



## Marks and Standards (2016)

Version 30 March 2020

**Applicability:**

These regulations apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate students in 2018-19 and beyond.

The following describes the Marks and Standards for programmes at Maynooth University. Maynooth University uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). These Marks and Standards should be read in conjunction with the Module Information, the Programme Specification and the Departmental Handbook for details of specific requirements of modules, entry criteria for modules with restricted entry, and deadlines and penalties.

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## Definitions

### Module

A module is a unit of study. The typical workload required to complete a module is indicated by the credit value of the module. While students may vary in pace of work, the general calculation is that one credit represents 25 hours of student work. A normal academic year of full time study over two semesters is 60 credits. Programmes which involve full time study for the full year (12 months) are normally 90 credits.

### Programme

A programme is a course of study leading to an award of the University. The programme description will include the subjects to be studied in each period of study or year, the modules which comprise the programme and the number of credits required in each subject and period of study.

### Subject

A subject is a subset of a programme of study, normally focussed on a specific discipline. Some programmes are single subject programmes. A subject may have defined requirements which must be met in order to progress in that subject, or graduate with an award in that subject.

### Period of Study

A programme of study, and a subject, may be divided into periods of study, which are normally academic years. Students are normally required to reach a certain standard in each period of study before progressing to the next.

### Terminology

	Possible outcomes
Module	Passed Passed by compensation Incomplete/Not passed
Programme	Completed Incomplete
Period of study	Progress Restricted Not progress
Subject (in a period of study)	Passed Passed by compensation Incomplete/ Not passed

## Registration

Students must register for their overall programme of study or qualification, each subject therein and all modules that they are taking during the year at the registration period at the beginning of each academic year. Restrictions may apply for enrolment in optional/elective modules that have restricted entry.

First-Year undergraduate students may change subjects and modules up to the end of the fourth week of the first semester. Other students may change their module choices, in the first three weeks of semester 1, or the first two weeks of semester 2. Changes are not normally allowed after these dates.

Full-time undergraduate students must register for 60 credits per year and no more than 35 in any one semester.

Full-time students may withdraw from a module up to 6 weeks after the start of the first semester, and register for a replacement module in the second semester (with the permission of the Head of Department) provided that their credits remain at least 25 and that there are extra appropriate credits available in the second semester. After this date withdrawal is not allowed.

In all cases, students are entered for the examination in the modules for which they are registered. Failure to attend for an examination constitutes an attempt at the examination.

### ***Status of modules within a subject or programme***

#### **Compulsory or optional**

Within a subject or programme a module may be either compulsory or optional. A compulsory module is one which must be taken by all students taking the subject, because the content of the module is considered essential. A student may not complete the programme of study and receive the award in that subject without passing all the compulsory modules.

#### **Required for progression**

Within a subject, a module may also be required for progression. A required module is a module which must be passed without compensation (i.e. a mark of 40% achieved) in order to progress in that subject.

**Pre-requisite:** A module may have defined pre-requisites, that is a module or modules which must have been passed in a previous period of study in order to register for the module.

**Co-requisite:** A module may have defined co-requisites, which are modules which a student must take, or have taken, in order to register for the module.

**Disallowed combination:** Where modules have very similar learning outcomes they may be classified as disallowed combinations. In this case a student cannot be awarded credit for more than one module of the disallowed combination.

### ***Discretion of the Board of Examination***

The Board of Examiners, under the authority delegated by Academic Council, has the right to adjust the marks of any student, taking into account the advice of the relevant departments, the advice of the relevant external examiners and the overall performance of the student. This is particularly relevant in

borderline cases. In addition, the Head of Department, in consultation with the external examiner, may authorise adjustments to marks of a student, based on medical or other personal circumstances that in their professional opinion have resulted in the examination marks not being a fair result for the student.

**Prizes and Awards**

It is not intended that the provision for supplemental examinations should create a pressure to re-sit unnecessarily. Therefore, prizes and awards are typically based on performance excluding results from resits/supplemental examinations.

