approve**:

1. The draft changes to the Code of Practice on Assessment for PGT students, as set out in Annex A.
2. The proposal that the revised Code applies to PGT students entering their studies in or after September 2026, and retrospectively also to those who commenced in January 2026.

4. Discussion

- 4.1 In September 2025, a Task and Finish Group (TFG) was established to review the University's policies relating to Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students and programmes, with the aim of ensuring that they best meet the needs of our academic community and support future PGT delivery, across all UoA campuses and online (see Annex B).
- 4.2 As part of this work, the TFG has reviewed the [Code of Practice on Assessment for Postgraduate Taught Students](#). The Group initially met to discuss the Code in October 2025 (see Annex C) and members also provided asynchronous feedback via a shared document. The Group convened again in late March 2026 to review the input received from the Education Committees and Senate, as detailed in Section 2 of this paper.
- 4.3 Initial input from QAC was sought at its meeting on 11 December 2025 (see paper *QAC/111225/005*, as well as the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2025, filed as paper *QAC/180226/001*). In particular, feedback was requested on sections relating to award classification and borderline candidates (Sections 3.8 and 4 of the Code), resits and compensatory credits (Section 6) and extra credits (Section 7).
- 4.4 A first draft of the Code was presented at the relevant Education Committees and Senate during Cycle 4. Further changes to the draft were made as a result of feedback received at these meetings.
- 4.5 Key proposed amendments include:
 - i. Updating reference to outdated processes and improving language clarity throughout the document.
 - ii. Updating the Data Protection information (Section 2.17 refers) following advice from the Information Governance Team.
 - iii. Removing the requirement for a minimum project/dissertation grade from the criteria for the award of Commendation and Distinction at Master's level. Eligibility for these awards would be determined solely on the basis of the overall Grade Point Average (GPA). The project/dissertation would continue

to contribute to the calculation of the GPA according to its credit weighting (Section 3.8 refers).

- iv. Clarifying existing practice already in place, whereby exit awards are awarded on the basis of the stages that are applicable, ie Stage 1 for PGCert and Stages 1 and 2 for PGDip (Section 3.9 refers).
 - v. Including the list of mitigating circumstances/good cause, in line with the Extensions Policy (Sections 5.2 and 5.3 refer), and clarifying the implications of MC/GC at course level, especially in relation to resits (Sections 5.5, 6.3 and 6.4 refer).
 - vi. Allowing project/dissertation resits for all fails, not only marginal ones (this reflects the change to the relevant General Regulation for PGT Awards, approved by Senate on 18 March 2026). Clarity has also been provided around the nature of the resit, deadlines and the level of supervision expected (Section 6.2 refers).
 - vii. Removing existing Section 6.4, which stopped candidates from being allowed to progress to the next stage in they failed a resit, at is no longer applicable to most PGT programmes, due to the tight timeframe.
 - viii. Providing additional clarity on timing of resits, with a view of improving consistency across Schools, while allowing a level of flexibility to avoid any undue disadvantage to international students. QAC would maintain oversight of any additional resit diets or alternative forms of assessment introduced by Schools (Sections 6.5 and 6.6 refer).
 - ix. Adding reference to Compensatory Credits in Section 6.7, cross-referencing Sections 3.10-3.11, and clarifying the requirements.
 - x. Aligning requirements for extra credits at PGT level with existing UG practice to ensure consistency, and clarifying the minimum level extra credits may be for award and classification purposes (Section 7 refers).
- 4.6 The Committee is invited to approve the above proposed changes to the PGT Code of Practice on Assessment.
- 4.7 Noting that the proposed changes to the Code are, in general, more favourable to students than current practice, the Committee is also invited to discuss and approve the proposal that the revised Code would apply to PGT students entering their studies in or after September 2026, but retrospectively also to those who entered in January 2026.
- 4.8 Subject to approval of the proposed changes, appropriate training and dissemination plans for staff and students will be developed in the coming months, to ensure stakeholders are informed and supported in the implementation of the revised Code of Practice on Assessment (PGT).

5. Further Information

Further information is available from Jason Bohan, Dean for Student Support & Experience (jason.bohan@abdn.ac.uk), and Isabella Fausti, Academic Policy and Quality Officer (isabella.fausti@abdn.ac.uk).

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Freedom of Information/Confidentiality Status

Open

University of Aberdeen
Academic Quality Handbook

CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT:
FOR POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT STUDENTS ~~WHO COMMENCED THEIR STUDIES IN OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 2021~~

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Please note: All, or specific sections, of this Code of Practice on Assessment may not apply to healthcare programmes (i.e., Physicians' Associate and Non-medical Prescribing Qualification). The School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition can further advise on Assessment regulations for these cohorts of students.

All Candidates should also consult course and programme [handbooks documentation](#), which will provide assessment information specific to the courses and programme they are undertaking.

