

*Chapter II*

*The Pontifical University*

at Maynooth



St Patrick's

Pontifical University

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# Degree, Diploma and Certificate Courses in the *Pontifical University at Maynooth*

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The *Saint Patrick's Pontifical University*, Maynooth offers the following Degree and Diploma Courses. These courses are outlined in detail in later chapters.

## IN THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

### Postgraduate Courses

Doctorate in Divinity (DD/STD)

Doctorate in Theology (PhD)

Licentiate in Divinity (STL)

Research Master's in Theology (MTh)

Master's in Theology (MTh) two years full time

Master's in Theology (MTh) one year full time

Master's in Theology (MTh) two years part time

Higher Diploma in Theological Studies (HDS)

### Professional Masters' in Theology

Master's in Theology (MTh) Pastoral Theology

Master's in Theology Pastoral Theology MTh (Healthcare Chaplaincy)

Master's in Liturgical Music (MLM)

Master's in Theology MTh Pastoral Liturgy

### Undergraduate Courses

Baccalaureate in Divinity (BD/STB)

Bachelor's in Theology (BTh)

Bachelor's in Theology and Arts (BATH)

Diploma in Theology (Dip Th)

*(This is a progression award within undergraduate at 120 cr)*

Advanced Certificate in Theology (Ad Cert)

*(This is a progression award within undergraduate at 60 cr)*

### Professional Certificates in Catholic Religious Education and Theological Studies

Professional Certificate in Catholic Religious Education and Theological Studies (PCCRE)

Professional Postgraduate Certificate in Catholic Religious Education and Theological Studies (PPCCRE)

### **IN THE CENTRE FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY**

Higher Diploma in Pastoral Liturgy (HDPL)

Higher Diploma in Pastoral Theology (HDPS)

Higher Diploma in Pastoral Theology - Healthcare Chaplaincy (HDPT)

Higher Diploma in Youth Ministry and Spirituality (HDYMS)

Diploma in Pastoral Ministry (DPM)

Diploma in Diaconate Studies ((DDS)

Diploma in Pastoral Theology (Dip PT)

Diploma in Pastoral Liturgy (DPT)

Diploma in Youth Ministry & Spirituality (DYMS)

Diploma in Church Music (DCM)

### **IN THE FACULTY OF CANON LAW**

Licentiate in Canon Law (LCL)

Doctorate in Canon Law (DCL)

### **IN THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY**

Doctorate in Philosophy (DPhil)

Licentiate in Philosophy (LPhil)

Master's in Philosophy (MPhil) Research

Master's in Philosophy (MPhil) two years taught

Master's in Philosophy (MPhil) one year taught

Baccalaureate in Philosophy (BPhil)

Higher Diploma in Philosophy (HDip Phil)

Higher Certificate in Philosophy(HCert Phil)

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# *Pontifical University Mission Statement*

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## **Vision and Mission**

The strategic plan (A Vision for Renewal & Transformation 2020–2030) endorsed by the Trustees of St Patrick’s Pontifical University, Maynooth in early March 2020 envisioned that:

By 2030, SPCM will be established as a leading Pontifical University and its campus recognised globally as a place of innovation and transformation, where ‘learning and living’ for the individual and community is in a sustainable, inclusive and unbounded environment.

The vision sets out a bold pathway for SPCM’s future, encompassing both the Pontifical University and the National Seminary of Ireland. It seeks to secure and expand the University’s academic offering at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels by developing leading-edge online-learning capacity and raising the University’s international profile with properly resourced research scholars.

The warrant for this vision is founded on the task articulated in our apostolic constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* (2018).

This vast and pressing task requires, on the cultural level of academic training and scientific study, a broad and generous effort at a radical paradigm shift, or rather – dare I say – at “a bold cultural revolution”. In this effort, the worldwide network of ecclesiastical universities and faculties is called to offer the decisive contribution of leaven, salt and light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the living Tradition of the Church, which is ever open to new situations and ideas. (*VG*, 3)

A Mission for SPCM naturally flows from this:

SPCM exists to explore faith, enrich minds, equip leaders and empower individuals and communities to bring about positive change in a rapidly changing world.

To a certain extent SPCM can do this by fulfilling the remit of every university, namely 'the advancement of knowledge through research, applied to the world through teaching'. However, the purpose of SPCM is even more profound and far-reaching.

### **Our Values and Higher Purpose**

Animated by the Gospel and the Catholic tradition, the Faculties of Theology and Philosophy value

- Achievement of the highest standards in teaching and learning, research, and vocational formation, marked by academic accountability, critical reflection, experience, and flexibility.
- Respect towards the uniqueness of each individual, responding to the diversity of backgrounds and need.
- Relationships which are mutually beneficial with students, alumni, professions, government, higher education institutions, NGOs, the Catholic Church, other Christian denominations and world religions, at local, national and international levels, and which contribute to the common good characterised by a special concern for people who are marginalised and for the natural environment.

Upholding our values and mission are

- Expertise as the largest theological and philosophical institute in the Catholic tradition in Ireland, offering a complete range of theological disciplines delivered by a highly-qualified staff, sustained by resources, publication, dialogue, innovation and mutual support.
- Rootedness in a rich Catholic intellectual tradition and community, and commitment to ethical and academic values.
- Collaboration characterised by attentiveness to students, engagement with the wider academic community, and constructive interaction with church, society and culture.

See *Strategic Plan: Desire to Flourish* (2015-2020).

The above may be summarised into our higher purpose, that is, our institutional self-understanding:

To serve society and the ecclesial community, and to promote the common good, by inspiring an inclusive community of learning to search for meaning in the Catholic tradition.

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# *Pontifical University* **Scholarships & Grants**

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For Further Information please contact [scholarships@spcm.ie](mailto:scholarships@spcm.ie)

*St Patrick's Pontifical University*, Maynooth awards scholarships, grants, and fee remission to current and incoming postgraduate candidates in order to promote and foster excellence in scholarship and research, but also to support postgraduates in their studies, to enhance their experience of postgraduate study and research, and to broaden their academic horizons. The range of scholarships and grants offered by the University may not necessarily be awarded every year.

Undergraduate scholarships, grants, and fee remission may also be awarded, and are provided to high-achieving entrants, as well as to certain students in order to support their access and full participation in Higher Education.

Preference is given to applicants who do not hold any other scholarship or educational award. Scholarships and grants are awarded initially for one year but may be considered for renewal from year to year during the holder's course of studies subject to renewed application. Prospective incoming candidates who have been accepted into a programme may be invited to apply for scholarships, grants or fee remission as appropriate.

*Scholarships* are awarded to successful candidates specifically in recognition of their academic excellence and potential.

*Grants* may be assigned to successful candidates on a financial needs-basis in all other cases.

*Fee Remission* is awarded as outlined below or in exceptional circumstances on the instruction of the President in consultation with the *Scholarships and Grants Board*.

The *Scholarships and Grants Board* reserves the right to determine any Scholarship, Grant or Fee Remission in whatever manner deemed suitable given a candidate's application. Such awards may include support for accommodation costs, fees, or otherwise.

