



Union
Theological
College

Study Regulations for PTFI Postgraduate Taught Programmes



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Study Regulations for PTFI Postgraduate Taught Programmes

The Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland (PTFI), confers the following awards on candidates who have successfully completed an approved postgraduate programme of study. These regulations cover Postgraduate Certificates, Postgraduate Diplomas, and Master's Degrees.

The following awards for Postgraduate Certificates, Postgraduate Diplomas, and Master's Degrees may be made:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Biblical Greek (PGCert)
- Master of Arts (Theology) (MA)
- Master of Divinity (MDiv)
- Master of Theology (MTh)

The regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes (PGT) are approved by the Faculty.

These regulations should be read in conjunction with the following policies including, but not limited to:

- Assessment Policy
- Externality Policy
- Student Disability Policy
- Common Grading Scale
- Academic Appeals Procedure

1. Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme

1.1 The College operates a Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) under which each module is assigned a level and a number of credit points reflecting the value of the module or unit.

1.2 The scale, which is based on 120 credit points for each academic year of full-time study, is widely accepted in universities throughout the United Kingdom and is intended to facilitate transfer between institutions. It is also compatible with the European Credit Transfer Accumulation System (ECTS) which uses a scale of 60 credit points for each academic year of study. CATS points are converted to ECTS points by dividing the College's points by two. ECTS points are converted to CAT's points by multiplying the ECTS points by two.

1.3 Credit is awarded on successful completion of a module.

1.4 There is no gradation of credit points for different levels of performance.

1.5 Subject to the agreement of the Principal (or nominee), students may transfer credit gained at this or another Higher Education Institution, provided that the credit has not contributed to another degree or other



qualification (see UTC RPL Procedures). Credit awarded for courses undertaken elsewhere will be so designated on transcripts issued by the College.

1.6 The general limit for the validity of credit is 10 years.

2. Postgraduate Taught Programmes

2.1 To qualify for a Postgraduate Certificate, the credits gained must amount to at least 60 at level 7 and meet the requirements of the relevant programme specification.

2.2 A person who has been awarded a Postgraduate Certificate from the College shall be admitted on request to a related programme in which the College offers a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's Degree. This is conditional on:

- i. The continuing validity of credit (see 1.6).
- ii. A pre-existing relationship between the Postgraduate Certificate and the Postgraduate Diploma or Master's Degree, outlined in the relevant programme specifications.
- iii. Any applicable visa and immigration requirements being met.
- iv. The person agreeing to surrender the Postgraduate Certificate to the College on successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma or Master's Degree.
- v. Confirmation that the person has not previously been required to withdraw from the specific Postgraduate Diploma or Master's Degree programme.

2.3 To qualify for a Postgraduate Diploma, the credits gained must amount to at least 120 at level 7 and meet the requirements of the relevant programme specification.

2.4 A person who has been awarded a Postgraduate Diploma from the College shall be admitted on request to a related programme in which the College offers a Master's Degree. This is conditional on:

- i. The continuing validity of credit (see 1.6).
- ii. A pre-existing relationship between the Postgraduate Diploma and the Master's Degree, outlined in the relevant programme specifications.
- iii. Any applicable visa and immigration requirements being met.
- iv. The person agreeing to surrender the Postgraduate Diploma to the College on successful completion of the Master's Degree, except in cases where continuing possession of the Postgraduate Diploma is a professional requirement.
- v. Confirmation that the person has not previously been required to withdraw from the specific Master's Degree programme.

2.5 To qualify for a Master's Degree, the credits gained must amount to at least 180 at level 7 and meet the requirements of the relevant programme specification.



3. Module Enrolment and Requirements

3.1 The Registrar shall be responsible for putting in place the mechanisms for ensuring that all students are properly enrolled on the correct modules.

3.2. Module coordinators are responsible for ensuring that students are informed of the requirements for passing a module not later than the first lecture of the module. This information is contained in the module outline which is published on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). No change may be made to either the contents or assessment after this without the written permission of the Principal and a revised statement must then be issued to students.

3.3 of the Personal Tutor and Programme Coordinator and are available to provide students with guidance and advice about matters pertaining to module enrolment and programme requirements. .