Section 1: Introduction

~~1.1~~ Assessment is the central element of the process by which the University is able to make awards to candidates who have completed courses and programmes. The purpose of this Code of Practice on Assessment is to ensure that the processes of assessment are conducted in a **fair, consistent, and transparent** manner across the University. This common approach is especially important due to the inter-disciplinary nature of many of the University's programmes ~~which means~~ meaning that candidates are studying courses offered by a number of Schools and these courses are then combined together in determining the overall award.

1.1

1.2 This Code of Practice on Assessment applies to postgraduate taught students, ~~who commenced their studies in or after September 2021,~~ including those who are studying on a short course basis.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

1.3 The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework¹ has developed a set of SCQF Levels Descriptors which illustrate the generic expectations for each **level** of study. Level of study refers to the level of the course, not necessarily programme year. For example, a Level ~~3~~5 course will have been designed to fit to the SCQF Level 11 descriptors ~~for level 3~~ and that does not change, regardless of when ~~the course is taken in programme year 3 (PY3) or in programme year 4 (PY4)~~ the course was taken. These descriptors, which set out the general characteristic outcomes, are important in terms of providing a reference point of expectations for each level of study.

1.4 The University's awards must comply with the SCQF framework. In broad terms, candidates must therefore achieve the minimum number of credit points to be eligible to receive their award. These requirements are detailed in Minimum Credit Requirements for Awards.

1.5 The University Calendar entry will state the requirements for each programme and award. This should include:

- (a) The courses required to be undertaken for the programme, including courses that do not carry any credit weighting (i.e. zero²credit-rated courses),
- (b) The details of the **compulsory** requirements. These are courses that must be passed for the achievement of the award. Such compulsory requirements may be set by the requirements of a Professional, Regulatory or Statutory Body (PSRB) which accredits the award or may be set by the Examiners (e.g. a requirement that a candidate achieve a pass in the ~~thesis/~~project/dissertation).
- (c) The number of remaining credits required for achievement of the programme award.

1.6 The **criteria** for courses and their relative weightings which will contribute to the determination of the overall programme award, must be made explicit to all candidates at the outset of their programme. In the case of postgraduate taught programmes, the constitution of each Stage of the programme must be made clear (NB: a stage may consist of taught courses or a research dissertation/project or a combination of both taught and research, which typically will cover learning outcomes associated with at least 60 credit points at Level ~~5~~/SCQF Level 11).

1.7 This information should be provided in a single document to ensure transparency and ease of reference regardless of whether the degree programme is delivered by a single discipline or is a degree programme delivered by more than one discipline.

¹ The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework is a common national framework for all awards in Scotland. It makes clear the relationship between qualifications, levels, entry and exit points, and routes for progression between awards. Further information is available at www.scqf.org.uk

² In the case of zero credit rated courses the relative weighting of this towards the overall determination of the award must be clearly stated to (i) students and (ii) Registry (via academicsservices@abdn.ac.uk); the latter is to ensure the Student Record Systems' Degree Classification screens and algorithms are accurate.

Section 2: Marking

Common Grading Scale (CGS)

- 2.1 The [University of Aberdeen Common Grading Scale \(CGS\)](#) provides a common marking scale which is used across the University. This enables candidates to compare their performance in different disciplines and courses and ensures consistency in assessment.
- 2.2 The CGS is an alphanumeric scale comprising 23 discrete **Grades** grouped into seven **Bands** with an associated **Grade Point** for each grade. These Grade Points are used for the purposes of (i) determining the overall course mark from a number of components (e.g., end of course examination and/or [essay coursework](#) mark) and (ii) determining ~~overall honours degree classification or~~ progression and award within a taught postgraduate [award programme](#). Each band has two associated **Descriptors** (one for essay-based [courses assessments](#) and one for more numerical-based [courses assessments](#)). These descriptors ~~should be appropriate~~ [inform the marking rubrics](#) for ~~most~~ [all](#) assessments. There will be some forms of assessment (e.g., practical exams) where it may be necessary for these to be tailored to meet the specific learning outcomes of the assessment.
- 2.3 It is University policy that an overall grade for each course must be awarded. As well as releasing the alphanumeric CGS for the course, the associated overall course grade point (to two decimal places) will also be given to students. If grading is carried out in percentages, or in another scale, these must first be converted to the CGS prior to release to students. If a School or Discipline wishes to use a grading scale other than the CGS, this must be mapped to the CGS and approval given by the [University Committee on Teaching & Learning \(UCTL\)](#) via the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).
- 2.4 Band descriptors should be read in conjunction with the [SCQF Levels Descriptors](#) which detail the expected level of attainment at each level of study.
- 2.5 The Band Descriptors should be used to inform the judgement as to which grade should be awarded for a piece of assessment. In doing so, it is important that this is done in the context that the top band represents the best that a candidate [at that level](#) could be expected to achieve. Students should be made aware of the band descriptors for each assessment. ~~It should be noted that this means a grade obtained at one level is not equivalent to the same grade awarded at a different level.~~
- 2.6 Normally in awarding a grade, Examiners should use the band descriptor to determine which band is appropriate and should then select the middle grade within that band (i.e. Grade B2 from within the Band B1, B2 and B3). Adjustment upwards or downwards to a higher or lower grade (i.e. B1 or B3) within that band can then be determined, if appropriate, based on how well the candidate's performance meets the band descriptor. Where an assessment is more quantitative in nature, it may be possible to map directly onto the grade.
- 2.7 A Grade should be awarded for each component of assessment (i.e. each [essay piece of coursework](#) or examination question). Course grades are calculated from a weighted average of all contributing assessments. From this weighted average (to two decimal places) the overall alphanumeric Grade for the course should be determined. In some cases, it may not be considered appropriate to award a Grade directly (for example in a multiple-choice test or quantitative type test). In these cases, taking account of the band descriptors, Schools should determine the appropriate percentage (or other) scale that would be used to convert the mark to a grade on the Common Grading Scale. This information should be approved by the QAC, made readily available to all students and such conversions should be published in course ~~handbooks~~ [documentation](#) and made available to all Examiners.