## **General Norms governing all Scholarships, Grants and Funding**

All those in receipt of *scholarships* or *grants* must present at registration and pay *at least 50%* of the applicable fee. All grants go towards fees. Scholarships can be used as a deduction from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of fees. In the case of a Scholarship candidate paying the entire fee at registration, the scholarship can then be paid out in two moieties (in November and February)

All those eligible for the listed fee remissions must present at registration and pay *at least 50%* of the respective postgraduate fee. The remission will be confirmed subsequent to registration and will be deducted from the second fee moiety. In the case of a person paying the entire fee at registration, the known remission or reduction can be taken into account with immediate effect.

### **Application Guidelines and Procedures**

An Invitation to Apply for funding will be sent via email to all qualifying continuing and incoming postgraduate students as follows:

*continuing students* by 30<sup>th</sup> June of academic year prior to their continuing year, and again in September/October

*incoming students* will be invited to apply in semester two of their incoming academic year.

In the case of automatic scholarship, grant, or fee remission awards, the Fees and Grants Office will be in email contact when all information has been processed.

The specific call for the *Eriugena and Coffey Scholarships* will be advertised widely and detailed information will be published on the University website as appropriate.

UNDERGRADUATE	Programme	Name	Type	Process	Value up to	Other
Theology and Arts	BATH,BTh	HEARDARE	Grant	Automatic from CAO	Varies	
Theology and Arts	BATH,BTh	Entrance Scholarship - 550 points	Scholarship	Automatic from LC Results	€1,000	Fees offset
Theology and Arts	BATH,BTh	Entrance Scholarship - 400 points	Scholarship	Automatic from LC Results	€500	Fees offset
Theology and Arts	BATH,BTh	O'Fitch Scholarship – NI Students	Fee Remission	Application	€1,500	Fees offset
Theology and Irish	BATH	Emma Minn <del>Murphy</del> Award	Grant	Invitation to Apply	€2,000	Increase if Non-SUSI grantholder
Divinity	BD	College Lay Divinity 'Alive in Hope'	Fee Remission	Invitation to Apply	€2,000	
POSTGRADUATE	Programme	Name	Type	Process	Value	Other
Theology - History	Masters	Thomas Gimartinl	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€3,000	
Theology - Pastoral	Masters/HDip	Martin McAlinden Award	Fee Remission	Invitation to Apply	€2,000	
Theology or Philosophy	1 year Masters	Remission - 1st class in BATH,BTh	Fee Remission	From Results	TBC	25% Fee reduction
Theology or Philosophy	2 year Masters	Remission - 1st class in BATH,BTh	Fee Remission	From Results	TBC	50% Fee reduction in Year 1
Theology or Philosophy	2 year Masters	Remission - 2.1 in BATH,BTh	Fee Remission	From Results	TBC	25% Fee reduction in Year 1
Theology or Philosophy	PhD/Masters	Michael Devlin Scholarship	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€3,300	
Theology and Philosophy	PhD/Masters	Matthew O'Donnell Scholarship	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€5,800	€2,600 Philosophy €3,200 Theology
Theology or Philosophy	PhD/Masters	Maynooth Union	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€3,000	
Theology or Philosophy	PhD/Masters	President's/ St. Patrick's Day Fund	Grant	Invitation to Apply	Varies	
Theology	PhD	Daniel & Mary <del>Murphy</del>	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€5,000	
Theology or Philosophy	PhD	Michael Olden	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€1,000	
Theology	PhD	College 'Alive in Hope'	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€2,000	
Theology	PhD	College 'Alive in Hope'	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€2,000	
Theology	PhD	College 'Alive in Hope'	Scholarship or Grant	Invitation to Apply	€2,000	
Theology	PhD	Scotus Erigena Research Scholarship	Scholarship only	Specific Open Call	Varies	Fees, Room and meal plan
Philosophy	PhD	Peter Coffey Research Scholarship	Scholarship only	Specific Open Call	Varies	Fees, Room and meal plan

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# *Erasmus+ EU Programme*

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* Rev. Dr John-Paul Sheridan  
[johnpaul.sheridan@spcm.ie](mailto:johnpaul.sheridan@spcm.ie)

*Erasmus+* is an exchange programme established by the European Union to support education, training, youth, and sport in Europe. For nearly 30 years, the EU has funded the Erasmus programme, which has enabled over three million European students to spend part of their studies at another higher education institution or with an organisation in Europe. Studying abroad has been shown to have a positive effect on later job prospects. It is also a chance to improve language skills, gain self-confidence and independence and immerse yourself in a new culture. *Erasmus* students from St. Patrick's Pontifical University usually spend one full academic year at a European university as part of their degree programme. In the *Erasmus* inter-university exchange programme, Saint Patrick's Pontifical University, Maynooth has inter-institutional agreements with Faculties of Theology and Philosophy in the following countries.

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Universities</b>
Belgium:	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Croatia:	Catholic University of Croatia Faculty of Catholic Theology - University of Split University of Zagreb – UniZG
Czech Republic:	Charles University, Prague University of South Bohemia České Budějovice University of Palacky, Olomouc
Finland:	University of Helsinki
France:	Institut Catholique de Paris Institut Albert le Grand (Ircom) Institut Catholique de Toulouse
Germany:	University of Augsburg Technische Universität, Dortmund

Sankt Georgen, Frankfurt am Main  
 University of Freiburg im Breisgau  
 Fulda University  
 Katholische Hochschule Mainz  
 Katholische Hochschule Nordrhein-Westfalen  
 Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München  
 Hochschule für Philosophie, München (Munich School of Philosophy) Institut  
 für Katholische Theologie - University of Paderborn  
 University of Passau  
 University of Regensburg  
 Catholic Faculty of Theology - University of Trier  
 University of Tübingen  
 Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster  
 Hungary: Episcopal Theological College of Pécs  
 Malta: University of Malta  
 Netherlands: Tilburg University, Utrecht  
 Radboud University, Nijmegen (formerly the Catholic University of Nijm MF  
 Norway: Norwegian School of Theology, Oslo  
 Poland: Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie  
 Pontifical University of John Paul II, Cracow  
 Pontifical University of Theology, Wroclaw  
 Portugal: Universidade Católica Portuguesa  
 Slovakia: Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology of Cyril and Methodius, Comenius U  
 Bratislava  
 Slovenia: Catholic University of Ružomberok  
 University of Ljubljana  
 Spain: CEU San Pablo University Madrid (Faculty Agreement)  
 Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, Catholic University of Valencia

Saint Vincent Martyr Faculty of Theology

Sweden: Newman Institute in Uppsala, Sweden

Switzerland University of Fribourg

## **OUTGOING ERASMUS STUDENTS**

### **Costs**

No fees have to be paid to the host university. Students are entitled to an Erasmus contribution towards the cost of their mobility.

### **Language Requirements**

While abroad, an *Erasmus* student follows courses in the language of the host country, with the exception of University of Leuven (Belgium), University of Malta, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), University of Palacky (Czech Republic), University of Helsinki (Finland), and Newman Institute, Uppsala (Sweden), all of whom offer an English-language theology programme to foreign students. The University of Tilburg, (Netherlands) and the University of South Bohemia (Czech Republic) both offer some theology lectures in English. Some universities offer free language courses to *Erasmus* students.