## Passing a module

### General principles:

- A module is passed when a mark or grade in the passing range is achieved.
- Where a student achieves a result in the compensation range, this may be classified as a pass by compensation if the performance in the other modules taken in the same period of study merits compensation.
- Where the module is not passed, it is graded as “Incomplete/Not passed” and no credits are earned.

A module outcome is expressed in one of three forms:

- As a mark, which is a whole number in the range 0 to 100.
- As a letter grade. Where modules use letter grades, A, B, C and D are passing grades, E is a grade which can allow pass by compensation, and F is a non-passing grade. The allowable grades are: A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, C1, C2, C3, D1, D2, E, and F.
- As a result, indicated as either Passed or Incomplete/Not Passed.

**Module components:** A module may have components which are assessed separately and combined to give the overall module result.

**Module conditions:** A module may have conditions which prescribe that some components must be passed in order to pass the module. Where a student does not meet these conditions the mark in the module is capped at 35 (where marks are used) or as an E (where grades are used).

**Ungraded modules:** Some modules may be included on an ungraded basis. In this case, the student is awarded the credits associated with the module once the module is passed, but no mark or grade is included in the calculation of annual or subject marks. This is typically done for:

1. Work placements and other experiential learning.
2. Modules taken in other institutions where there is not an agreement to accept the marks/grades awarded elsewhere.
3. Modules involving a competency standard.
4. Modules within a structured PhD/research master’s programme.

### Possible module results

Passed	Meets the required standard and all module conditions.
Passed by compensation	A result in the compensation range, and performance in other modules in the same sitting justifies compensation, as defined in the compensation regulations. A module passed by compensation is treated as passed for purposes of credit accumulation, and completion of award. However, a module that is “required” in a subject must be passed without compensation to meet the subject completion and progression requirements.
Incomplete/Not passed	A student is considered not to have successfully completed a module in ANY of the following cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The mark is less than the compensation threshold.</li> <li>• The student did not meet the minimum attendance requirement (where there are stated mandatory attendance thresholds).</li> </ul>

**Pass standards**

	In modules where marks are used	In modules where grades are used
Pass standard	40% or higher	Grades A, B, C or D
Compensation range	Marks of at least 35%, but less than 40%	Grade E
Incomplete/Not passed grades	Marks below 35%	Grade F

A module once passed is normally passed in perpetuity. However, if a module has been passed more than two years previously, a Head of Department may require supplementary work or require the student to take the module again in order to progress.

**Exceptions: Passing a module**

1	Taught MSc programmes in Computer Science	A module mark of 50% is needed to pass a module. Compensation is permitted only for module marks over 40%. As a result, the overall mark required for progression or completion is 50%.
2	Certificate in International Foundation Studies:	A module mark of 50% is needed to pass a module. (From academic year 2018-19).
3	An Dioplóma Iarchéime san Aistriúchán agus san Eagarthóireacht (Ar Líne)	A module mark of 60% is needed to pass a module, and 50% to compensate in a module.
4	Teastas Gairmiúil sa Ghaeilge (Bunscoil) - Professional Certificate in Irish (Primary School)	(i) A requirement to pass TEG B1 in Irish with a mark of at least 65% to pass the programme. (ii) Pass mark of 50% in all other modules.
5	Certificate in Research Skills	A module mark of 60% is needed to pass a module. (From September 2019, academic year 2019-20).

## Completing a programme

In order to complete a programme and be eligible for the award a student must:

1. Complete and pass modules to the required credit value for the programme, for example 180 credits for three year full time degrees, and 240 credits for four year full time degrees.
2. Complete and pass the minimum number of credits in each subject taken to degree level.
3. Complete and pass the modules specified in the programme specification, including the prescribed modules in each subject, and all compulsory modules.