Determination of Overall Course Grade

- 2.8 Most courses involve more than one component of assessment. Course grades are calculated from a weighted average of all contributing assessments. From this weighted average (to two decimal places) the overall alphanumeric Grade for the course should be determined. Candidates must be made aware of the relative weightings of each component at the outset of the course.

2.9 Each Grade on the Common Grading Scale is associated with a numerical **Grade Point** (0-22). These Grade Points are used for the purposes of determining overall course Grades.

Course grades are calculated from a weighted average of all contributing assessments. From this weighted average (to two decimal places) the overall alphanumeric Grade for the course should be determined.

For example: A course has two essays each weighted 20% and one exam weighted 60%, the Grades for which are B2, A3 and C1 respectively. The overall Grade for the course would be determined as follows:

Grade	Grade Point	Weighting	Calculation
B2	16	20%	$(20\% \times 16) + (20\% \times 20) + (60\% \times 14)$ = 3.2 + 4 + 8.4 = 15.60 <u>(2 decimal places)</u> = B3
A3	20	20%	
C1	14	60%	

Internal Examiners/Markers

2.10 [University Court Ordinance 404](#) and the ~~General Regulations for First Degrees and for Taught Postgraduate~~ [General Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards](#) indicate that the Examiners for each degree shall be the “Professors, Readers, [Senior Lecturers](#) and Lecturers in the University [including those holding such status on an honorary basis] whose courses qualify for that degree, and such External Examiners as may be appointed by the University Court”. Notwithstanding these Regulations, the Senate has agreed that Heads of School may also permit others without that status, such as Teaching Assistants, Teaching Fellows, Clinical Tutors or Recognised Teachers, (including those appointed as Relief Teachers and/or on a part-time basis) to mark prescribed degree assessments (in-course assignments and/or written examination scripts) where the Head of School is satisfied that the person concerned is sufficiently experienced to be a competent marker.

~~“Blind”~~ / Anonymous Marking

2.11 Written Examinations ~~Scripts~~²: All written examinations ~~scripts~~ must be **anonymous**, i.e., students should only be identified by candidate number, [including examinations carried out and submitted online](#). ~~For paper-based~~ [The University’s](#) examinations, booklets require candidates to write their student ID number on their scripts ~~with their name being~~, [with their name](#) concealed in a sealable section.

2.12 ~~Other Summative Assessments~~ [Coursework](#): Where appropriate, all ~~other assessments~~ [coursework](#) should be marked anonymously. In determining the appropriateness of anonymous marking, the impact of this on the quality of the feedback subsequently available to students, [as well as whether it is possible to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes for certain types of assessment if they are anonymous \(for example, it may not be possible to carry out some authentic assessment anonymously\)](#), should be considered.

Moderation Procedures

2.13 The [University’s Moderation Policy](#) is a process intended to ~~assure~~ [ensure](#) that an assessment outcome is fair and reliable and that assessment criteria have been applied consistently. The [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\) Quality Code for Higher Education](#) ~~Quality Code for Higher Education 2018~~ stipulates that ‘Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process’. Moderation must be carried out ~~prior to the return of grades~~ [before grades are returned](#) to students.

Return of Grades

2.14 Markers should provide timely feedback to students on all types of in-course assessment, including oral or clinical examinations, ~~even when the grades are summative and contribute to the overall course grade.~~

2.15 The Senate has agreed that Schools must inform students of their CGS grade for individual elements of ~~in-~~
~~course assignments~~ coursework irrespective of whether the marks are to contribute to the overall course
CGS grade. This will usually be done via the Gradebook on MyAberdeen, while the Student Hub will inform
students of their overall course CGS grade.