### **Credit for work done while abroad.**

ECTS was proposed by the European Commission as a way of creating common academic procedures for the different European countries. The aim of the system is to guarantee the recognition of studies carried out abroad. It is a “common academic coinage” for measuring and comparing students' performances and transferring examination results from one institution to another. Students are assessed in their host universities for courses followed and such assessments are recognised by the home university. One year's (or two semesters') work is regarded as being equivalent to 60 credits. The number of credits attaching to any course will reflect the number of hours (in lectures, seminars, tutorials, etc.) demanded by that course. Thus, a course to which 10 credits are attached is assumed to represent one sixth of the student's full year's workload. It should be noted that ECTS does not refer to the assessment for courses. BATH *Erasmus* students must take 60 credits in total, at least 30 of which must be in Theology. *Erasmus* students must pass these 60 credits to be eligible for the BATH International award. BATH *Erasmus* students complete four years of study in total.

### **Who may apply?**

Full-time registered students on the BTh/BD/BATH programmes and postgraduate programmes are eligible to apply. However, the ‘International’ title is only given for the BATH degree. It should also be noted that BATH student who are studying

a language in their degree may be required to take part in the *Erasmus* programme to complete their degree requirements.

### **Application**

Students must complete an “Expression of Interest” application form that can be downloaded from our website: <https://sppu.ie/international/erasmus/outgoing-erasmus-students> and students should also contact the Erasmus Coordinator.

**Deadline for receipt of completed application forms: 1<sup>st</sup> March.**

### **INCOMING ERASMUS STUDENTS**

Incoming Erasmus students must be nominated by their home university to study in St Patrick’s Pontifical University, Maynooth. Once this nomination has been received, the student will be invited to fill out the online application. All details and relevant information for incoming students can be found on the Erasmus+ Incoming Student page of the university’s website. <https://sppu.ie/international/erasmus/incoming-erasmus-students>

### **Modules:**

Incoming Erasmus students can choose modules from the following undergraduate programmes: BTh; BATH; BD. See Kalendarium – Chapter III. Students may choose some postgraduate modules, subject to availability and/or agreement with relevant lecturer. See Kalendarium – Chapter IV.

### **Closing date for nominations:**

Semester I: 15<sup>th</sup> May  
Semester II: 2<sup>nd</sup> December

### **Closing date for applications:**

Semester I: 30<sup>th</sup> May  
Semester II: 15<sup>th</sup> December

Admissions Office  
Saint Patrick’s Pontifical University  
Maynooth  
County Kildare  
IRELAND

E-mail: [admissions@spcm.ie](mailto:admissions@spcm.ie)  
Web: [www.sppu.ie](http://www.sppu.ie)  
Telephone: Ireland:  
+353 1 7083600

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## **Student Representation on the Faculty Councils**

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1. Two students shall be elected each year and shall be invited to attend meetings of the Council of the Faculty.
2. One student shall be elected from among the undergraduate students and one from among the postgraduate students.
3. The Dean shall arrange for an election from each group. Nominations shall be requested and an election shall take place before the first ordinary meeting of the Faculty in October.
4. The student(s) elected shall act as representatives until the end of the academic year.
5. Their term shall be for one year and they shall not be available for re-election.
6. They shall be notified regarding all meetings that they are invited to attend; they shall receive copies of agenda, minutes and relevant documentation; they shall be entitled to propose items for inclusion on the agenda.
7. When matters under discussion affect the reputation of a student, the Council of the Faculty may decide to discuss them in the absence of the student representatives.
8. Student representatives shall not be entitled to sit on committees of the Council of the Faculty; they may however be co-opted by the Council of the Faculty.
9. They shall not be present for discussion of, or to vote on appointments or promotions. They shall not attend examination board meetings or portions of meetings devoted to examinations.
10. In areas not covered in these norms, the Chairman of the Council of the Faculty shall have full discretion.

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# Assessments: Grades and Distinctions

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## Undergraduate

Unless otherwise required by assessment types that attain the particular learning outcomes of a module, all examinations, tests and essays are graded according to the following scale.

### **70%+: Summa cum Laude / First Class Honours / A**

**Excellent:** A comprehensive, highly structured, focused, concise, relevant, creative and effective use of material, demonstrating:

- An extensive and detailed knowledge of the material being assessed;
- An exceptional ability to organise, analyse and present the material;
- Evidence of extensive but relevant reading supported by reference / quotations.
- Demonstrating critical understanding, creativity and insight;
- A fluent, lucid, stimulating and original presentation with minimal spelling or grammatical errors.

### **60-69%: Magna cum Laude / Second Class Honours, Grade I / B**

**Very Good:** A thorough and well-organised response to a question, demonstrating:

- A broad knowledge and understanding of the material with some original insight;
- A consistent ability to analyse, apply and organise the material to answer the question logically and convincingly;
- Evidence of substantial background reading;
- A clear presentation of contrasting arguments and viewpoints;
- Clear and fluent expression with few presentation errors.

### **50-59%: Cum Laude / Second Class Honours, Grade II / C**

**Good:** A reasonable, adequate and competent answer to a question, demonstrating:

- An adequate and reasonable familiarity with, if not complete knowledge of, the relevant material;
- Clear presentation of statements, ideas and arguments with omission of some important elements of an answer or the appearance of a number of minor mistakes;
- A coherent presentation of the material with weaknesses in clarity and structure;
- Evidence of some background reading but not well supported by citation or quotation;

- Presentation and expression of sufficient quality to convey meaning with some lack in fluency and presentation errors (spelling and grammar).

**45-49%: Third Class Honours / D**

**Satisfactory:** A modest but acceptable response to the question, demonstrating:

- A basic grasp of the material but somewhat lacking in focus and structure;
- Main points covered but poor in detail with several minor errors or isolated but significant mistakes in fact or comprehension;
- Answer displaying only a basic capacity of understanding with limited or basic development of argument and independent thought;
- Little or no evidence of background reading;
- Satisfactory presentation with an acceptable level of presentation errors.

**40-44%: Pass / E**

**Acceptable:** A very basic and limited understanding of the material, demonstrating:

- Shows a basic grasp of the subject matter, poorly focused and structured contain irrelevant material;
- Demonstrated a minimum appreciation of the facts and basic concepts presented with some incoherence;
- Containing serious and several substantial errors;
- No evidence of background reading;
- Poor expression with the minimum acceptable standard of spelling and grammatical presentation.

**35-39%: Fail / F**

**Marginal:** An answer that does not meet the minimum acceptable standards or requirements of question asked, demonstrating:

- Little understanding even of class material;
- Answer displays major deficiencies in structure, relevance or focus;
- Replete with serious mistakes in fact or theory;
- Incomplete, incoherent and confused answer;
- Serious problems with presentation, spelling and grammar.

**30-34%: Fail / G**

**Unacceptable:** Demonstrating:

- Gross errors and major inaccuracies;
- Incomplete;
- Unacceptable standards of presentation, spelling and grammar.
- Copying / Plagiarism.

## **Below 30%: Fail / No Grade**

**Unacceptable:** Demonstrating:

- Entirely irrelevant material to the question posed;
- No knowledge displayed relevant to the question posed.
- Extensive plagiarism / copying.
- Illogical.
- A few lines.