### Normal minimum credit requirements for a subject within an undergraduate degree

	Three year degree	Four year degree
Double major	70 credits	90 credits
Major with minor	70 credits	90 credits
Single major	90 credits	120 credits
Minor	50 credits	60 credits

### Composition of the award mark: Undergraduate Degree Programmes

For each programme, the final award mark is calculated by combining the individual module marks obtained in all modules taken after first year, excluding ungraded modules, using only modules in which credits are earned (i.e. passed modules) and eliminating duplicate results for modules which were repeated (using the rules defined in the section on repetition).

The award mark is the annual mark for each year after first year, weighted towards the final year. The normal weighting for undergraduate programmes is that the final year contributes 70% to the final mark, and the other years after first year contribute the other 30%, as shown below. Where students take a period of study abroad, or are on a placement, this is normally assessed on an ungraded basis (unless explicitly stated) and excluded from the calculation of the award mark.

### Weighting of the award mark

Three year degrees		Three year degree with study abroad		Four year degrees	
Second year	30%	Second year	30%	Second year	10%
Final year	70%	Study abroad	Excluded	Third year	20%
		Final year	70%	Final year	70%

### Composition of the award mark: Postgraduate Programmes

In postgraduate **taught** programmes (except professional/taught doctorates) all modules other than ungraded modules contribute to the calculation of the award.

In postgraduate **research** programmes, students are required to complete a specified number of credits in approved modules, to complete the programme. However, the award of the degree is based on assessment of the research thesis.

In professional/taught doctorates taught modules may or may not contribute to the award, as defined in the programme specification.

### Transfer Students and Exemptions

Students transferring from other recognised universities or higher education institutions may receive credit for work done in the other institution, in accordance with the credit value of the work done and its relevance to the programme they wish to pursue at Maynooth University.

Modules taken in other institutions will normally be treated as ungraded modules, and therefore add to the credits earned by the student but make no contribution to the annual, subject or award mark.

Similarly, where students are granted exemptions, this will contribute to the credit value but the marks/grades earned elsewhere will not contribute to the annual, subject or award mark/grade.

### Exceptions: Composition of the final mark

1	LLB, where students take a third year placement or study abroad which is ungraded	The second year will contribute 10% to the final marks, and final year will contribute 90%.
2	M.Eng (5 year programme)	The composition of the final mark will be Final year - 70% 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> years - 10% each
3	B.Ed (Primary).	The composition of the final mark will be 3 <sup>rd</sup> year and 4 <sup>th</sup> year, both 50%.
4	BA Local Studies and BA Community Studies.	The final mark will be calculated as the credit weighted average of all graded modules contributing to the award.
5	Diploma in Arts (Adult Guidance Counselling) and Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (Adult Guidance Counselling)	There are two distinct components of the course, Part A and Part B. A student must achieve the same grade in both components of the course in order to achieve that grade overall in the programme.
6	Certificate in Research Skills	A pass mark of 60% in the programme is needed to pass the programme (From September 2019, academic year 2019-20).
7	MEd in Innovative Teaching and Learning	Final award mark to be calculated as a weighted average to a ratio of 30:70 (Year 1:Year 2) (From academic year 2019-20, including 2019-20 final year students)

### Award Grades

Where University awards are classified, the following standards are used.

	Award mark in programmes where marks are used	GPA in programmes where grades are used (not yet available)
First Class Honours	70-100%	
Second Class Honours Grade I	60-69%	
Second Class Honours Grade II	50-59%	
Third Class Honours	45-49%	
Pass	40-44%	

See annex A for the calculation of GPA.

Exceptions - awards which are not classified

1	PhD, taught doctorate, and research master's degrees.
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## Progression within a programme

### General principles:

- A student who passes the modules taken in a period of study is allowed to progress to the next period of study.
- Where a student does not meet this standard, but is sufficiently close to allow compensation or progression with a deficit, a “restricted” rating is applied, and a student may progress in subjects in which the progression standards have been met.
- Where the overall result is not within the compensation/deficit range, a student may not progress to the next period of study, regardless of the performance in individual subjects.

In an undergraduate programme of more than a year in duration, a student is normally expected to reach a required standard in one period of study before progressing to the next.