~~2.15 Thus, for example, for a course assessed entirely by three in-course essays, Schools should inform~~

~~students of their individual essay CGS grade (usually via MyAberdeen Grade Centre) and the Student Record (or Student Record Card via the Student Hub) will inform students of their overall course CGS grade.~~

- 2.16 ~~If a course is assessed by a combination of a written examination and continuous assessment Schools should inform students of their individual essay CGS grade (usually via MyAberdeen Grade Centre) and the Student Record (or Student Record Card via the Student Hub) will inform students of their overall course CGS grade. However, Wherever possible, it is important to provide s for students with feedback to be able to see the grades awarded for on their performance on individual questions or elements of in an exam assessment; this gives them important feedback on which areas of the course they understand well and which they may need to work at. A breakdown of exam grades can be released to students via MyAberdeen if the MyAberdeen site is set up accordingly. If not, Schools should find an alternative way to give students this vital feedback on their exam performance.~~

Data Protection

- 2.17 Schools should be aware that data protection legislation gives students the right to request access to personal data ~~held relating to them (including from 1 January 2005 such data held in manual datasets which are not structured by reference to individuals).~~ ~~Although responses recorded by students in examinations are exempt from the right of access, the University may choose to provide copies where appropriate. This could include examination scripts and~~ ~~However,~~ any written comments made by ~~E~~examiners on ~~their~~ assessed ~~ments~~ work may be subject to disclosure under subject access rights. Schools should therefore ensure that all Examiners, including External Examiners, are aware that their written comments on candidates' written examinations ~~s~~ ~~scripts~~ may be provided to students who make a formal application for disclosure of their personal data.

Section 3: Progression and Award within Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Programmes

- 3.1 If applicable, Examiners will have the right not to permit a candidate to progress any further through a taught postgraduate programme if that candidate has failed a single course or more and exhausted all opportunities for reassessment on that course. Failure on a single course will normally mean that the candidate will not be able to meet the requirements for the award that they registered for.
- 3.2 Reassessment must be taken at the next available opportunity. Examiners may decide to withdraw any student from study who does not submit themselves for reassessment in a course at the next available opportunity without good cause or medical circumstances.
- 3.3 Candidates on a PGT Programme may receive one of three awards: a Postgraduate Certificate, a Postgraduate Diploma or a Master’s Degree subject to achievement of the necessary requirements. The Postgraduate Diploma and the Master’s Degree may be awarded with Commendation or Distinction.
- 3.4 Award is based on performance across the PGT programme as a whole. The overall grade for each course is used in the determination of the award with the credit value of each course determining their relative weightings. Where a course is a compulsory part of a programme but does not contribute to the determination of the overall award this must be clearly stated. In the case of zero-credit rated courses, the relative weighting of these towards the determination of the overall award must be clearly stated.
- 3.5 Achievement of a Postgraduate Award is based on achievement of credit.
- 3.6 Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students ~~commencing their studies in or after September 2021,~~ will have their degree classification based on the Grade Point Average (GPA) system.
- 3.7 The GPA and hence whether or not the award is to be made with Commendation or Distinction is determined by aggregating the Grade Points for each course taking account of the relative weightings in terms of credit.
- 3.8 The criteria for progression and award are as follows:

Award of Postgraduate Certificate	Normally achievement of 60 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all (i.e. ≥9.00)
Award of Postgraduate Diploma	Normally achievement of 120 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all (i.e. ≥9.00)
Award of Postgraduate Diploma with Commendation *	Normally achievement of 120 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all (i.e. ≥9.00) , and a GPA of 15 or above
Award of Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction **	Normally achievement of 120 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all (i.e. ≥9.00) , and a GPA of 18 or above
Award of Master’s Degree	Normally achievement of 180 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all (i.e. ≥9.00)

Award of Master's Degree with Commendation *	Normally achievement of 180 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all (i.e. ≥ 9.00), and a GPA of 15 or above, and a grade of B3 or above in the project / dissertation
Award of Master's Degree with Distinction **	Normally achievement of 180 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all (i.e. ≥ 9.00), and a GPA of 18 or above, and normally a grade of A5 or above in the project / dissertation

* *In line with Section 4 of this Code, candidates achieving a GPA of greater than 14.49, but less than 15 will be considered borderline for the purposes of award of PG Diploma or Master's Degree with Commendation*

** *In line with Section 4 of this Code, candidates achieving a GPA of greater than 17.49, but less than 18 will be considered borderline for the purposes of award of PG Diploma or Master's Degree with Distinction*

Two illustrative examples are given below (NB: All GPA calculations are computed to 2 decimal places):