## **Postgraduate**

The *Postgraduate Marking Criteria* of the Pontifical University, set out below, are to be read in conjunction with discipline-specific criteria as appropriate and need to be viewed as a starting point. The *Postgraduate Marking Criteria* provide guidance on the overall standards expected at different grade bands, but *discipline-specific criteria* (e.g., in *homiletics*, *prayer leadership*, etc.) may be needed in order to ensure that marking decisions are consistent, fair and transparent to both faculty and students.

**A (Summa cum laude • 1H) 70+** § *An exceptional paper that reflects both outstanding knowledge of material and critical ability*

- A++ (80+) Extremely insightful work displaying the highest level of in-depth knowledge. For research dissertation (or a project): publishable quality of international stature, groundbreaking research, exhibiting an exceptional level of originality and/or independent thought, ability to make informed judgments of international significance. Highest standards of presentation.
- A+ (76–80) Insightful work displaying in-depth knowledge. For research dissertation (or a project): *publishable* quality, outstanding research potential, originality and/or independent thought, ability to make informed judgments. Highest standards of *presentation*.
- A (70–75) Insightful work displaying in-depth knowledge. For research dissertation (or a project): work of publishable quality, excellent research potential, originality and/or independent thought, *ability* to make informed judgments. High standards of presentation.

**B (Magna cum laude • 2H1) 60–69** § *A coherent paper that demonstrates critical evaluation*

Work at 2H1 level demonstrates an in-depth analysis and understanding of key issues with evidence of some originality. Relevant sources are used effectively to support argument/discussion. Clear evidence of *critical approach* to key issues and *some* ability to evaluate arguments; coherent work, logically presented.

- B+ (65–69) Thoughtful work displaying good knowledge and accuracy. For dissertation/project: some evidence of research potential, clear thinking and/or ability to make informed judgments. Good standards of presentation.
- B (60–64) Work displays good knowledge and accuracy. For dissertation/project: *some* evidence of clear thinking and/or ability to make informed judgments. Good standards of presentation.

**C (Cum laude • 2H2) 50–59** § *A coherent and logical paper which shows understanding of the basic principles*

Understanding of *some* key issues with evidence of ability to reflect critically; *some* key issues addressed. Relevant sources used to support argument/discussion. *Some* evidence of critical approach to key issues and ability to evaluate arguments. Competent work in places but lacks fluency *and* coherence.

**Dissertations which merit “cum laude” indicate that a candidate is not yet ready to progress to the next academic level.**

- C+ (55–59) Work displays knowledge and understanding in *most* areas, but the standard of work is *variable*. For dissertation/project: evidence of clear thinking in places but lacks insight. Satisfactory standards of presentation.
- C (50–54) Work displays knowledge and understanding in *some* areas, but *some key issues are not addressed*. For dissertation/project: some evidence of clear thinking but lacks insight and fluency. Satisfactory standards of presentation.

**D+E (Pass) 40–49** § *A superficial answer with limited knowledge of core material and limited critical ability*

- D (45–49) Superficial *understanding* of some key issues, but lacking in focus and structure. Limited evidence of a critical approach to key issues, which are not always understood or addressed; gaps in the use of relevant

sources used to support work; lack of ability to evaluate arguments. Satisfactory standards of presentation.

- E (40–44) Work displays only a basic knowledge and understanding in some areas, while the standard of work is variable. Little evidence of a critical approach to key issues. Limited evidence of use of sources beyond those from supplied bibliography; use of some source sources of questionable value or relevance, but without evidence unacknowledged sources. Acceptable standards of presentation.

**F (Fail) 20–39** § An answer almost entirely lacking in evidence of knowledge and understanding

Key issues misunderstood or not addressed. Structure confused or incoherent. Limited or no use of relevant sources to support work. No evidence of a critical approach to key issues or ability to evaluate arguments.

- F+ (30–39) Incomplete answers with only peripheral knowledge relevant to the questions. Work displays poor, disorganized presentation.
- F- (20–29) Work makes some attempt to write something relevant, but with many flaws; nothing of substance.

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## ***Pontifical University***

# **Marks and Standards**

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The benchmark for quality assurance in Europe, *The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG), requires students to ‘be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently’ (Standard 1.3). The following describes the Marks and Standards for programmes of the Pontifical University, St Patrick’s Pontifical University, Maynooth. The Pontifical University uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). These Marks and Standards should be read in conjunction with the Programme Specification, Module Information, other requirements outlined in the Kalendarium and, where applicable, the Marks and Standards of Maynooth University.

### **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 outlined in the Kalendarium 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**

	<b>Possible Outcomes</b>
Module	Passed Passed by compensation Incomplete / Not passed
Programme	Completed Incomplete
Period of Study	Progress Passed by compensation Passed with deficit 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 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.

Where allowed by the programme specification students may change their module choices, where choices are available, in the first three weeks of Semester 1, or the first two weeks of semester 2. Changes after these dates are only possible with the agreement of the Registrar, Programme Coordinator, and the relevant Module deliverer.

Students must register for the required number of credits per semester and no more than an additional 5 credits in any one semester. Permission to register for more than 5 additional credits in any one semester must be sought from the Registrar and the Programme Coordinator

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 Registrar and Programme Coordinator) 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.

### **Rules pertaining to BATH Programme**

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.

Where allowed by the programme specification

- For the BATH programme first-year undergraduate students may change subjects and modules up to the end of the fourth week of the first semester and all other students may change their module choices, where choices are available, in the first three weeks of Semester 1, or the first two weeks of semester 2.

Changes after these dates are only possible with the agreement of the Registrar, Subject Coordinator (Arts) or Programme Coordinator (Theology), and the relevant Module deliverer.

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 Registrar and Programme Coordinator) 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

### ***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 or programme of study, because the content of the module is considered essential. A student may not complete the programme of study and receive the award in that programme 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 Examination Board***

The Examination Board of the relevant Faculty has the right to adjust the marks of any student, taking into account the advice of the relevant module deliverer, the advice of the relevant external examiners and the overall performance of the student. This is particularly relevant in borderline cases.

In addition, in consultation with the external examiner, adjustments may be authorised 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.

## Progression within the BATh 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, 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.

- The 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).

The possible outcomes for a period of study are:

Progress	A student who passes all modules in a period of study will be allowed to progress to the next period of study.
Restricted	<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> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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 over40%;</li> <li>At least half of the credits taken in the period have marks of40%or above.</li> </ul>
Not progress	A student who does not meet any of the above criteria is not allowed to progress.

### **Subject progression/passing on the BATH Programme**

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:

Passed	A student who passes all modules in a period of study will be allowed to <u>pass the subject and progress to the next period of study.</u>
Passed by Compensation	A student may pass by compensation in a subject where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overall weighted average mark across all modules taken i 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>
Incomplete / Not passed	A student who does not meet any of the criteria is not allowed to progress in the subject. In exceptional circumstances an Examination Board 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 an Examinations Board 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.

### **Progression Carrying a Credit Deficit on the BATH Programme**

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). For calculation of the award grade, modules taken to make up a deficit are counted as being part of the year of study during which they were passed. 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.

### **Completing The BATH 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 (180) for the programme.
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.

