



The University of Manchester

**MASTERS PROGRAMMES IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER
SCIENCE
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
2021/22**

**HANDBOOK FOR
MSC, POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA, AND
POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE**

This is the handbook for the Postgraduate Taught Programmes (PGT) offered by the Department of Computer Science in the University of Manchester. It covers the MSc, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates. Students on these programmes are expected to be familiar with the contents of this handbook, as it outlines the regulations for the programmes, assessment rules and the facilities of the department and university, as well as providing guidance on undertaking the programmes.

Although the information contained in this handbook is believed to be correct at the time of going to press, the department reserves the right to make appropriate changes without prior notice; however the department will endeavour to inform students of any substantial changes made affecting the programmes. This disclaimer does not affect any statutory rights which you may have under English law.

The Department of Computer Science is within the School of Engineering, in the Faculty of Science and Engineering. The School of Engineering delegates authority to all of its departments for the implementation and management of university policies and frameworks relating to teaching, learning and the student experience and its degree regulations.

Norman Paton, PGT Programme Director, Manchester, 17th September 2021

Covid-19 Statement

All information relating to the programme(s) in this handbook is correct at the time of publication and we will use all reasonable endeavours to deliver the programme(s) accordingly. However, it may be necessary to make changes to the programme(s) in particular circumstances (as indicated in Section 5.1 of the [Student Terms & Conditions 2021-22](#)), including changes which may need to be implemented in response to the significant challenges presented by the pandemic. Please be assured that the University will act in the best interests of students and will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on teaching, learning and assessment.

Students will be notified of any material changes in a timely and effective manner and students are also encouraged to regularly check My Manchester and the Department/Discipline communications channels for up to date information relating to COVID-19 which may affect your studies

We encourage all those coming to campus to follow the University's [COVID-19 safety guidelines](#).

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: General Information.....	5
Contact Details	5
Welcome and General Resources	5
Discipline and Conduct	7
Tier 4 Visa Attendance Monitoring.....	8
Programme Staff	8
Department and Postgraduate Student Support Staff	10
Department Library	10
Out-of-hours Authorisation.....	10
eLearning environment - Blackboard	11
Notice Boards and Social Space	11
Student Representatives	11
2021/2022 Key Dates in the Academic Year and Timetable	11
Chapter 2: Overview of the Programmes	13
Types and Lengths of Programmes.....	13
MSc Overview	13
Welcome Week and Induction	13
English Language Classes	14
Themes	14
Course Units.....	14
Course Unit Selection	15
Projects	15
Chapter 3: Programme Structure	16
MSc in Advanced Computer Science.....	16
Pathways	16
Themes and Course Units	17
Advanced Computer Science Programme Specification.....	17
Project.....	17

MSc Project.....	17
Diploma Project.....	18
Chapter 4: Assessment and Examinations.....	20
General Assessment Requirements	20
Taught Component.....	20
Coursework.....	20
Late Submission	21
Examinations	21
Resitting Examinations.....	21
Remarking of Examination Papers and Coursework.....	22
Project.....	22
Assessment Regulations for MSc, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate	23
Taught Course Units	23
Pass Rules for Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate	24
Degree Classification: Distinction, Merit, Pass.....	24
Procedures for Students Who Fail	26
Appeals	27
Chapter 5: Student Support Services	27
Students with Additional Support Needs.....	28
International Students.....	28
Useful Forms	29
Chapter 6: University of Manchester Library	29
Facilities	29
Getting Started	29
Library Search	30
Library Subject Guides	30
Training and Support	30
Chapter 7: Health and Safety.....	30

