

QA3 Annex D

Programme design information relating to assessment under the provisions of the New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phases 2 & 3 for postgraduate taught programmes

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Assessment in the programme context

Scheme of study and scheme of assessment

1. For the purposes of describing clearly and completely a scheme of study and a scheme of assessment for a programme that is fully compliant with the NFAAR-PGT, it will be sufficient to indicate:
 - a. How the specific programme is subdivided into stages.
 - b. Which units are designated essential units.
 - c. Which, if any, units are required to be passed before progression to a subsequent stage can be determined or permitted.
 - d. Which units are of the taught type (or are part of a taught phase of the programme) and which are of the dissertation/project type (or are part of a dissertation/project phase of the programme).
 - e. Whether there is any specific average of marks (and if there is, its level — minimum 40%) from a taught stage of a programme that is required to determine eligibility to progress to a dissertation/project stage.
 - f. How any designated alternative programmes are related to the programme in question.
2. For programmes fully compliant with the NFAAR-PGT, clear reference to the centrally-maintained description of the regulations and a succinct tabular definition of the specific programme details will satisfactorily meet points 1.a–f above. An illustration is provided in [Appendix 1: Scheme of study and scheme of assessment details](#).
3. In any case where an exemption from a specific provision of the NFAAR-PGT has been approved for a specific programme, the owning academic department/school must ensure that the scheme of study and/or scheme of assessment include full and clear explanation of the special provisions approved for that programme.

Defining parts and stages

4. The structure of each programme of study for the purpose of setting out its summative assessment will be described in terms of parts and stages, such that:
 - a. Completion of each stage is determined by the outcomes of summative assessment that is normally both progress assessment and final assessment.
 - b. Summative assessment in Part 4 will normally be progress assessment and final assessment and will contribute to the calculation for an award in due course as well as being used to determine the student's fitness to continue on the programme and/or to proceed to the next stage of a programme, where appropriate.
5. Frequently occurring programme structures are illustrated in these terms in Appendix 2: Examples of programme structures. In accordance with normal programme and unit creation and modification procedures, upon the recommendation of academic departments/schools and having regard for broad types of programmes, other allocations of stages may be approved.
6. Neither a part nor a stage will be shorter in duration than one semester.
7. Normally, any supplementary assessments to be undertaken by students who have failed to meet the requirements for progression to the next stage of a programme will occur, and must be satisfactorily completed, before progression to the next stage is permitted. [Appendix 3: Stage progression](#) gives further information about the relationship between the definition of stages and the definition of the units that

determine eligibility to progress. See also NFAAR-PGT, Appendix 7: Supplementary assessment.” Assessment weightings in the calculation of averages.

8. Within Part 4 assessment, the contribution of a unit’s assessment to the progression and/or award calculations will normally be directly proportional to the credit-values of the units concerned.
9. The contributions of units to progression and award decisions will be according to their place in a relevant programme, rather than the assigned level of the unit: FHEQ 4, 5, 6 and 7 (ie. Certificate (C), Intermediate (I), Honours (H), and Master (M)).
10. Contributions from Part 4 summative assessments may be aggregated in the calculation of specified averages for progression, or for award, decision-making.
11. Further details about units’ credit-weighted values in assessment are set out in [Appendix 4: Unit weightings in the calculation of averages](#)~~Appendix 4: Unit weightings in the calculation of averages.~~

Designated essential units

12. In accordance with normal programme and unit creation and modification procedures, upon the recommendation of academic departments/schools and having regard for broad types of programmes, units may be classed as designated essential units for specified programmes. (Designated essential units (DEUs) are those which must be passed in order to qualify to proceed with a programme or to receive its normal award at the end. Marginal failure in such units cannot be condoned.)
13. Any designated essential units will be clearly specified in the scheme of study for that programme.

Stage required units

14. In accordance with normal programme and unit creation and modification procedures, upon the recommendation of academic departments/schools and having regard for the characteristics of PGT programmes, units may be classed as stage required units or not stage required units for specified programmes.
15. Any stage required units will be clearly specified in the scheme of study for that programme, and any failure must be retrieved through supplementary assessment before eligibility for progression to the next stage will be determined or permitted.