- Where a programme uses marks, an annual mark is calculated as the credit weighted average of module marks taken in the period of study, excluding modules assessed on an ungraded basis, using only modules in which credits are earned (i.e. passed modules) and eliminating duplicate results for modules which were repeated (using the rules defined in the section on repetition).
- Where a programme uses grading, an annual grade is calculated from the module grades as outlined in Annex A.

The possible outcomes for a period of study are:

<b>Progress</b>	A student who passes all modules in a period of study will be allowed to progress to the next period of study.
<b>Restricted</b>	<p>A student who does not meet the required progression standard, but is within the compensation parameters may be rated as “Restricted” and allowed to progress if the subjects to be continued have been passed, and any other subject-specific progression requirements have been met. Where the subjects have not been passed, or the requirements have not been met, the student will not be allowed to progress. Note that in single subject programmes, a student must meet both the general progression requirements and the subject requirements in order to progress.</p> <p>A “Restricted: compensation” rating will be given where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall weighted average mark across all modules is 40% or above;</li> <li>• No module has a mark below 35%;</li> <li>• At least half of the credits taken in the period have been passed (i.e. 40% or above).</li> </ul> <p>A “Restricted: deficit” rating will be given where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The modules with marks below 35% amount to no more than 10 credits;</li> <li>• The weighted average mark in the remaining modules, excluding the deficit modules, is over 40%;</li> <li>• At least half of the credits taken in the period have marks of 40% or above.</li> </ul>
<b>Not progress</b>	A student who does not meet any of the above criteria is <b>not allowed</b> to progress.

**Progression Carrying a Credit Deficit**

Progression carrying a deficit is allowed only where this does not conflict with the subject progression requirements.

Where a student progresses carrying a deficit, the student will need to take additional modules to make up the deficit before becoming eligible for the award. This can be done by taking additional modules allowable in the programme of study or by repeating the incomplete modules (subject to timetable constraints).

A student may normally progress to study abroad or a placement carrying a deficit of up to 10 credits.

A student who reaches the end of the normal duration of the programme with a deficit will not be eligible for the award of the degree, but may re-register for an additional period to make up the deficit.

**Subject progression/passing**

The subject mark is calculated as the credit weighted average of the most recent marks in the modules taken by the student that constitute the programme of study for that subject in the year in question, excluding ungraded modules.

The possible outcomes for a subject in a period of study are:

<b>Passed</b>	A student who passes all modules in a period of study will be allowed to pass the subject and progress to the next period of study.
<b>Passed by compensation</b>	A student may <b>pass by compensation</b> in a subject where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall weighted average mark across all modules taken in the subject is 40% or above;</li> <li>• No module has a mark below 35%;</li> <li>• At least half of the credits taken in the subject have marks of 40% or above;</li> <li>• The student has passed all required modules without compensation.</li> </ul>
<b>Incomplete/Not passed</b>	A student who does not meet any of the criteria is <b>not allowed</b> to progress in the subject. In exceptional circumstances a Department may, after a review, recommend allowing a student to progress in the subject with an allowable deficit. The allowable deficit is as defined in the section on progression in the period of study.

In exceptional circumstances a Department may approve progression in a subject carrying a deficit of up to 10 credits in that subject. Where this is done, the student must make up the deficit before becoming eligible for the award.