### **Composition of the award mark**

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 degree		Three-year degree with study abroad	
Second year	30%	Second year	30%
Final year	70%	Study Abroad	Excluded
		Final year	70%

## Rules pertaining to all Programmes

(With the exception of BATH Regulations above)

### 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, may progress 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 modules.

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

- The 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).

The possible outcomes for a period of study in a taught programme are:

Progress	A student who passes all modules in a period of study will be allowed to progress to the next period of study.
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Restricted	<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</p> <p>A “Restricted: compensation” rating will be given where:</p> <p>The overall weighted average mark across all modules taken in the subject is 40% or above;</p> <p>No module has a mark below 35%;</p> <p>At least half of the credits taken in the period have been passed (i.e. 40% or above). A “Restricted: deficit” rating will be given where:</p> <p>The modules with marks below 35% amount to no more than 10 credits;</p> <p>The weighted average mark in the remaining modules, excluding the deficit modules, is over 40%;</p> <p>At least half of the credits taken in the period have marks of 40% or above.</p>
Not progress	A student who does not meet any of the above criteria is not allowed to progress.

**The possible outcomes for a period of study in a postgraduate programme are:**

<i>Progress</i>	<i>The student may progress to the next year of study or receive a final award.</i>
<i>Progress with conditions</i>	<i>The student may progress to the next year of study, subject to conditions.</i>
<i>Not progress</i>	<i>The student cannot progress to a further year of study.</i>
<i>Transfer to an alternative Programme</i>	<i>The student can transfer to an alternative programme.</i>

### ***Progression Carrying a Credit Deficit***

Progression carrying a deficit is allowed only where this does not conflict with the programme 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). For calculation of the award grade, modules taken to make up a deficit are counted as being part of the year of study during which they were passed. 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.

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

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

**Required for progression:** Within a programme 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 programme. Note all postgraduate modules are required modules.

**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 Examination Board***

The Examination Board of the relevant Faculty has the right to adjust the marks of any student, taking into account the advice of the relevant module deliverer, the advice of the relevant external examiners and the overall performance of the student. This is particularly relevant in borderline cases.

In addition, in consultation with the external examiner, adjustments may be

authorised 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:**

- where a student achieves a result in the compensation range, this may be classified as a pass by compensation if the performance in 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 either as a
- 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, D are passing grades, E is a grade which can allow pass by compensation and F is a non-passing grade. See *Assessments: Grades and Distinctions*
- As a result, indicated as either Passed or Incomplete/Not Passed.

*Note: It is the practice of the Pontifical University that semester results are provisional. Therefore, an indicative grade is provided to the student after preliminary examination boards or by the module deliverer. The official grade is made available to the student after the June or September final exam board.*

**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).

**Module Assessment:** Examinations will only be set on content that have been given in the current or preceding year.

In order to pass a module, a student must obtain at least 40% in the module, and in addition fulfil all the requirements of the module. See below for criteria for

compensation.

The requirements for a module are outlined in the module description on the website

Assessment rubrics are available on the University website. The dates for the submission of essays and other written work in each semester are posted during the first week of each semester.

### **Late submission of essays:**

- No penalties apply if an extension has been granted
- The following penalties apply if an essay extension was not sought or granted or if the extension date was not honoured: up to 1 week late 10% deducted from the mark awarded; up to 2 weeks late 20% deducted from the mark awarded
- Students may appeal the application of such penalties outlined above to the Programme Coordinator. In the case the Programme Coordinator is the lecturer, all appeals are submitted to the Dean of the relevant Faculty.

**Module Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all modules satisfactorily. A student, whose attendance is unsatisfactory, in the judgement of the relevant Faculty, may be debarred from presenting for the relevant examination.

**Supplementary Modules:** Students may choose to undertake an additional module from the suite of Elective and Special Modules, above the required credits. In such cases, the lowest mark of an equivalent credit weighted module from within the suite will be discarded from the calculation of the overall mark.

**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 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 within a structured PhD/research master's programme.

### **Possible module outcomes**

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.
Not passed / Incomplete	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. <small>[SEP]</small></li> <li>• The student did not meet the minimum attendance requirement (where there are stated mandatory attendance thresholds).</li> <li>• Do not complete the required elements of assessment</li> </ul>

### Module Compensation Regulations

Compensation can only be applied when all modules taken in a period of study are looked at together. A module may be said to be “in the compensation range” when it is between 35 and 39%. However the rules below govern the application of this regulation. If a student does not meet this criteria then the module will not be passed by compensation irrespective of the mark attained.

In order for a module to be passed by compensation the following criteria must be met:

- No more than 10 credits (over all modules taken in the period of study) are below the compensation threshold (usually 35%).
- The average mark in the remaining modules in the period of study is the pass mark (usually 40%) or above.
- At least half of the credits have reached the pass threshold (usually 40%) or above.

**BATH Regulation:** If some modules are passed by compensation then in order for their subjects to then be passed by compensation, the following criteria must be met:

- The overall weighted average mark across all modules taken in the subject is the pass mark (usually 40%) or above.
- No module in that subject has a mark below the compensation threshold (usually 35%).
- At least half of the credits taken in the subject have marks which have reached the pass threshold (usually 40%) or above.
- All required modules have been passed without compensation.

*All other Programme Compensation Regulation:* If some modules are passed by

compensation then in order for their period of study to then be passed by compensation, the following criteria must be met:

- The overall weighted average mark across all modules taken in the period of study is the pass mark (usually 40%) or above.
- No module in that period of study has a mark below the compensation threshold (usually 35%).
- At least half of the credits taken in the period of study have marks which have reached the pass threshold (usually 40%) or above.
- All required modules have been passed without compensation.

### **Pass standards**

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 module Leader and/or Programme Coordinator may require supplementary work or require the student to take the module again in order to progress.

## **Completing A Programme**

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

- Complete and pass modules to the required credit value for the programme, for example 180 credits for three-year full-time degrees.
- Complete and pass the modules specified in the programme specification,

### **Composition of the award mark**

Any variation to composition of award mark calculation are stipulated within the programme specifications available to each student.

### **Composition of the award mark: Programmes at NFQ level 5, 6 and 7**

In programmes at NFQ level 5, 6 and 7 all modules across all years of the programme (other than ungraded modules) contribute to the calculation of the award mark. Any deviation to this rule is specified within the individual programme specifications.

### **Composition of the award mark: Programmes at NFQ level 8**

The final mark 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 duplicated results for modules which were repeated (using the rules defined in the section on repetition).

For a three-year degree programme, 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.

### **Composition of the award mark: Programmes at NFQ level 9 and 10**

In masters programmes (except professional programmes) all modules other than ungraded modules contribute to the calculation of the award.

In doctoral programmes (except professional programmes) the final thesis contribute to the calculation of the award.

In professional programmes, 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 the Pontifical University. normally no more than 50% of the credit value of the programme may be exempted.

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.

### **Award Grades**

	Award Mark
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%

## **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 module descriptions. In exceptional cases the Examination Board may waive this cap. In exceptional cases the Examination Board 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 the Examination Board 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 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:

- a. Repetition of modules which have been passed may be allowed where the progression requirement is higher than the pass mark.
- b. Final year students may apply to repeat/resit up to 15 credits of modules which have been passed.
- c. 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 resit or repeat a passed module (40% or over) 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.