Appendix 1: Scheme of study and scheme of assessment details

Figure 1: Table showing a hypothetical one-year full-time programme

Programme code	TXXX-AFM01									
Programme title	Public Science Policy									
Award type	Master of Science									
Award title	Public Science Policy									
Mode of Attendance	Full-time									
Length	12 months									
State if coexistent M-level programme	-									
State any designated alternative programme(s)	TXXX-AFB02 Public Science Policy (9-months full-time) leading to PG Diploma award									
Approving body and date of approval	Board of Studies for the Faculty of ... 16 January 2010									
Part	Stage	Normal period of study for this Mode		Unit code	Unit title	Unit status	Credits	DEU status	SRU status	Taught, or Dissert'n/ project credits
4	1	Yr 1	Sem 1	XX50399	Full unit title as formally approved	C	12	-	Not SRU	TSC
		Yr 1	Sem 1	XX50206	Full unit title as formally approved	C	12	-	Not SRU	TSC
		Yr 1	Sem 1	XX30111	Full unit title as formally approved	C	6	-	Not SRU	TSC
		Yr 1	Sem 2	XX50441	Full unit title as formally approved	O Take 12 credits	12	DEU	Not SRU	TSC
		Yr 1	Sem 2	XX50466	Full unit title as formally approved		12	DEU	Not SRU	TSC
		Yr 1	Sem 2	XX50223	Full unit title as formally approved	O Take 12 credits	12	-	Not SRU	TSC
		Yr 1	Sem 2	XX50101	Full unit title as formally approved		12	-	Not SRU	TSC
	Yr 1	Sem 2	XX50349	Full unit title as formally approved	C	6	DEU	SRU	TSC	
2	Yr 1	Sum-mer	XX50377	Full unit title as formally approved	C	30	DEU	SRU	DPC	
Assessment weightings and decision references										
Stage	Weighting within programme		NFAAR-PGT decisions reference See: http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/nfa/index.htm							
Stage 1	60 / 90 credits (2/3)		All assessment: Appendix 11 Programme progression requirement (PPR): Not applicable							
Stage 2	30 / 90 credits (1/3)		All assessment: Appendix 11							

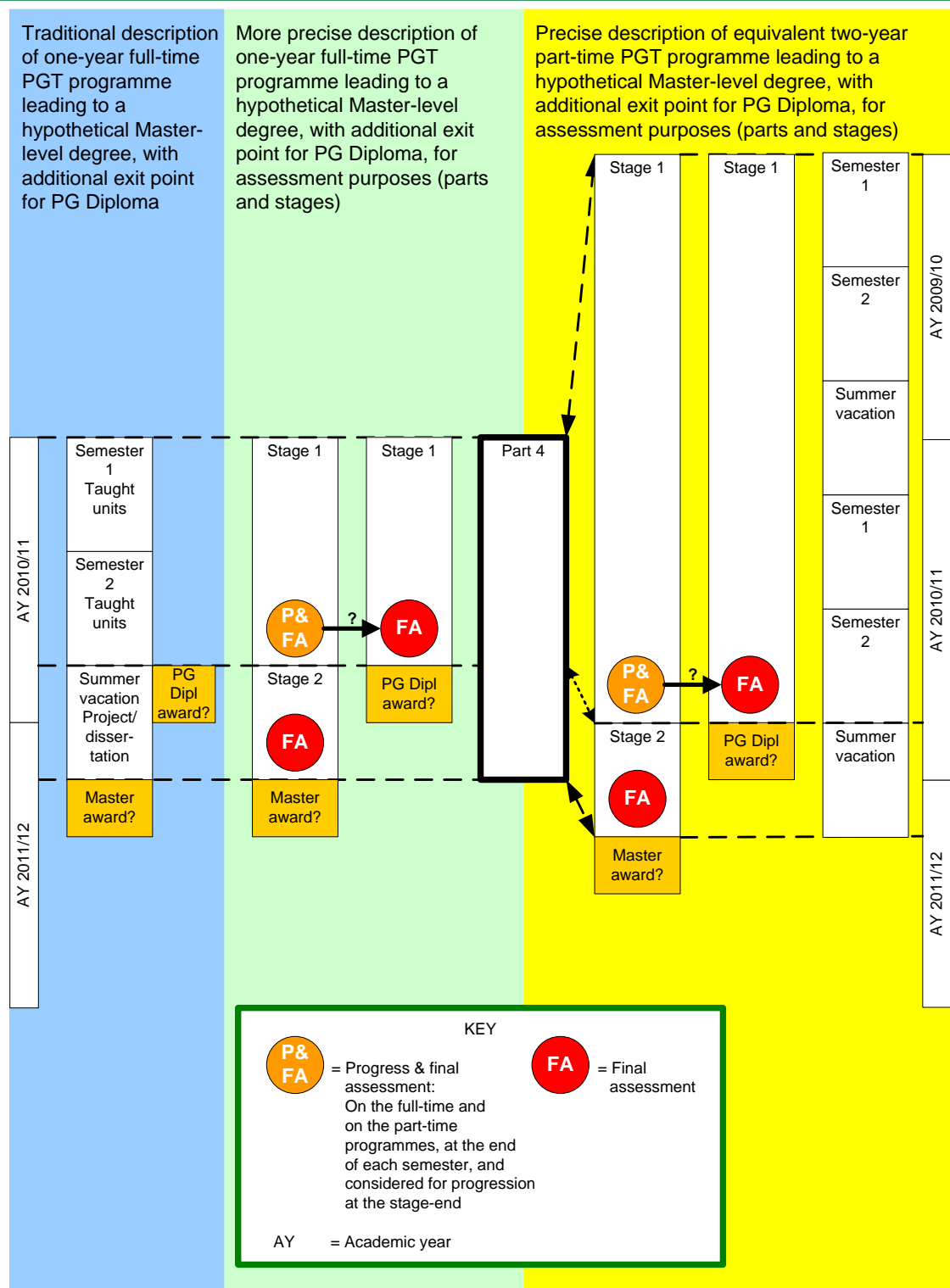
Appendix 2: Examples of programme structures