**Exceptions to progression regulations**

	<b>Applicability</b>	<b>Exception</b>
1	History: progression from first year to second year single major	Requires a subject mark of at least 50.
2	Taught MSc programmes in Computer Science: MSc in Computer Science (Software Engineering) MSc in Computer Science (Applied)	The overall mark required for progression or completion is 50%.
3	Science degrees, progression from third year to fourth year. The degrees involved are: B.Sc. B.Sc. Biological and Biomedical Science B.Sc. Biotechnology B.Sc. Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Chemistry B.Sc. Computer Science and Software Engineering B.Sc. Multimedia, Mobile and Web Development B.Sc. Science education. B.Sc. Mathematics Education B.Sc. Physics with Astrophysics	Students are required to achieve a subject mark of at least 45% in third year, to progress to a subject in fourth year. Students who do not achieve this standard but exceed 40%, and meet the other progression rules, are eligible for the award of a level 7 B.Sc. (Pass) degree.
4	Education PME (Secondary)	The department may permit, at its discretion, a student to progress carrying a deficit of up to 20 credits.
5	Progression from first year Mathematics (pure) to second year mathematics (pure). This applies to students progressing from any of: MT1FY, MTD100, or MT100T, and seeking progression to MT2MJ, MT2DM, or CST200.	Students are required to achieve 50% to progress. Students who pass mathematics, but do not reach this threshold may progress to second year mathematical studies.
6	Science degrees. Progression from third year Mathematics (Applied) to 4 <sup>th</sup> Science single major Mathematics (Applied).	Students are required to achieve 50% to progress. Students who pass Mathematics (Applied), but do not reach this threshold may progress to double major 4 <sup>th</sup> year Mathematics (Applied).
7	<b>Certificate in International Foundation Studies:</b>	An average of 50% is needed to pass the programme. (From academic year 2018-19).
8	<b>An Diplóma Iarchéime san Aistriúchán agus san Eagarthóireacht (Ar Líne)</b>	An average mark of 60% is needed to pass the programme.
9	The following 2 year Master's degrees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-year MSc Finance,</li> <li>• 2-year MSc Economics,</li> <li>• 2-year MSc Economic and Financial Risk Analysis,</li> <li>• 2-year MA Accounting.</li> </ul>	A student must obtain an annual mark of 60% or more in the first year of the programme in order to progress to the second year.  Students who do not meet this standard may exit with a Higher Diploma qualification.
10	International Engineering College BE Electronic Engineering BSc Computer Science & Software Engineering BSc Multimedia, Mobile & Web Development BSc Robotics and Intelligent Devices	A student may progress carrying a deficit of up to 20 credits.

**Special case: Mathematics in First year science**

In some science programmes, Mathematics is a compulsory subject in first year. In such programmes;

1. A student must achieve a subject mark of at least 35% in Mathematics in order to progress to second year.
2. A student who achieves 35% in the subject but has a credit deficit in Mathematics, may progress carrying a deficit, and make up the deficit with modules from mathematics or other subjects.

The degrees involved are MH201, MH202, MH204, MH208, MH209, MH210, and MH212.

## Repetition

A supplemental assessment allows a student to re-sit part or all of the assessment of a module which has not been passed during the same period of study.

Repeating a module involves re-registering for a module and retaking all of the assessment associated with the module in a subsequent academic year.

### **Supplemental assessments**

Where the assessment of a module includes a university scheduled examination, the University will normally provide an opportunity to re-sit the examination in a supplemental examination within the same period of study.

- a) Supplemental examinations are normally provided for undergraduate modules assessed by examination. Results in supplemental examinations are not capped.
- b) Where a student resits the examination component of a module, the results from other components are carried forward.

In some modules, a student is allowed to re-sit other components of assessment of a module, or to submit an alternative assignment in its place. In certain types of assessment the resit mark is capped at 40%. The availability of resits, and the capping of results, are specified in the academic database. In exceptional cases the University may waive this cap. In exceptional cases a Department may allow the result in an examination to be carried forward, while allowing a resit of other components.

### **Repeating a module**

A student who does not pass a module may repeat the module or a suitable substitute module in a subsequent academic year. As modules may be changed from time to time, a student may not always be able to repeat exactly the same module in a subsequent year.

Where a student repeats a module, the student must normally register for the full module, and complete all of the assessment components. In exceptional circumstances a Department may allow a student to repeat components of the assessment and carry forward the results from other components. Where a student repeats a module which has not been passed with a mark over the pass threshold (40%), the better of the two results will be used in calculation of subject, annual and award marks.