3.4 Choice of modules may be subject to the constraints of timetabling and module availability.

It is possible that a module listed will not be able to run due to reasons beyond the College's control. It is also possible the module availability will be limited by maximum class sizes. Students will be contacted in advance if their module choices are affected by any of these issues.

3.5 Students may not change the modules for which they are enrolled without the formal written approval of their Programme Coordinator. No such changes will be permitted after the second week of the relevant module, except where there are exceptional circumstances, in which case students may be permitted to take a replacement module in a subsequent semester if this is permitted in the relevant programme specification.

3.6 All modules and programmes shall be subject to review in accordance with procedures laid down by the Faculty.

3.7 International Students are reminded that UTC has a responsibility to inform the UKVI should attendance fall below their prescribed threshold of 85%.

3.8 Duration of Studies

A full-time student would normally be expected to study 180 credits for a master's degree over three semesters in a 12-month period; two semesters of full-time study for the Postgraduate Diploma; or one semester for the Postgraduate Certificate.

A part-time student would normally be expected to study 180 credits for a master's degree in a period up to four years; and postgraduate diplomas and postgraduate corticates in a period up to three years.

4. Examinations and Assessment

4.1 Procedures

4.1.1 Forms of assessment may take place at any point in the academic year.



4.1.2 The decision on whether to attempt an assessment and the consequences of that decision shall remain the sole responsibility of each student.

4.2 Late Submission of Assessed Work

4.2.1 Assessed work, including dissertations, submitted after the deadline will be penalised at the rate of 5% of the total marks available for each working day late up to a maximum of five working days, after which a mark of zero shall be awarded, i.e., day one is 100% - 5%; day two is 100% - 10%; day three is 100% - 15%, etc. Where the assessed work component accounts for a certain proportion of the module mark, the 5% penalty will apply to the assessed component mark only and not to the overall module mark.

4.2.2 Exemptions shall be granted to 4.2.1 only if there are exceptional circumstances, and where the student has made a case in writing to the SEAA within three working days of the deadline for. Extensions to deadlines shall be proportionate to the impact of the exceptional circumstances.

4.2.3 If students require special arrangements to be made, e.g. on the grounds of disability, it is their responsibility to bring this to the attention of the College Disability Officer as early as possible. Details of any extensions and exemptions will be included in the reasonable adjustment.

5. Request for Concessions Based on Exceptional Circumstances

5.1 Exceptional circumstances for the purposes of assessment decisions are defined as unforeseen factors or factors outside the student's control which may adversely affect performance, such as illness during an examination.

5.2 If a student has disclosed a fluctuating condition related to a disability and registered with the Disability Officer, they will have been given provision for flexible deadlines related to that condition and this should be dealt with under the Student Disability Policy and not under exceptional circumstances.

5.3 If a student suffers from a disability or an ongoing medical condition, but has not registered with the Disability Officer, the College will not be aware of their condition, and a request for concession for exceptional circumstances will be required.

5.4 Evidence of exceptional circumstances must be submitted to the College on the appropriate form within three working days of returning to study.

5.5 If a student knows they are going to miss an assignment deadline because of exceptional circumstances, they should inform the SEAA in advance by telephone or email / letter of their enforced absence, either personally or, if this is not possible, via someone on their behalf.

5.6 The Board of Examiners is not obliged to consider any medical certificate or evidence of exceptional circumstances presented after the published deadline. The exception to this is where a concession has been granted on the grounds of a student's disability.

5.7 Evidence of exceptional circumstances and, where required, their impact on academic performance presented during the Assessment period will be considered by the Board of Examiners.

5.8 Evidence of exceptional circumstances and, where required, their impact on academic performance presented during the Teaching period, in relation to continuous assessment, will be considered by the SEAA where such consideration will facilitate a timely decision.



5.9 Extra marks shall not be awarded to compensate for exceptional circumstances.

6. Boards of Examiners

6.1 Requirements

6.1.1 College examinations and assessments shall be conducted under the supervision and control of the PTFI Boards of Examiners which has the following responsibilities with respect to PGT programmes (see PTFI Terms of Reference):

- i. Examine and award degrees in Theology and cognate subjects to graduate-entry students in Union Theological College on the recommendation of Faculty.
- ii. Approve new programmes and major changes to programmes on the recommendation of Faculty
- iii. Make and alter any statutes and regulations (lawfully and within provisions of the Charter) concerning: the examination and qualifications for degrees or other distinctions; the mode and time for convening meetings of PTFI.