Figure 2: Stages in typical full-time Master programmes

Examples of programme structures within Part 4 assessment contexts				
Semester 1	Stage 1 60 credits of taught units ----- No progression points within the (taught) stage ----- The taught stage has to be successfully completed before the project/dissertation stage can be started *	Stage 1 90 credits of mixed unit types running in parallel ----- No progression points within the programme ----- 42 credits of taught-type units running in the two semesters	Stage 1 30 credits of taught units ----- Some taught units in this stage must be passed to progress safely into Stage 2 *	Stage 1 60 credits of taught units and a 30-credit project/dissertation unit ----- No progression points within the programme (though, for example, failure beyond certain thresholds could lead to termination of registration)
	Semester 2	48 credits of project/dissertation-type units running throughout the entire calendar year -----	Stage 2 30 credits of taught units ----- The two taught stages have to be successfully completed before the project/dissertation stage can be started *	
	Summer vacation	Stage 2 30 credit project/dissertation unit -----	Stage 3 30 credit project/dissertation unit -----	
	Notes A particular programme might have defined PG Cert and PG Dipl awards that could be gained for appropriate achievements in Stage 1 (30, or 60, credits respectively). Some programmes might have an additional progression requirement to start Stage 2 – not just passing taught units but getting 50% overall stage average.	Notes The equivalence between this type of programme and a more traditional two-semester (taught) and summer vacation (dissertation) is achieved by defining unit types.	Notes A programme of this type might have defined PG Cert award available at the end of Stage 1 and a defined PG Dipl award available at the end of Stage 2. The identification of separate stages for Semesters 1 and 2 indicates the need satisfactorily to complete the assessment for Stage 1 before progressing.	Notes A programme of this type has no progression points defined by separate stages. Subject to what is available when, the student might be able to choose which units to take and in what order. The equivalence between this type of programme and a more traditional two-semester (taught) and summer vacation (dissertation) is achieved by defining unit types.
<p>In all cases, parity in the assessment criteria for an award is achieved by distinguishing the types of credit that contribute to the total. For example, a Master award with distinction depends on achieving an overall programme average (OPA) of at least 70.00% as well as a dissertation/project average (DPA) of at least 70.00% and a taught-stage(s) average (TSA) of at least 60.00%. The definitions for DPA and TSA are such that they can be used even when those types of units are not separated out into distinct stages.</p>				
<p>* Where stages are specified, the general principle is that <i>all</i> stage assessment must be successfully completed before progression is permitted – in other words, that all units are stage-required units (SRUs). However, if some units are defined as non-SRUs, any supplementary assessment required will only have to be completed before the end of the programme.</p>				

See [Appendix 3: Stage progression](#) for further information about the relationship between the definition of stages and the definition of the units that determine eligibility to progress.