A repeating student who chooses to repeat a module which has already been passed and credits earned (i.e. Pass or Pass by Compensation result) may choose, or may be required, to take a new module. In such cases the original module mark and the new module mark will be included in the calculation of the qualification.

### **Time Limit on Repetition**

A student may normally repeat a period of study only once. In exceptional circumstances the Examinations Board may decide to allow additional repetition opportunities.

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# External Examiners in the Pontifical University

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*The Pontifical University* has followed the long-standing practise of the Irish Universities in appointing External Examiners in each of the major theological disciplines. The system of extern examining has contributed to maintaining the standard of theological excellence of the University, the standing of its degrees, both nationally and internationally, and their comparability with those offered in similar institutions.

External Examiners are normally appointed for a term of three years. They monitor the maintenance of academic standards within a subject area and ensure equity in the results of examinations.

External Examiners are appointed by the relevant Faculty on recommendation of the appropriate Department where relevant. Persons nominated as External Examiners are normally teaching at university level in the area they are to examine.

### **Prior to Examinations:**

Heads of Department or designated representatives will communicate to the External Examiner full information on the courses to be examined, as well as copies of examination papers from previous years if necessary and a description of the methods of assessment used, including Continuous Assessment.

External Examiners approve the examination papers. Draft papers should be sent in sufficient time to enable them to propose changes and to permit discussion of such proposed changes to take place.

The External Examiner will be informed as early as possible of proposed dates for Examination Board.

### **Examinations:**

All examination scripts, essays and other course work contributing to the final grade should be available to the External Examiner. In practise, a sufficient number of scripts and other written work will be sent to the External Examiners which will permit them to determine that the internal marking has been appropriate and consistent. They should normally see a sample of scripts drawn from the top, middle and bottom of the mark range: they should also be sent scripts of borderline candidates.

Where necessary, External Examiners will participate with Internal Examiners in oral examinations.

**Following the Examinations:**

External examiners will be invited to attend Departmental meetings to discuss the examination results. They will also be invited to attend the Faculty Examination Board meetings.

**External Examiner's Report:**

Following the Examination, the External Examiner shall submit a brief report to the Department. Where appropriate, the External Examiner may also submit a report to the President.

**The External Examiner and Examination Appeals:**

External Examiners may be consulted in relation to matters arising from examination appeals.

**Examiners at Postgraduate Level**

Examiners at Postgraduate Level are appointed by the relevant Faculty. Their role corresponds to that of External Examiners at Undergraduate level.

In the Faculty of Theology, Programme External Examiners will be appointed for Master's Degree in Pastoral Theology, the Higher Diploma in Theological Studies, the MTh (Liturgy) and the MTh (Liturgical Music) programmes.

For the degrees of Licentiate and Master, it is appropriate that an External Examiner be nominated who has expertise in the area of the thesis.

For the Degree of Doctor, the External Examiner must have specialist knowledge of the area of thesis. Names and professional details of the proposed examiners will be submitted by the director to the Postgraduate Board who will bring same to the Faculty Meeting.

For the Doctorate in Divinity, the External Examiner attends the public defence of the thesis.

For the PhD in Theology, the External Examiner attends the *viva voce* examination, along with the Supervisor of the dissertation, the Internal Reader and the Chair of the *viva* board.

External Examiners will submit a report on the thesis submitted for their attention.

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# Code of Practice for the Conducting of *Viva Voce* Examinations and Defences

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## *1. The Purpose of the ‘Viva’ and ‘Defence’*

The purpose of a *viva* or a defence is to (i) verify that the dissertation is the candidate’s own work, (ii) to confirm that the candidate understands what he or she has written and can defend it, (iii) to allow the candidate to clarify and develop the written dissertation in response to the examiners’ questions, and (iv) to verbally investigate the candidate’s awareness of where his or her original work sits in relation to the wider research field.

### *The Viva Voce Examination – or viva – for the Licentiate*

The *viva voce* examination (commonly known as the “*viva*”) is the formal oral examination of a dissertation and constitutes a key part of the examination of licentiate degrees: the STL and LPhil.

Two examiners—one internal to the Pontifical University and one external—examine the candidate *viva voce* on the dissertation she or he has submitted.

### *1.2 The Defence for the Doctorate*

The ‘doctoral defence’ is the formal oral examination for of a dissertation and constitutes a key part of the examination of doctorate degrees: the DPhil (Philosophy), and PhD and DD (Theology).

The PhD defence requires two examiners—one internal to the Pontifical University and one external—to examine the candidate.

The Doctorate in Divinity (STD or DD) and Doctorate in Philosophy (DPhil) defences are public examinations, in the presence of the Council of the Faculty (of Theology or Philosophy). DPhil and STD/DD defences require five examiners, three of whom – two internal and one external – are readers of the dissertation.

Further details on the constitution, format, length, and components of *vivas* and defences can be found in the table below.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

### *2.1. Dean of Postgraduate Studies*

It is the responsibility of the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, who may attend all *vivas/defences ex officio*, to (i) establish a mutually convenient date, time, and venue for the *viva* or defence, and (ii) to communicate information on the date, time, and venue of the *viva/defence* to both Examiners, to the Chair, and to the candidate.

The *viva/defence* should normally be held on campus. In exceptional circumstances (for example, the examination of students based overseas) the examination may be held elsewhere, provided the student agrees to the arrangement. Electronic conferencing may be used in some circumstances. The Pontifical University Office is to be consulted where use of electronic conferencing is considered. Care should be taken in choosing the venue for the *viva/defence* to ensure that the examination can be conducted in an accessible, relaxed, and comfortable atmosphere, without risk of interruption and extraneous noise.

After readers' reports have been submitted (at least two weeks in advance of the provisional defence date), it is the responsibility of the Dean of Postgraduate Studies to confer with the chair and readers to ascertain whether the provisional *viva/defence* date ought to be confirmed or be postponed.

### *2.2 The Chair*

In the Pontifical University *vivas/defences* are chaired by an independent permanent member of the relevant faculty. The presence of an independent Chair is designed to ensure that integrity and fairness is maintained by all parties during the *viva/defence*.

The relevant faculty, upon the recommendation of the Postgraduate Board, appoints the Chair when the dissertation has been submitted for examination to the Pontifical University Office. The Pontifical University Office forwards to each of the Examiners a copy of the doctoral dissertation, together with a copy of the 300-word abstract, a report form, and a copy of the doctoral regulations. The candidate will also receive a copy of the doctoral regulations.

Prior to *viva/defence* the Chair is responsible for:

- Collecting the necessary documentation from the Pontifical University Office, including individual written reports from the Examiners and a results form to be filled out.
- Chairing a preliminary meeting of the Examiners and reviewing the structure, roles, and format of the *viva/defence*. (This usually happens on the same day but prior to the scheduled start of the *viva/defence*.) The supervisor should normally be available for consultation with the examiners during this meeting.