6.1.2 The College Internal Exam Board has the following responsibilities with respect to PGT programmes (see Internal Exam Board Terms of Reference).

- i. To ensure that the assessment procedures for which it is responsible have been carried out in a proper and impartial manner and in accordance with the approved policies. This includes the scrutinising all module outlines prior to their recommendation to Faculty.
- ii. To refer all new summative assessment tasks (including level-7 dissertation proposals) to the appropriate External Examiner for approval to ensure that they are correct and at an appropriate level and standard for the module concerned.
- iii. To consider any comments or advice provided by External Examiners with regards to summative assessment tasks and respond as required.
- iv. To oversee the marking, moderation, and external scrutiny of all summative assessments.
- v. To ensure that the decisions and recommendations brought to the PTFI Board of Examiners are arrived at in a proper and timely manner.

6.2 Appointment of Examiners

6.2.1 Internal Examiners: Internal examiners are drawn from the academic staff teaching the subject.

6.2.2 External Examiners: External examiners shall be appointed by the Faculty and reported to the Management Committee. to serve on the PTFI Board of Examiners according to the Externality Policy for UTC programmes.

6.3 Procedures of the PTFI Board of Examiners

6.3.1 The Chairperson of the PTFI Board of Examiners shall be responsible for ensuring that the approved procedures and regulations are followed by the Board and that the correct marks are published by the College.



6.3.2 The Secretary of the PTFI Board of Examiners shall be responsible for keeping a record of all decisions and the reasoning behind them.

6.3.3 The minutes of all meetings of the PTFI Board of Examiners shall be retained by the College Office.

6.3.4 External examiners must annually attend the PTFI Board of Examiners meeting at which award decisions are taken.

6.3.5 In cases where external examiners are not present, they must be fully consulted other means. It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson of the PTFI Board of Examiners to ensure that the views of the other external examiners are presented to the Board.

6.3.6 If the opinion of the PTFI Board of Examiners is equally divided, the Chairperson of the Board shall have the final casting vote (in addition to the Chairperson's original vote as a member of the Board of Examiners). In all other cases it will be the majority decision of the members present of the Board of Examiners that will be upheld.

6.3.7 Where, in exceptional cases, issues of timing of student matters affect the decision-making capacity of the PTFI Board of Examiners, the Chair will be granted the power to make any subsequent decision.

6.4 Awarding Credit and Resit Requirements

6.4.1 Decisions regarding the award of credit shall be taken by the relevant PTFI Board of Examiners by applying these regulations.

6.4.2 Assessed components of modules shall be marked to an integer on a scale of 0-100. For all qualitative assessments this must be according to the characteristics identified on the Common Grading Scale (see Appendix A)

6.4.3 To be awarded a pass for a module, students must demonstrate all the module's specified learning outcomes as well as achieving an overall pass mark for that module (see 8.1.1). Where an learning outcome is assessed by a combination of assessment elements a minimum mark in each component is not required, unless a participate programme or module requirement stipulates otherwise.

6.4.4 The pass mark at level 7 is 50%.

6.4.5 Where a student has not attained an overall pass mark for a module but has met the required standard in one or more of the compulsory components, the student must resit those components necessary in order to complete and pass the module. In these repeats the maximum mark will be capped at the pass mark. The resit period will be determined by the Exam Board.

6.4.6 Students may be permitted to retake failed modules, subject to programme regulations and regulation 6.4.14 below. Fees for these modules (including a registration fee) will be charged at the rate of the academic year that they are taken in.



6.4.7 Where a student has failed to pass a module they may resit, or exceptionally take as a first sitting, an assessment which contributes to the requirements for passing the module, at or before the designated resit period before the end of the academic year.

6.4.8 Where there is more than one component of assessment for a module, regulations 6.4.4-6.4.5 provides the framework for identifying which assessments students should be permitted and required to undertake.

6.4.9 When a failed component of assessment is to be retaken, students may be permitted to undertake an alternative form of assessment in lieu of the failed component, but only if the alternative assessment examines the specific learning outcomes associated with the failed component.