Figure 3: Equivalent parts and stages in full-time and part-time programmes



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Appendix 3: Stage progression

1. Some aspects of stage progression requirements are illustrated in [Figure 2: Stages in typical full-time Master programmes](#) in Appendix 2: Examples of programme structures.
2. Within PGT programmes that are defined as being entirely Part 4 for assessment purposes, stages may or may not be necessary.
3. If stages are defined, the principle being adopted is that each stage must be successfully completed before progression to the next will be permitted.
4. As an example, the full-time two-semester taught phase of a ~~m~~Master programme might be defined as Stage 1, such that it must be completed before the student can embark on Stage 2, the dissertation or project phase. This completion of the taught Stage 1 might be required, for example:
 - a. To ensure that all of the units, which are all designated essential units (DEUs), will have been passed before the student is permitted to embark on the dissertation or project unit because otherwise it would be impossible to know for certain that such progression would be worthwhile.
 - b. To ensure that all of the units, which are all stage required units (SRUs), will have been understood before the student is permitted to embark on the dissertation or project unit because otherwise it would be impossible to know for certain that such progression would be worthwhile.
5. However, it is possible, by defining some units as SRUs and others as non-SRUs to ensure that progression would be held up, pending successful supplementary assessment for units which *are* required for progression to be safe, while for some units (the non-SRUs) it would be acceptable to retrieve failure at the same time as undertaking the dissertation/project phase of the programme. Thus, a *dissertation-preparation* unit might be the sole SRU within a taught stage, with all other units being defined as non-SRUs. This would ensure that the one unit which was singularly critical as preparation for the dissertation phase would have been successfully completed.
6. Limiting the extent of SRUs within a programme made up of separate stages will not mean that students may proceed with significant proportions of supplementary assessment outstanding, since that possibility will always be limited by the existence of the persistent generic PGT rules:
 - a. *Compensation of condonable failures rule*: marginal failure marks of 35%-39% in other than designated essential units (DEUs) in no more than 20% of the taught stage credits (TSC) will be condoned (C1 or C2) and will not stop a student from continuing study for the current award aim (Master).
 - b. *Maximum retrieval rule*: no more than 18 credits for taught units (TSC) towards a Master or a Postgraduate Diploma award, and no more than 12 credits for taught units (TSC) towards a Postgraduate Certificate award, may be retrieved after failure by means of passing supplementary assessment (P2 or C2).

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Appendix 4: Unit weightings in the calculation of averages

1. The programmes covered by the NFAAR-PGT are closely defined. For a Master degree, they are almost exclusively either of twelve months' duration, or have an equivalent load spread out over a longer part-time period of study. Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma periods of study are normally one, or two, full-time semesters respectively, or have equivalent loads spread out over longer part-time periods of study.
2. Similarly, these programmes are designed as being at Master level: those leading to a Master degree, as well as those leading to Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma awards, are all designed to have a very high minimum of Master-level units — if they are not exclusively made up of Master-level units.
3. These features combine with the normal use of credit as a measure of relative workload in the design of programmes of study to produce a very consistent set of conditions. When credit is then considered in relation to assessment (and granted in recognition of the successful completion of a unit), it makes sense to treat all units required within these tightly constrained programmes of study as contributing value proportionate to their credits to any award calculation.
4. Thus, units are weighted according to their proportion of the total credit requirement for an award, or for progression decisions on the way to the intended award, according to the following general principles:
 - a. For the purpose of determining eligibility for the award of Master with merit or Master with distinction:
 - The Overall Programme Average (OPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the programme.
 - The Dissertation/Project Average (DPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) required to contribute to the dissertation/project stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) defined as of *Dissertation/project* type required to contribute to the programme.
 - The Taught Stage Average (TSA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the taught stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units defined as of *Taught* type required to contribute to the programme.
 - b. For the purpose of determining eligibility for the award of Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma or Master, or of Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma with merit, or of Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma with distinction:
 - The Overall Programme Average (OPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the programme.
 - c. For the purpose of determining progression decisions between stages, an Overall Stage Average (OSA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) required to contribute to the relevant stage.

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