EXAMPLE 1				
Course	Weighting (credit points)	Grade	Grade Point	Course GPA (2 decimal places) Calculation
Stage 1				
AB5001	15	B1	17.40	$17.40 \times 15/180$ 1.45
AB5002	15	B3	15.30	$15.30 \times 15/180$ 1.28
AB5003	15	C2	13.90	$13.90 \times 15/180$ 1.16
AB5010	15	C3	12.00	$12.00 \times 15/180$ 1.00
Stage 2				
AB5510	30	C2	13.00	$13.00 \times 30/180$ 2.17
AB5501	30	B2	16.00	$16.00 \times 30/180$ 2.67
Stage 3				
AB5901	60	B2	16.00	$16.00 \times 60/180$ 5.33
	Total credits = 180	Total GPA = 15.06 As the student has achieved 180 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all, and a GPA of 15 or above, and a grade of B3 or above in the project / dissertation the student receives a Master's degree with Commendation.		

EXAMPLE 2				
Course	Weighting (credit points)	Grade	Grade Point	Course GPA (2 decimal places) Calculation
Stage 1				
EC5001	15	D1	11.52	$11.52 \times 15/180$ 0.96
EC5002	15	B2	16.75	$16.75 \times 15/180$ 1.40
EC5003	15	D1	11.82	$11.82 \times 15/180$ 0.99
EC5010	15	C3	12.00	$12.00 \times 15/180$ 1.00
Stage 2				
EC5510	30	C2	13.00	$13.00 \times 30/180$ 2.17
EC5501	30	B2	16.00	$16.00 \times 30/180$ 2.67

Stage 3				
EC5901	60	B2	16.00	5.33 16.00 x 60/180
	Total credits = 180	Total GPA = 14.52 As the student has achieved 180 credits with a grade of D3 or RP or better in all, <u>and</u> their GPA falls within the 14.49<GPA<15 borderline category. with a grade of B3 or above in the project / dissertation the student is considered borderline <u>for</u> <u>between</u> a Master's degree /and a Master's degree with Commendation- using the GPA.		

3.9 For exit award purposes, a student who has not achieved the credit requirements for a Master's degree may be awarded either a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) or Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip), depending on the number of credit points they have accumulated. The PGCert should be awarded on the basis of Stage 1 of the Programme Specifications; and the PGDip should be awarded on the basis of Stages 1 and 2 of the Programme Specifications. For the purpose of calculating the GPA for classification of a PGDip, the resit fail grades will be used in line with Section 6.4, if applicable.

~~3.9~~3.10 ~~In exceptional circumstances, at~~At the recommendation of the ~~examiners~~Examiners meeting, Master's Degree and Postgraduate Diploma candidates with a marginal fail (a grade of either E1, E2, or E3) in up to 30 credits may be eligible for the award of up to 30 Level 3 (SCQF Level 9) compensatory credits. In line with General Regulation 8.7 for PGT Awards, ~~F~~this may only be considered if all the following apply:

- (a) The student must have gained passes in courses amounting to 150 credits at Level 5 (SCQF Level 11)
- (b) The student must have a GPA equivalent of at least C3 (i.e. ≥12.00)
- (c) The student must have either had MC or GC in their first opportunity to sit the course and marginally failed the resit or have marginally failed their first attempt at the course and had MC or GC for the resit diet. ~~A marginal fail is called as a grade of either E1, E2, or E3.~~
- (d) The next available opportunity for the student to resit the course is not until the next academic year following completion of the programme¹.

~~3.10~~3.11 ~~The above~~Section 3.10 is also applicable to the award of a ~~Postgraduate Diploma or~~ Postgraduate Certificate. ~~However,~~ in the case of a Postgraduate Certificate, only up to 20 Level 3 credits can be awarded.

¹ For the purposes of 3.9, for January starts, if the next available opportunity for a resit is the June/July following completion of their programme, that will be considered as being in the next academic year.

Section 4: Borderline Candidates

4.1 Details of the GPA bands associated with each Postgraduate Taught Award are provided below.

Grade Point Average	Postgraduate Award
18.00-22.00	MSc with Distinction*
greater than 17.49, less than 18.00	<i>Borderline MSc Commendation/Borderline Distinction</i>
15.00 – 17.49	MSc with Commendation#
greater than 14.49, less than 15.00	<i>Borderline MSc/MSc-Borderline Commendation</i>
12.00 – 14.49	MSc
greater than 11.49, less than 12.00	MSc
9.00 – 11.49	MSc
greater than 8.49, less than 9.00	<i>Borderline Fail/MSc</i>
0.00 – 8.49	Fail

**The award of Distinction normally requires a Project grade of A5 or above*

#The award of Commendation normally requires a Project grade of B3 or above

4.2 Where a candidate is borderline for a higher class of degree, [promotion to the higher class is not automatic but Examiners will consider cases proactively](#). Examiners' Meetings will use discretion to determine whether it would be appropriate to award the higher degree outcome. In doing so, Examiners' Meetings will ~~will~~ [may](#) consider, where applicable, [any of the following](#):