6.4.10 Students will not be permitted to resit, or take as a first sit, modules which they have passed.

6.4.11 Students will not be permitted to take additional modules to substitute for modules already passed.

6.4.12 When a module is retaken, the maximum mark for that module will be capped at the pass mark.

6.4.13 If a module is no longer being offered, students will have to take a substitute module at the same level as the original module. For modules substituted in this way, or where the student chooses to take another module in place of a failed module, the maximum mark will be the pass mark.. The substituted module must be identified as such at enrolment.

6.4.14 Students who have failed a module twice (one first sit and one resit) must meet with their Programme Coordinator and normally will not be permitted to repeat that module again.

6.4.15 Persistent failures may lead to the student being required to withdraw from the Programme.

6.5 Release of Module Marks to Students

6.5.1 The only module marks to be released to a student are those which have been agreed by the PTFI Board of Examiners and signed by the Chairperson and Registrar and where applicable the external examiner(s).

6.5.2 The formal mechanism for providing marks to individual students shall be through the College Office.

6.5.3 Marks will be released to third parties only with the permission of the student.

6.6 Decisions on Student Progress and Award

Decisions regarding student progress and award shall be made by the PTFI Board of Examiners.

6.7 The Board of Examiners: Exceptional Circumstances

6.7.1 During a period of study, students may encounter significant personal difficulties that impact on their ability to study for or complete academic assessment(s), including examinations. In order for such circumstances to be taken account of with regard to assessment, students need to make a timely EC claim, fully supported with documentary evidence.



6.7.2 The College will not ordinarily accept an EC claim once an assignment has been submitted by the agreed deadline (or agreed extended deadline). In these cases, the College assumes that the student has judged themselves fit to undertake the assessment and so no concurrent or subsequent claim for extenuating circumstances relating to the assessment will be accepted. This also applies to partial submission of coursework – so an EC claim cannot be made for a piece of unfinished work submitted before the deadline.

6.7.3 Where a student is prevented by illness or other sufficient cause from taking or completing any assessed component of a module including any practical, written or oral examination, the Board of Examiners should either:

- a. In cases where the student has attempted the assessed components but failed the module:
 - i. Require the student to resubmit failed coursework within a set time limit as a first attempt.
 - ii. Permit the student to repeat a failed examination as a first attempt.
 - iii. Permit the student to retake the failed module as a first attempt.
- b. In cases where a student is prevented by illness or other sufficient cause from taking or completing any assessed component of a module:
 - i. Require the student to take the assessment at the next available opportunity or to take a special assessment for full marks.
 - ii. Reviews the student's overall academic profile and considers awarding a pass for the module, or, if the Board of Examiners so decides, require the student to undertake a further special assessment for classification purposes.

6.7.4 Where a pass is awarded, under regulation 6.7.3 b.ii the Board may either:

- i. Calculate the overall mark for the award on the basis of the remaining modules; or
- ii. Calculate a mark for that module based on the average of the remaining modules.

The number of modules awarded a pass under regulation 6.7.3b.ii shall be at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, but in any event shall not be more than one sixth of the marks contributing to the overall mark for the award.

6.7.5 The powers of Boards of Examiners to apply these procedures shall cease when the degree results have been confirmed, except:

- i. Where a student's disability or illness has prevented them being subjected to a further written or practical test by the time the pass list is confirmed, the examiners may append to the record list a statement, 'The result in the case of ... will be determined after further examination'. The student may thereafter be examined and a result confirmed up to and including 30 September following; or
- ii. Where a student has appealed the decision of the Board of Examiners under the Academic Appeal Procedure.



7. Student Support Meetings

7.1 Where a student has not met the requirements to progress, or is required to withdraw, the College will call the student to a Student Support Meeting within 10 working days of the deadline for the publication of results.

7.2 The College may also call students about whom they have a general concern following the publication of results.

7.3 The purpose of the meeting is to explain the academic progress decision to the student and ensure that appropriate support is in place.

7.4 Student Support Meetings must include at least two members of senior College staff who are appropriately qualified to advise students on their progress.

7.5 Where possible, the College should ensure a gender balance in the membership of the meeting.

7.6 Student Support Meetings have no decision-making authority regarding a student's progress and cannot consider evidence of exceptional circumstances which students present at the meeting. Students presenting evidence of exceptional circumstances at this point should only be advised by the Support Meeting to appeal through the College's Academic Appeals Procedures if the evidence is new and could not have been presented to the SEAA.