A student may not normally repeat a module which has been passed with a mark over the pass threshold (40%). There are three exceptions to this regulation:

- 1) Repetition of modules which have been passed may be allowed where the progression requirement is higher than the pass mark.
- 2) Final year students may apply to repeat/resit up to 15 credits of modules which have been passed.
- 3) Repetition of passed modules may be allowed where the University has convincing evidence to suggest that a student significantly underperformed as a result of extenuating circumstances.

A student who chooses to repeat a passed module (40% or over) or to take a new module in lieu of a passed module in order to try and improve a result must relinquish the mark first obtained and accept either 40% on the original module or the mark obtained at the second sitting.

**Time Limit on Repetition.** A student may normally repeat a period of study only once. In exceptional circumstances the University may decide to allow additional repetition opportunities.

## **Annex A: Grading**

Not available at present.

**Annex B: Version history**

Version 28 April 2016	Approved at Academic Council February 2016, with implementation phasing agreed at Academic Council April 2016.  Published on University Website.
Version 19 June	Amended with exceptions to Marks and Standards approved at Academic Council May 2016.
Version 13 October	Amended with exception to Marks and Standards, B.Ed. composition of final mark.
Version 5 June 2017	Amended with exceptions approved at Academic Council in April and May 2017):  <b>BA Local and Community Studies.</b>  The final mark will be calculated as the credit weighted average of all graded modules contributing to the award.  <b>Diploma in Arts (Adult Guidance Counselling) and Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (Adult Guidance Counselling)</b>  There are two distinct components of the course, Part A and Part B. A student must achieve the same grade in both components of the course in order to achieve that grade overall in the programme.
Version Sept. 2017	Amended with respect to applicability to student cohort
Version 13 Nov. 2017	Amended with respect to exception to Marks and Standards (BSc Physics with Astrophysics) approved at Academic Council November 2017
Version 11 February 2018	Amended to include exceptions approved at Academic Council February 2018.  <b>(a) Mathematics in First Year Science:</b> Special case for Mathematics in first year science programmes where the subject is compulsory, to require a mark of at least 35% in the subject to progress in the programme.  <b>(b) An Diplóma Iarchéime san Aistriúchán agus san Eagarthóireacht:</b> A temporary exception (for existing students and 2018 intake) to Marks and Standards to set the pass mark for the programme and for individual modules at 60%, and to set the compensation threshold at 50%.  <b>(c) Certificate in International Foundation Studies:</b> Exception to raise the pass mark to 50% in the programme and in all modules.  <b>(d) Resitting and Repeating Modules:</b> Amendment to include the better of 2 results where a student is registered for the same module twice and did not exceed the pass threshold on the first attempt.
Version 10 March 2018	Amended to clarify the definition of annual mark as follows (page 9):  “an annual mark is calculated as the credit weighted average of module marks taken in the period of study, excluding modules assessed on an ungraded basis, using only modules in which credits are earned (i.e. passed modules) and eliminating duplicate results for modules which were repeated (using the rules defined in the section on repetition).”

Version 10 April 2018	Amended to include the following exception to module pass marks. <b>Teastas Gairmiúil sa Ghaeilge (Bunscoil) – Professional Certificate in Irish (Primary School)</b> (i) A requirement to pass TEG B1 in Irish with a mark of at least 65% to pass the programme. (ii) Pass mark of 50% in all other modules.
Version 11 September 2018	Amended with respect to applicability to student cohort
Version 21 November 2018	Amended to include the exception to progression rules for certain 2 years masters programmes in Economics Finance and Accounting.  Amended the title of Adult Guidance and Counselling to Adult Guidance Counselling.
Version 03 February 2020	Amended with exceptions to Marks and Standards approved at Academic Council February 2020
Version 30 March 2020	Amended to remove the reference ‘up to 2018 entrants only’ for An Diplóma Iarchéime san Aistriúchán agus san Eagarthóireacht (Ar Line) with respect to: (i) exceptions in passing a module (ii) exceptions to progression regulations