- **Grade Profile:** across PGT courses (for example, if the majority of grades are in the higher award, the Examiners may consider this as grounds for upgrading);
- **Exit velocity** (NB: At *postgraduate taught* level, this can only be considered if it is relevant to a degree programme. If there is evidence that a candidate has performed sufficiently better in later parts of their PGT programme this could be considered equivalent to exit velocity);
- **Mitigating circumstances:** Candidates are, through published procedures for doing so, invited to submit supporting statements and/or evidence to provide Examiners with information on the mitigating circumstances they have experienced, [as long as these have not already been considered at course level](#).

4.3 *Viva voce* exams **are not permitted** for determining the final classification of borderline students.

4.4 In all borderline cases, the rationale for the final degree class or postgraduate award given must be clearly recorded in the minutes of Examiners' Meetings.

Section 5: Mitigating Circumstances / Impaired Performance

5.1 Mitigating circumstances/good cause (MC/GC) indicate that a student has suffered some illness or other personal difficulties which have affected their performance in an assessment or prevented them submitting an assessment or sitting an exam. Students are required to inform the University in good time, in accordance with the Policy and Procedures on Student Absence⁴. MC/GC can only be considered at either course level or at degree classification level.

5.2 In line with the Policy And Procedures On Extensions And Penalties For Unauthorised Late Submissions Of Coursework, the following list of circumstances may be considered as mitigating circumstances/good cause (MC/GC), although each application will be judged on its own merit. The list should be considered indicative and not exhaustive.

- Illness (whether physical or mental) shortly before a coursework deadline that has a notable impact on the ability to complete the assessment;
- Bereavement;
- Sudden illness or emergency involving a close family member, including unforeseen caring commitments;
- Unexpected and exceptional personal circumstances (for example, a serious or traumatic event, being the victim of a crime, etc.);
- Exceptional, unforeseen and unavoidable changes in work commitments.

5.3 The following list of circumstances will not normally be considered as mitigating circumstances/good cause (MC/GC):

- A minor illness or injury which would not reasonably have had a significant adverse impact on a student's performance;
- Circumstances which were foreseeable or preventable;
- Holidays (including visiting home, if this is in a different location to the place of study);
- Regular and planned work commitments;
- Poor planning and time-management²;
- Proximity to other assessment deadlines;
- Minor IT/Computer problems (students should regularly back up their work and make use of library and IT resources).

5.25.4 MC/GC circumstances can impact on both course grades and overall degree classification. **It is not possible to adjust the grade awarded for an assessment that is thought to have been affected by mitigating circumstances.** For example, a student submits an assignment and is awarded a C2 by the marker. The School are aware that the student has submitted a medical certificate showing that they were unwell in the lead up to the assignment and are content that this is genuine and that the grade awarded is not representative of the student's normal work. Even having accepted this, it is not possible for the Examiners

² Students experiencing extenuating circumstances and disabled students, including students who are neurodivergent and those with health conditions which may impact their time-management and planning, should contact Student Support to explore the provision of inclusion adjustments such as the adjustment for extensions to deadlines.

to make a judgement about the extent of the impact and thereby to determine the compensation which should be applied to the obtained grade, i.e. it is not possible to change the grade awarded; the work cannot be regraded to at a B2, for example, as it is not of a standard that warrants a B2. How Schools should deal with MC/GC is outlined below in Sections 5.5 and 5.6.

5.35.5 At course level:

If the Examiners are confident that the assessments already completed by the candidate prior to the mitigating circumstances provide evidence that they have met ALL the learning outcomes of the course then, subject to at least 75% weighting of the assessments for the course having been completed, an overall grade for the course may be returned on the basis of the prior assessments. For example, if a student has failed to submit (or performs badly in) one essay or lab report counting for 20% of the overall course grade due to MC/GC but all the learning outcomes of the course have been met through other essays or lab reports, the eExaminers may set aside this assessment, i.e. the C2 in Section 5.2 above, and the overall course grade will be calculated on the 80% of the course that has been completed.

Where less than 75% weighting of the components of assessment for the course have been completed, the affected assessment(s) should be set aside and the candidate should (wherever possible) be given another opportunity to take the assessment(s) with the affected attempt(s) discounted. For example, if a student has long-term, intermittent health issues which have affected several assessment(s) that contribute(s) 50% of the course grade, that student they must be offered an opportunity to resit/resubmit the affected assessments (or the entire course) with the first sitting attempt(s) being discounted. This means that, in this case, the resit/resubmission will count as a first attempt, and the grade will not be capped.

Where the Examiners do not consider the grounds presented to be sufficient good cause, the assessment should be treated in the same way as it would have been had no mitigating evidence been submitted. No partial compensation for good cause can be given.