Fire, Emergencies and First Aid.....	31
Fire Safety Arrangements and Requirements	31
Emergencies	33
First Aid.....	33
Accidents and Incidents.....	33
Electrical Equipment.....	34
Lone Working and Out-of-Hours Working	34
Out-of-Hours Work in the Kilburn Building	35
Out-of-Hours Work in the Information Technology Building	35
Occupants of the Building Remaining on Site outside of Normal Working Hours	36
Chemical Safety	36
Department Smoking Policy.....	36
Chapter 8: University Regulations, Procedures and Policies	36
Attendance	37
Ill Health	37
Mitigating Circumstances.....	39
Examples of Mitigating Circumstances Outcomes	39
Interruptions	41
Guidance on Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Malpractice.....	41
Collusion	45
Collaboration.....	45
Fabrication or Falsification of Results	46
Penalties for Poor Practice vs. Malpractice.....	46
Complaints Procedure	47
Dignity at Study and Work	47

Chapter 1: General Information

Contact Details

The [Department of Computer Science](#) is located in the [Kilburn Building](#).

[Student Support Office](#)

email: compsci-ss0-pgt@manchester.ac.uk

tel +44 (0) 161 306 8155

In person support is available from the Faculty of Science and Engineering South Campus Hub. The Hub is located in Engineering Building A.

hubs will be able to answer general queries from any student. You can find these locations on the [campus map](#). Opening hours are Monday – Friday 09:00 – 17:00.

The Engineering Building A hub is based on the ground floor, adjacent to the main entrance - a [digital floor plan](#) to aid orientation. As you enter the building you will find our support area beside the main stairwell. Our helpful and friendly student service team aim to resolve student queries or refer and signpost appropriately.

- General student life enquiries, help with registration and start of year questions
- Advice and referrals specific to your subject area
- Welfare, student support and student service general queries

Welcome and General Resources

Welcome to the Department of Computer Science. We hope that you will have a productive and happy time here in your postgraduate studies. This section is a brief introductory guide to some of the services, facilities and documents that are available to help you.

Programme handbook (this document): full of useful details, advice and general information. We expect you to read and consult it.

Syllabus: the descriptions for each MSc programme and the pathways therein are available on the [pathways page](#).

The full list of MSc course units and their descriptions is available on the [syllabus page](#). Do read the theme and course unit descriptions. They outline the aims of each course unit, the contents and who should take the course unit (including requisite academic background).

You are recommended to attend the theme introduction talks in Welcome Week, before finalising your choice of themes and course units.

For all the latest information regarding handbooks, syllabi, timetables, projects, specialist advice and guidance, please visit the department postgraduate taught (PGT) [webpages](#).

Induction: during the first week, called Welcome Week, we run a number of important induction events, explaining how the department, the programmes, course units, exams, coursework, email accounts, projects, etc. work, setting you up to start with your studies in week one. It is vital that you meet and make friends with staff and other MSc students. Information regarding the Welcome Week timetable is available on our [timetable page](#). Additional information about life in Manchester, and settling in, is provided on our [student support page](#).

Employability: the [university careers service](#) provides useful information and support. This includes information on vacancies and advice on making [applications](#).

Facilities: There are dedicated MSc computing facilities in Room 2.25a and 2.25b of the Kilburn Building. All machines in the MSc lab support Linux and MS Windows. On many of the programmes, you need to be familiar with both systems. There is an introductory lab on our systems in Welcome Week. In 2.11, next to the laboratory area, there is a breakout space for master's students. If you have queries regarding the department's IT facilities, please first check the [FAQ](#). As usual, never send your username and/or password in an electronic format to anybody, ever. You will find a wealth of useful information at [IT Services](#).

Help: it is extremely important that if you are having difficulties, whether it is on an academic, personal or university matter, you seek advice at the earliest possible opportunity.

In particular, any matter, whatever it is, that affects your work and progress here must be brought to your academic advisor in confidence. We can often help and can always advise on management of work.

For academic help on particular course units, consult the lecturers on that course unit. For academic help on the MSc project in the first instance consult your supervisor, and for organizational queries about the project consult the MSc project coordinator.