During the *viva/defence* the Chair is responsible for:

- Introducing all those present at the *viva/defence*, including attempting to put all parties at their ease.
- Outlining the structure and format of the *viva/defence* to the Examiners and candidates, and indicating the respective roles of the Chair, Supervisor, and Examiners.
- Intervening in the examining process only if there appears to be bias, misconduct or unfairness, or if the Examiners are diverting from the agreed format of the *viva/defence* in such a manner as to disadvantage the candidate, or if the Chair believes the *viva/defence* is progressing in a manner which could compromise the academic standards of the Pontifical University. Actions which might be taken include calling a temporary halt to the examination, holding a private discussion with the Examiners or the candidate, or, most exceptionally, ending the examination.
- Asking the candidate if she or he is satisfied that the examination was conducted fairly. Should the candidate express any concerns in this regard, they shall be noted by the chair, and included in the documentation of the *viva/defence*.

For the Deliberation:

- Inviting the candidate and those present other than the examiners (e.g., the supervisor, and the Dean of Postgraduate Studies) to leave the room for the duration of the examiners' deliberations.
- Chairing the post-*viva/defence* discussion of the Examiners, and outlining and clarifying all possible recommendations.
- Ensuring the Examiners complete and sign the relevant forms at the end of the *viva/defence*.

- Inviting the candidate (and others present) to return to the room and then communicate to the candidate the results of the *viva*/defence. (For *vivas*, only the result – *no mark* – is communicated.)

After the *viva*/defence the Chair is responsible for:

- Ensuring that a report on the recommendation of the Examiners (where necessary, indicating details of major/minor amendments required) is sent to the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, the Pontifical University Office, and the supervisor.
- Presenting the Examiners' report to the relevant Faculty for approval.
- Providing information for any subsequent appeal procedure.

It is to be noted that the Chair is **not** responsible for:

- Having any knowledge of the subject of the dissertation, nor is s/he required to read the dissertation.

### *2.3 The Dissertation Supervisor*

In no research degree (LPhil, STL, PhD, DPhil, DD) is the supervisor an examining reader of the dissertation. In the case of the DPhil and DD defence, the supervisor may act as a non-dissertation-reading examiner who contributes to the assessment of the candidate's lecture and responses to propositions, but not to the dissertation. With respect to the remaining research degrees (LPhil, STL, PhD), the supervisor may attend the examination, but does not question the candidate, and can only provide clarification on any matters when requested by the Board (i.e., Examiners and Chair). The supervisor does not participate in the final decision and leaves the examination room while deliberations take place, unless asked to remain by the Chair. (In case the supervisor is also an examiner in a DPhil and DD defence, his or her contribution to the deliberations is limited to the components of the defence other than the dissertation.)

### ***3. Criteria for the Appointment of Research Examiners (Internal and External)***

Examiners are appointed by the relevant Faculty, upon the recommendation of the Postgraduate Board. Examiners should normally have the following qualities and competencies:

- Experience in supervising postgraduate candidates and in the examination process of such candidates;
- Formal academic qualification, normally at doctoral level, and/or a

professional qualification or experience at an appropriate level and relevant to the area being examined;

- A willingness to respond to requests to read dissertations within specified time deadlines and to be available to attend such oral examinations and/or examiners meetings as are appropriate.

Examiners should not have a close personal relationship with other examiners, supervisors or a candidate, if it might be construed as entailing a conflict of interest.

### *3.1 Criteria for Appointment of External Examiners*

For research awards, external examiners are appointed for specific dissertations. For doctoral candidates, external examiners should not normally be appointed more than twice in a four-year period; for Masters and STL/LPhil dissertations, an external examiner is not to be appointed more than once per [academic] year. Such appointments may be made irrespective of external examiners' duties with regard to taught programmes.

External examiners should have recognised expertise in the subject matter of the dissertation being examined.

The external examiner should be independent of the Pontifical University, of its internal examiners, supervisors, and of the candidates presenting themselves for examination. Thus, all external examiners:

- should normally be in the employ of a third level institution; recent *emeriti* (within three years or less) who are research active may also be considered;
- should not have been in the employ of the Pontifical University (in any capacity) in the three years prior to appointment;
- should not have been a student of the Pontifical University in the three years prior to appointment;
- should not, in the past three years, have been a beneficiary of any bursary or remuneration from the Pontifical University other than from posts such as external examiner, member of accreditation panel, member of quality review panel, member of recruitment/promotions panel or similar;
- should not have assisted/advised the postgraduate candidate on the work underpinning the preparation of his/her dissertation.

### 3.2 Criteria for the Appointment of Internal Examiners

The internal examiner should normally be a member of the Council of Faculty of the respective faculty in the Pontifical University who has the appropriate expertise in the candidate's subject area. If a faculty wishes to recommend nominees who do not satisfy this criterion, this should be highlighted in the nomination form and a case provided for consideration by faculty.

#### 4. The Assessment of the Viva or Defence

##### 4.1 Evaluation of the Viva for the Licentiate

The *scriptum*/dissertation is assessed in a 30–50-minute *viva voce* examination in accordance with these regulations for *viva voce* examinations in the Pontifical University (see table below).

A consensus percentage mark is given by the examiners for the *scriptum*/dissertation and for the performance in the *viva*. The final overall mark is weighted according to the following credits: *Scriptum* = 30 credits; *Viva* = 10 credits.

##### 4.2 Possible Outcomes of a Doctoral Defence and Registration/Fee Implications (if any)

The examiners should not recommend awarding the doctoral degree unless they judge the work to be of a sufficient standard as a work of serious scholarship.

In the case of the DD/STD defence, the Faculty shall vote firstly on whether the degree of doctor is to be awarded and secondly on what mark shall be given. Separate marks are given for the dissertation and the propositions; the minimum mark is 65%. The marks are counted, and an aggregate mark is awarded. This is not communicated to the candidate.

With respect to the all defences (PhD, DPhil, and DD/STD), the examiners may recommend that the candidate should:

- 1 Be awarded the Doctorate degree without further examination or amendment.

*No further registration or fee required.*

- 2 Be awarded the Doctorate degree without further examination, subject to making the changes specified which must be subsequently carried out to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner (within a period of six months).

*No further registration or fee required.*

- 3 Be awarded the Doctorate degree without further examination subject to making specified changes to the satisfaction of both Internal and External Examiners (applied where examiners estimate that more than eight weeks but less than six months additional work is required).

*No further fee or registration required.*

*NOTE: if more than six months work is required, the candidate must re-register and a continuation fee will apply.*

- 4 Not be awarded the Doctorate degree, but be permitted to re-submit the dissertation in a revised form for re-examination by the same examiners (applied where examiners estimate that there is more than six months additional work required). In this case areas requiring major amendments will be detailed by the Examiners in the examination.

*The candidate will re-register for the duration of the period of revision. A continuation fee will apply.*

- 5 Not be awarded the Doctorate degree and not be permitted to re-submit for re-examination for the Doctorate Degree.

*No further registration permitted.*

Where the degree is not awarded, but the candidate is permitted to re-submit the dissertation in a revised form for re-examination by the same examiners (category 4 above), the candidate must be registered in order for the revised dissertation to be accepted for re-examination. Normally the revised dissertation should be submitted within 12 months following the *viva*.