5.45.6 At degree classification level:

Where the Examiners agree that illness or other good cause has impacted on performance it is important to determine whether or not that has already been taken into account at course level. *MC/GC cannot be taken into account at both course level and degree classification level* and can only be considered for students who are at a borderline between one degree classification and another. If mitigating circumstances have not already been considered at course level the Examiners' MMeeting may consider this as justification for moving that student into the higher degree classification.

⁴~~The University's Student Absence Policy is available here.~~

Section 6: Resits: Reassessment & Award of Compensatory Credit

- 6.1 With the exceptions listed in Section 5 ~~above~~, PGT Students who fail, or who fail to attend or complete, a course for whatever reason and who wish to be awarded credit for the relevant course will be required to resit.
- 6.2 If a student fails their ~~Resits for~~ projects/dissertations, they will be allowed to resit/resubmit. Normally, the resubmission will be based on the same project topic, and the student may be allowed to collect additional data, re-analyse data, re-write, or other work at the School's discretion. The support provided for their second attempt should consist of feedback/guidance and one additional meeting with their supervisor (or an appropriate alternative member of staff if the supervisor is not available), with any further meetings arranged if deemed appropriate by the supervisor. The resubmission deadline will be agreed by the Examiners, and will depend on the original submission, the nature of the project, and the work required in response to the feedback received. ~~are only permitted for candidates who achieve a marginal fail (E1, E2, or E3).~~ At the School's discretion, and with QAC approval, a project/dissertation resit may be assessed through a *viva voce* instead of a resubmission. Students will be informed when this applies to their assessment.
- 6.3 In order to be eligible to take a resit, a candidate must hold a valid class certificate. The validity of a class certificate is limited to the academic year in which it is awarded and to the academic year immediately following. Candidates holding a valid class certificate are permitted a total of two opportunities of assessment within this period. In other words, only one resit opportunity will be allowed. This does not apply in circumstances of GC/MC, as per Section 5.5, as in those cases the resit/resubmission would count as a first attempt.
- ~~6.4 Where a candidate fails a resit they will not normally be permitted to progress into the next stage of the programme.~~
- ~~6.5~~ 6.4 Grades achieved at resit are marked as either 'resit pass' (RP) or 'resit fail' (RF). RP are capped at CGS D3 when for the purposes of calculating the Grade Point Average (GPA) and for pass / commendation or distinction awards, except if MC/GC was granted, in line with Section 5.5. For the purpose of calculating the GPA in case of a failed resit, the actual failed grade (of the two attempts, whichever is higher) will be used.
- 6.5 In each academic year there are two assessment opportunities: the main exam diet in the relevant Term and the summer exam resit diet. Exam Resits should take place as soon as possible after the initial examination should take place at the next available diet. The timing of resit examinations is determined by individual Schools. For some courses or for some assessments it may not be possible to have the resit until the next academic year. With QAC oversight, some level of flexibility, including alternative assessment opportunities, may be provided.
- 6.6 Notwithstanding 6.5, resit/resubmission of coursework will take place at a date determined by the School, but no later than the next available exam resit diet.
- ~~6.6~~ 6.7 If the exceptional circumstances set out in Section 3.10 (a)-(d) of this Code apply, candidates with a marginal fail in up to 30 credits may be eligible for the award of up to 30 Level 3 (SCQF Level 9) compensatory credits, at the recommendation of the Examiners.

Section 7: Students who take extra credits at PGT

- 7.1 If a PGT student ~~takes extra credit, e.g. 10 credits, the GPA calculation would be out of 190 credit points and not 180cp.~~ Students should be made aware of all the implications of taking additional credit on top of a full curriculum wishes to take additional credits, they must seek permission of their School(s) to do so. If approval is given, Schools will ask students to nominate (at the point of registration for extra courses) which of their non-compulsory credits they wish to contribute to the GPA calculation for award purposes. The courses selected for award and classification purposes may not be at a level lower than Level 3 (SCQF 9). The ~~total number of credits~~ GPA calculation will remain that for of the specific programme of study (e.g. normally 180 credits for MSc). Note, this does not apply if a student is taking extra credits as a result of a fail in a non-compulsory course.

7.2 Schools must ensure that students are made aware of the implications of taking additional credit.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE
PGT POLICY REVIEW TASK AND FINISH GROUP
REMIT AND COMPOSITION

1. GROUP TITLE

Postgraduate Taught Policy Review Task and Finish Group

2. DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT

September 2025

3. CHAIR AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AREA

Chair: Dean for Student Support and Experience

Clerk: Academic Services

4. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this Task and Finish Group is to review the University's Policy related to Postgraduate Taught students and programmes to ensure that they best meet the needs of our academic community. Academic Services periodically review university policies and regulations and had identified the need to review PGT policies. In addition, members of the PGT forum had similarly identified the need to review these policies to support school PGT provision. It was agreed that we should organise a PGT Policy Review TFG to progress this work over AY 2025/26. PGT policies should be reviewed so they are appropriate for the future of PGT delivery for students studying on campus and online and across UoA campuses.