Procedures and Administration: for forms, procedures etc. please contact the [Student Support Office \(SSO\)](#). Many forms are available on the department [StudentNet](#). The university has an excellent [Counselling and Mental Health Service](#) with a drop-in centre, quick appointments, workshops and resources. There is also help from the [Students' Union](#) and [Legal Services](#).

International Students: Students from outside the UK may wish to take part in the activities of the [International Society](#), including their welcome service. Other help for overseas students is available from the [University's International Advice team](#).

Photocopying and Printing: as a PGT student, you will be given an annual allowance for computer printout and photocopying in the department for coursework printing. There is a combined printer and photocopier in the MSc lab, but you can use other [printers](#) connected to the university's network as well.

Additional Costs: as stated above, you have access to the department's computer facilities and a limited allowance of printing and photocopying. During your studies, you are expected to bring the usual stationery to take notes in labs and for your project. Other than for these, we do not expect that university activities will incur any other costs.

Discipline and Conduct

Please note that the University of Manchester has a regulation on [conduct and discipline of students \(Regulation XVII\)](#) that governs the conduct and discipline of students, and sets out the procedure for taking disciplinary actions.

Tier 4 Visa Attendance Monitoring

The university operates attendance monitoring throughout the academic year, to ensure that all students are engaged in the programme. This is particularly important for those students with a Tier 4 Student Visa, as the University must meet the UKVI statutory requirements as a sponsor of Tier 4 students and its responsibilities in accordance with its highly trusted sponsor status.

What happens if a Tier 4 student is not in regular attendance? The department must be able to confirm Tier 4 student's engagement to the UKVI throughout the academic year. If you are not able to attend your scheduled activities (or meetings with your supervisor during the project period) you must let us know. Initially the department will contact students who have unexplained absences, to check if there are any issues. If the absence continues this will have to be reported to the UKVI, and the university will cease to sponsor the student's Tier 4 visa. The Tier 4 visa will then be curtailed and the student must leave the UK within 60 days.

Further Information: further information on Tier 4 visas is available on the [government website](#). If you have any concerns about the attendance monitoring census points, or your Tier 4 visa status, please contact compsci-ssopgt@manchester.ac.uk.

The university has a comprehensive website, which will answer many of your [visa queries](#). The contact details for the University's International Advice team are:

email visa@manchester.ac.uk

tel +44 (0)161 275 5000 (option 1)

Programme Staff

Responsibility	Name and homepage
PGT Programme Director	Prof Norman Paton
Lead Academic Advisor	Dr Sandra Sampaio
Project Coordinator	Prof Tom Thomson

1.1 Academic Staff with responsibility for the programme

Table 1.1 summarises the roles of academic staff who have substantial responsibilities relating to our master's programmes. The postgraduate taught (PGT) programme director has overall responsibility for the management of the programmes. Academic advisors are there to offer students pastoral and academic advice. If you have any questions regarding your programme choice, progress, or performance, or if you are experiencing difficulties of any kind, you can contact your academic advisor (assigned to you in Welcome Week) or the Student Support Office (see below). Once you have started your project, your supervisor is also there to help you with any questions you have. The role of the academic advisor is:

- to assist students with the process of induction and orientation into academic life and the university community;
- to work with students to build personal academic relationships;
- to retain an interest in their students' personal and general academic and professional development throughout their academic careers while at the university, providing information and guidance on academic choice;
- to monitor both academic performance and student engagement in a proactive manner and advise on constructive strategies to enable improvement;
- to offer general academic advice to students on their general progress and development;
- to listen and offer students help and advice about pastoral/non-academic matters and to signpost students to other student services for further assistance if necessary.

If you need a reference letter for an application, you can ask your project supervisor, a lecturer of a course unit you have taken or your academic advisor. A lecturer on a course unit may not think that they know you well enough to write a useful reference, but your project supervisor and academic advisor should provide one on request.

Note that the academic advisor may also not know your work especially well.

Academic staff (lecturers, senior lecturers, readers, professors) will teach course units and supervise projects. Each course unit has a course unit leader, but may be taught by more than one person.