In the case where the examiners recommend that the Doctorate not be awarded and that the student not be permitted to re-submit for re-examination (category 5 above), the examiners may subsequently consider whether or not the work is sufficient for the award of a masters level degree. If they agree that a masters level award would be merited then a separate recommendation may be made in writing to that effect. Application of this option should be seen as exceptional, rather than as one of the usual possible outcomes of a doctoral examination.

#### *4.3 After the Viva/defence*

The Chair of the *viva/defence* is responsible for submitting the relevant form with results to the Pontifical University Office.

If the examiners recommend that a Doctorate be awarded, the student must submit one hardbound copy of the dissertation, and one electronic copy (on memory stick

or corresponding medium) in PDF format and comprising one file, exactly mirroring the hardbound copy and embodying any changes prescribed by the examiners.

The result of the defence report will not be considered by the relevant Faculty until the hardbound copy and the electronic copy of the revised dissertation, incorporating the recommended changes and confirmed by the internal examiner (or internal and external examiner, as applicable depending on the outcome of the defence), have been lodged with the Pontifical University Office.

Where the opinions of the examiners differ, each examiner will submit a separate written report for consideration by the Postgraduate Board in the presence of the Registrar. This meeting of the Board will make a recommendation to the relevant faculty for approval.

DEGREE	EXAMINATION TYPE	LENGTH	ATTENDEES	LECTURE	PRESENTATION OF ARGUMENTS AND CONCLUSION	DEFENDING THE DISSERTATION	PROPOSITION EXAMINATION	NOTES
DD/STD	defence	c. 130 min.	Chair (President or Dean), Candidate, Supervisor, Council of the Faculty; at least 5 examiners (3 of whom are readers of the dissertation, 2 internal, 1 external), academic community, members of the public.	30 min. (On the topic)	c. 10 min.	60 min.	30 min.  On nine propositions chosen by the candidate and approved by the Council of the Faculty of Theology. Three propositions will be chosen from each subject area: Systematic Theology, Moral Theology, and Sacred Scripture.	At least part of the dissertation must be published (e.g., on MURAL) before conferral of degree.
DPhil	defence	c. 130 min.	Chair (President or Dean), Candidate, Supervisor, Council of the Faculty; at least 5 examiners (3 of whom are readers of the dissertation, 2 internal, 1 external), academic community, members of the public.	30 min. (On a topic chosen by the Faculty)	c. 10 min.	60 min.	30 min.  On twenty-five propositions from general philosophy chosen by the candidate and approved by the Philosophy Faculty.	At least part of the dissertation must be published (e.g., on MURAL) before conferral of degree.
PhD	viva	60–90 min.	Chair, Candidate, Supervisor, Internal and External Readers	n/a	c. 20 min.	40–70 min.	n/a	
STL	viva	30–50 min.	Chair, Candidate, Supervisor, Internal and External Readers	n/a	c. 10 min.	20–40 min.	n/a	
LPhil	viva	30–50 min.	Chair, Candidate, Supervisor, Internal and External Readers	n/a	c. 10 min.	20–40 min.	n/a	

<sup>1</sup> MURAL-Maynooth University Research Archive Library. Cf. *Veritatis Gaudium* §48.

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# Procedures for the Discussion, Checking and Appeal of Examination Results

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The Supervisor of Examinations shall implement the following procedures:

## **1. Procedures for Discussion of Examination Results:**

The Faculty shall arrange a specific date within ten days of notification of examination results, on which students may discuss their examination results with the relevant departments of the Faculty. (This arrangement is to be in addition to any other arrangement which departments may make).

## **2. Procedures for Checking of Examination Results:**

(i) Students may formally request the Supervisor of Examinations, Pontifical University Office, in writing, within two weeks from the date of publication of results in University, or, in exceptional circumstances, within such extended period as allowed by the President of the College, to arrange a check of their examination result.

(ii) The Supervisor of Examinations shall communicate with the relevant Head of Department or his / her nominee, who shall arrange to have the results checked as soon as possible. The formal check shall ensure that all parts of the examination (including continuous assessment) have been marked and that no errors occurred in the recording, collating or combining of marks which determined the result.

(iii) The outcome of the checking of examination results shall be communicated in writing by the Head of Department or his / her nominee, to the Supervisor of Examinations who shall, if such an error has occurred, make the necessary arrangements to have the result amended and inform the student concerned without delay.

(iv) The fee for checking an examination result is €25 per subject.

## **3. Procedures for Appeal of Examination Results:**

### **3.1 Grounds for Appeal**

(i) there is evidence of substantive irregularity in the conduct of the examination;

(ii) the student has grounds to indicate that the checking of his / her examination result was not properly carried out;

(iii) there are circumstances which the Examination Board was not aware of when its decision was taken.

- Note: Students who are appealing under ground 3.1(ii) above are obliged to request a recheck through the Pontifical University Office. Any

subsequent appeal will be based on the outcome of this initial recheck and must be lodged within two weeks of the notification of the recheck.

- Note: Students who are appealing under 3.1(iii) must outline the steps taken to notify the department concerned of the circumstances relevant to their appeal, and the response to any notification. If no steps were taken in this regard, they must explain why this was the case.

### **3.2 Appeal Procedures**

(i) A student who wishes to appeal an examination result must do so in writing, setting out the grounds for the appeal in full, and any supporting evidence, to the Supervisor of Examinations, Pontifical University Office, within three weeks of the issuing of the examination results. There shall be a fee for an examination appeal that will be €60 per subject.

(ii) Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Supervisor of Examinations shall inform the Examinations Appeal Board and the relevant Head(s) of Department(s) that an appeal has been lodged. Where an appeal arises in an Arts Subject the Board of Appeal shall be that of Maynooth University.

(iii) Pending the outcome of an appeal, students should be advised as follows:

- An appeal may not be successful
- Students should avail themselves of any opportunity to re-present for examination, on the understanding that a re-sitting of an examination would not prejudice their appeal in any way
- The conferring of a degree, where relevant, may be deferred, pending the final outcome of the appeal.

### **3.3 Examinations Appeal Board**

(i) The Examination Appeals Board shall consist of four members appointed by the relevant Faculty. Three of these shall be members of the Faculty and one external member. The Supervisor of Examinations shall not be a member of the Board. The quorum for any meeting of the Board shall be three members. The Faculty shall appoint one of its members Chairperson of the Board.

(ii) The relevant Faculty shall also appoint three alternate members, who will be called on in the event of the unavoidable absence of a member of the Board or his / her involvement in the appeal under consideration. The alternate members may include extern examiners from subjects other than that involved in the appeal. The President of the College may, on the request of the Chairperson of the Board, appoint additional alternate members provided that such appointments shall lapse unless ratified by the next meeting of the Faculty.

(iii) The Examinations Appeal Board shall consider the appeal and the grounds on which it is based, and may, as appropriate, consult with the internal and external examiner(s). The Board's decision shall be by majority vote, and, in the event of equality of votes, by the casting vote of the chairperson. The chairperson of the Board shall inform the President, the Faculty and the student regarding the outcome of the appeal.

(iv) The Examinations Appeal Board shall complete its business with reasonable expedition, normally within four weeks of the date of the acceptance of the appeal.

(v) The decision of the Examinations Appeal Board shall be final.