5. REMIT

The Task and Finish Group will complete the following work:

- (i) Review the following Policies:
 - [Code of Practice for Postgraduate Taught Students, Programme Coordinators, Course Coordinators and Heads of School](#)
 - [Code of Practice on Assessment for Postgraduate Taught Students](#)
 - [General Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards \(Schedule B\)](#)
 - [Code of Practice on Student Discipline \(Academic\)](#)
- (ii) Seek consultation from any relevant stakeholders through appropriate committees, groups, and networks.
- (iii) Identify and implement any required changes to the above Policies.
- (iv) Establish any connections between the above Policies and other institution policies, procedures and guidance notes, to ensure all are fully connected.
- (v) Submit paperwork for policy approval at required committees and Senate.

6. COMPOSITION

Chair: Dean for Student Support and Experience

Membership: Selection of School representatives (Academic and administrative)
 Students' Union Representatives
 Registry Representative
 QAC Representatives
 Student Support Representative
 Centre for Academic Development Representative
 Online Education Representative
 International Compliance Representative

ACCOUNT TO BE TAKEN OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN MEMBERSHIP

7. MEMBERSHIP

Representative Area	Memberships
Chair	Jason Bohan
Clerk	Isabella Fausti
School Representatives (Academic)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Vasilis Louca (Biological Sciences) 2) Emma Percy (DHPA) 3) Jakub Zbrzenzy (DHPA) 4) Shannon Babbie (Education) 5) Ines Graca (Engineering) 6) Patricia Živković (Law) 7) Leone Craig (MMSN) 8) Sandie Cleland (Psychology) 9) Ezel Tabur (Social Science)
School Representatives (Administrative)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Louise Mckenzie (Business) 2) Lyn Magee (Engineering) 3) Megan Nicolson (Engineering) 4) Julie Timms (NCS)
Students' Union Representation	Samuel Seymour (AUSA VP Education) Mungo Brown (Postgraduate Representative)
TNE Representative	Lyn Batchelor (Qatar)
QAC Representative	Alex Menshykov (Engineering) Piotr Niewiadomski (Geosciences)
Registry Representative	Robert Findlay
Student Support Representative	Jemma Murdoch
Centre for Academic Development Representative	Chloe Alexander
Online Education Representative	Jenna Stuart
International Advice and Compliance Representative	Briony Livingston
Staff representative of the Students' Union	Georgina Rolfe

8. MEMBERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Each member of the committee will contribute to discussions and feedback to their respective areas. School representatives will ensure that they use their School Education Committees and other School forums to inform feedback into PGT processes and procedures.

9. REPORTING LINE/PARENT COMMITTEE AND INTERFACE WITH OTHER GROUPS OR COMMITTEES

Formal reporting line: Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Interface with other committees: Academic Policy and Regulations Group (APRG)
University Education Committee (UEC)
Student Support and Experience Committee (SSEC)
School Education Committees

10. FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS

A minimum of four meetings to be held during Term 1 to discuss each Policy, and one meeting in Term 2, aiming for drafts to be considered during Committee Cycle 4.

University of Aberdeen

PGT Policy Review Task & Finish Group

Note of Meeting 2: Code of Practice on Assessment (PGT)

Date of meeting: 28/10/2025

Present: Jason Bohan (Chair), Chloe Alexander, Lyn Batchelor, Sandie Cleland, Leone Craig, Robert Findlay, Ines Graca, Briony Livingston, Vasilis Louca, Louise McKenzie, Alex Menshykov, Jemma Murdoch, Megan Nicolson, Emma Percy, Georgina Rolfe, Samuel Seymour, Jenna Stuart, Ezel Tabur, Patricia Živković, and Isabella Fausti (Clerk).

Apologies: Shannon Babbie, Lyn Magee, Piotr Niewiadomski, Julie Timms, and Jakub Zbrzenzy.

1. Purpose of Meeting

The group met to explore potential revisions to the [Code of Practice on Assessment \(PGT\)](#), to ensure it is clear, up-to-date, and consistent. Members shared suggestions for improvements both at the meeting and asynchronously through a shared document.

2. Key recommendations

- Update language and information to ensure it is consistent, removing UG-centric wording; ensure language doesn't exclude online and TNE provision.
- Update outdated terminology around assessments.
- Consider adding a glossary to clearly define terminology.
- Seek QAC input on classification, borderline cases, resits and extra credits.
- Consider develop more guidance/examples for Schools on applying uplift criteria with borderline cases.
- More consistency across Schools regarding resits and timing of resit diets.
- Align practice for extra credits with UG.