We also use graduate teaching assistants, who are usually PhD students, to help students to understand and assimilate the material in a given lab/examples class; give feedback to students on their work; mark coursework as appropriate; and give general advice on sensible working practices and time management.

Department and Postgraduate Student Support Staff

Head of Department:

- [Professor Robert Stevens](#), Room 2.125

Student Support Office:

The [Student Support Office \(SSO\)](#) is able to provide general guidance and advice.

Student Support Office Staff and Responsibilities:

- [Hannah Cousins](#) – Teaching and Learning Manager and Student Disability Support Coordinator
- [Graham Richardson](#) – Senior Postgraduate Programmes Administrator
- [Chris Calland](#) – Postgraduate Assistant

Department Library

The Department of Computer Science has its own library, which is exclusively for use by computer science students and staff. It has multiple copies of every book on our course unit reading lists, and a collection of general-interest computer science books, all of which can be borrowed for short periods. The department library has copies of recommended textbooks for PGT course units.

Out-of-hours Authorisation

Out-of-hours authorisation allows entry to the Kilburn Building outside of normal hours (Monday to Friday 6pm - 11.30pm; Saturday and Sunday 10am – 8pm). To gain Out-of-hours authorisation you must first complete all stages of the Health and Safety course and Out-of-hours test in the CS-PGT-Community area of Blackboard.

Once you have completed the final out-of-hours test, please take a screenshot showing you have completed and email this to the [SSO](#). We will then arrange a time for you to come to activate your card.

eLearning environment - Blackboard

Course units make use of the university's eLearning environment, Blackboard, for example to provide access to teaching materials, for submitting coursework and for providing feedback. It is therefore crucial that you have access to [Blackboard](#), know how to use it, and check it regularly for relevant information.

Notice Boards and Social Space

The postgraduate notice board is positioned in the corridor adjacent to the MSc laboratory, Kilburn Building. This is used for displaying general information and advice. You are entitled to make use of the study and dining area on the lower first floor, near the Byte Caf  and the breakout room beside the MSc lab is considered a space for PGT students.

Student Representatives

The department and university take seriously both the issues of student representation and that of quality control of the programme. Student representatives are identified during Welcome Week, and will have the opportunity to bring issues to relevant members of staff, and see that they are dealt with satisfactorily.

In all course units, online unit surveys (USs) will be carried out. Students are encouraged to complete these, for they are part of the quality assessment. The department processes them, and the course unit lecturers and their appraisers, the programme director, the external examiners, and others who are concerned with the programme quality read them.

2021/2022 Key Dates in the Academic Year and Timetable

Period/Event	Dates
Welcome Period	13 September – 24 September 2021
Deadline for course unit registration	24 September 2021

Semester 1 Period 1 course unit teaching	27 September to 29 October 2021
Coursework completion Period 1	1 November – 5 November 2021
Semester 1 Period 2 course unit teaching	8 November – 10 December 2021
Coursework completion Period 2	13 December – 17 December 2021
Semester 1 Periods 1 & 2 examinations	17 January – 28 January 2022
Deadline for Sem. 2 Periods 3 & 4 course unit changes	4 February 2022
Semester 2 Period 3 course unit teaching	31 January – 4 March 2022
Coursework Completion Period 3	7 March – 11 March 2022
Semester 2 Period 4 course unit teaching	14 March – 6 May 2022
Coursework Completion Period 4	9 May – 13 May 2022
Semester 2 Periods 3 & 4 examinations	23 May – 10 June 2022
Dissertation submission deadline	2 September 2022
Results released	November 2022 (tbc)
Graduation week	Mid-December 2022 (tbc)

Table 1.2: Key Dates in the Academic Year. Some dates are yet to be confirmed.

Chapter 2: Overview of the Programmes

This chapter provides an overview of the organisation of our master's programmes.