7.7 All advice given to the student at the meeting should be recorded in the minutes.

8. Mark Scales and Awards

Note: Common Grading Scale at Appendix A

8.1.1 The pass mark for taught postgraduate modules is 50%:

8.1.2 The programme mark shall be calculated from the weighted average of the module marks, and shall be rounded to an integer.

8.1.3 The Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma shall be awarded as exit points only. Where the credit accumulated exceeds the requisite amount for the exit award being conferred, only the credits with the highest marks that make up the required amount shall be selected to calculate the overall average.

8.1.4 For Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Master's Degree results there is a common mark scale as follows:

70+	Pass with distinction*
60+	Pass with merit
50+	Pass
Below 50	Fail

*A student qualifies with distinction in the Master's degree if the overall average of the taught modules is at least 70%, with a mark of at least 70 in the Master's project/dissertation.



9. Publication of Examination Results

9.1 The appropriate forms shall be signed by the Chairperson and the Registrar and, where applicable, by the external examiner(s) and retained by the College Office. Individual result sheets shall be signed by the Chairperson or Registrar.

9.2 The results of the degree examinations shall be confirmed by the College Board of Examiners and published by the College Office.

9.3 Any changes to published marks must be approved by the Principal.

10. Posthumous Awards

Where a student dies before the degree or diploma for which they are studying has been conferred, the following will apply:

- i. Where the student has fulfilled all the course requirements, has completed all the formal examinations and has qualified for the award of the degree or diploma, the College shall confer the degree or diploma subject to the consent of the next-of-kin;
- ii. Where the student dies at an earlier stage in the course than defined in i. the Board of Examiners shall not recommend the award of a degree or diploma, but shall confirm the results of any module or part of the course which the student has completed.

11. Appeal Against a Decision of a Board of Examiners

For appeal against a decision of the College Board of Examiners on progression, assessment and awards, see the Academic Appeals Procedures.

12. Revocation of Awards

In accordance with the Charter the authority to revoke a degree or other award of the College rests with the PTFI, following a recommendation by the Faculty.

Appendix A: Common Grading Scale - Postgraduate

	Mark Band	Characteristics
An exceptional answer that reflects outstanding knowledge of material and critical ability ≥ 70	80 and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superlative work, logically presented and worthy of publication • Coherent and compelling work logically presented • Authoritative knowledge and understanding • Clear evidence of independence of thought and originality • Exemplary methodological rigour • High critical judgement and confident grasp of complex issues • Evidence of innovative and original use of sources • The very highest standards of presentation
	70–79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coherent and compelling work logically presented • Thorough and systematic knowledge and understanding • Originality • Methodological rigour • Very good critical judgement and grasp of complex issues • A wide range of sources used selectively • High standards of presentation
A coherent and logical answer that demonstrates critical evaluation	60–69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coherent work logically presented • Very good knowledge and understanding of key issues • Some evidence of originality • Sound methodology • Relevant sources used effectively to support argument/discussion • Critical judgement and good grasp of complex issues • Very good standards of presentation
A coherent and logical answer which shows understanding of the basic principles	50–59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competent work in places but lacks fluency/coherence • Work displays knowledge and understanding in most areas but the standard of work is variable • Evidence of clear thinking but lacks insight • Largely descriptive or narrative in focus • Relevant sources used to support argument/discussion • Methodological application is not consistent or thorough • Limited evidence of a critical approach and of the ability to evaluate • Satisfactory standards of presentation

A failing answer with limited knowledge of core material and limited critical ability	40–49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weaknesses in structure, fluency and/or coherence • Lacking methodological application • Superficial understanding of some key issues • Key issues misunderstood or not addressed • Gaps in the use of relevant sources used to support work • Only limited evidence of a critical approach and of the ability to evaluate • Presentational weaknesses
A weak fail	0–39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is confused and incoherent • Limited or no use of relevant sources to support work • Disorganised presentation • Lack of understanding of, or focus on key issues • No evidence of methodology • Poor presentation

Module content should be interpreted as the topic or area of research being undertaken in the study in keeping with the learning outcomes for the module. The above criteria can be applied to both taught modules at M-level and the M-level dissertation (ignoring reference to module content)