Types and Lengths of Programmes

The department offers the following taught postgraduate degrees:

Award	Duration	Mode of Study
MSc	1 year	Full-time
PG Diploma	1 year	Full-time (exit award only)
PG Certificate	1 year	Full-time (exit award only)

MSc Overview

The MSc has three distinct phases: induction (Welcome Week), taught course units, and the project. The first two take up roughly the first six months of the programme, in two semesters, while the remaining time and part of semester two are dedicated to the project. Provisional results for the first semester are published in February.

Formal exam board meetings with external examiners take place in June/July when official results are published. A second External Examiners' Meeting is convened in November to consider the dissertations and to review the overall results.

Recommendations for award or otherwise are made to the MSc panel of the Faculty, which makes the final decision in time for the December graduation.

Welcome Week and Induction

For 21/22 there are two weeks of University Welcome and Induction and a one week Department Welcome. During this period, there is a wide range of activities arranged to help you with the programme, your studies, your life at university here in Manchester and in the UK. There will be university wide online events running from week commencing 13 September. From week commencing 20 September there will be events held by the university, the student's union and programme specific events from the department.

The Department of Computer Science Welcome events will include an introduction to the department, to university facilities, to staff and your fellow students, and a series of introductory talks for the themes. Students are encouraged to attend these introductions in order to choose the appropriate themes, and to learn about all the topics, including those you are probably choosing not to take.

In addition to department activities, the university and the Students' Union have a range of introductory events, including the Societies Fair, where you may choose from an enormous list of activities, from fencing to mountaineering, from dance to films, chess to bell ringing, from political and religious groups, to charities and hobbies.

English Language Classes

Throughout the year English courses that have a particular emphasis on academic writing are available via the [University Language Centre](#). We strongly recommend that all international students take these classes, as they can make a big difference to your overall degree result.

Themes

The MSc in ACS programme allows you to choose three themes. A theme is a conceptually coherent pair of course units, each of which is worth 15 credits. Hence, three themes make up the 90 credits of the taught elements of these programmes.

ACS students cannot replace or choose other course units than those from their chosen themes. This is because course units within a theme are designed to build on each other, and thus a student following a “later” course unit within a theme without having followed the earlier one(s) is likely to lack prerequisite knowledge.

In order to help you choose, there is an introduction to themes in the Welcome Week at the beginning of the academic year. The themes and their course units are listed on our current [PGT website](#).

Course Units

Taught MSc course units in the Department of Computer Science are delivered over a five-week block known as a period, plus at least one additional week for coursework completion and/or examinations. The taught part of the programme takes place over four periods (two in each semester).

The timetabled sessions of a course unit typically consist of a mix of activities including lectures, supervised practical work, seminars, discussions, etc. We follow a blended learning format, which means that lectures are available as videos to watch when you choose. Scheduled activities take place at particular times (as shown on the timetable) and you are expected to attend these online or in person, according to the course unit instructions. Course units also have coursework, some or all of which is likely to be assessed. Deadlines for assessed work will be set in individual course units. Examinations take place at the end of each semester, and resit examinations are scheduled in the summer.

Taught course units are worth 15 credits each and you need to take six taught course units for an MSc. You should take four course units in the first semester (two in each period) and two in the second semester (one in each period, in parallel with work on the project). Whilst we try to ensure all course units will run, some may be withdrawn or changed for a variety of reasons. Some course units will have a restriction on the number of students who may attend for various reasons (e.g. licences, facilities, etc.) and these may become fully subscribed.

Course Unit Selection

Registration on pathways, themes and course units should be completed through the Student System by 10am on the Friday of the Department Welcome Week. A Course Unit Selection guide can be found at [PGT course unit selection](#). If you wish to change your course unit selection after the deadline please contact compsci-ssopgt@manchester.ac.uk. It is not normally possible to change course unit selection for the semester after the end of the first week of teaching in that semester. If the request is after the first week of teaching permission will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. You will need an email from the course unit leader for the unit which is currently running which you intend to transfer to confirming that they are happy for you to transfer late before the move will be considered.

Projects

Projects are designed by members of staff to enable you to develop research and development skills and to gain practical experience of applying the techniques covered in the taught part of the programme to realistic problems. Projects relate to current research and development areas, and are undertaken in the department or in

an industrial setting. Students may propose their own projects so long as the project is suitable for the award of an MSc and the department can accommodate it.

The projects are individually supervised and typically, you would meet with your supervisor, at least at the beginning of the project, for approximately one hour each week.

Although much of your work is likely to be in the form of a program, technique or system, your degree is awarded primarily based on the quality of the final dissertation.

Project Allocation: projects are allocated to students towards the end of the first semester, satisfying individual preferences wherever possible. An announcement about this procedure will be made in the latter half of the first semester.

Dissertation and Submission Deadlines: the deadline for submission of dissertations is 2nd September 2022. The only exception to this deadline is significant mitigating circumstances (see Chapter 8).

Ethical Approval Mechanisms: all experiments that involve human or animal subjects have to be approved by the University Ethical Approval procedure. More details about this are available on the [Wiki](#). To get approval, follow the procedure on the [research ethics website](#).

Chapter 3: Programme Structure

MSc in Advanced Computer Science

The MSc in Advanced Computer Science draws upon the research of the department, together with industrial links, to provide an intensive masters level programme. The programme provides both a depth of treatment and a wide choice of topics in computer science.

Pathways

Depending on the themes you follow, you can choose to specialise in one of the available [pathways](#). If your project is suitable for your chosen pathway, you can opt for your degree certificate to carry the title.

MSc in Advanced Computer Science with specialisation in <PathwayName>.

Alternatively, you can choose the themes of a given pathway, carry out a suitable project and opt for your Certificate to carry the title MSc in Advanced Computer Science (without the pathway being mentioned). A description of the pathways is on our [pathways web page](#).

If your chosen pathway differs from that which you were admitted on to you must confirm the change with the [SSO](#), to ensure that your degree certificate will be correct.

Themes and Course Units

Studying a theme involves taking two course units. A student chooses two themes that are taught in semester one, and one theme that is taught in semester two.

A complete list of themes and course units they involve can be found on the [PGT themes webpage](#).

Please note that some course units in semester two have specific prerequisites in semester one – please check the specifications for individual course units.

Advanced Computer Science Programme Specification

The University Programme Specification document is available on our [programme specifications website](#).

Project

MSc Project

An MSc student progresses to the MSc project unless their exam performance is such as to require them to transfer to Diploma or PG Certificate (see Chapter 4).

The MSc Project has two components:

- 1) Research methods and professional skills training: six weeks of classes and activities on topics relating to:
 - research methods: covering topics such as research planning, research methodologies, related work and empirical evaluation;
 - professional skills: covering ethical, legal, organisational and managerial issues of relevance to computer science.

- Project work: the application of technical skills from the programme, in the context of the research methods and technical skills training, to a substantial piece of technical work, under the supervision of a member of academic staff.
- 2) The research methods and professional skills training takes place in period three (February to mid-March), and for full-time students, the work on the project takes place from mid-March to early September.

The assessment for the project is through:

- A project overview and plan: a structured document submitted at the end of period four, which presents the key features of the project in a way that reflects the topics covered in the Research Methods and Professional Skills training.
- A dissertation: a substantial document submitted in early September that presents the results of the project, in particular relating the work to other work on the problem to be solved and the techniques used, describing and motivating the approach taken, evaluating the outcome, and drawing conclusions.

Presentation of Dissertations: the general requirements for presentation of a dissertation are set out in the University's Ordinances and Regulations, in particular in the university's guidance on the [presentation](#) of taught master's dissertations.

Examination of Projects: the MSc dissertation is evaluated by two internal examiners, (normally your supervisor and another academic not involved with the project) who submit written reports and agree an overall mark. The external examiner at a specially convened examination board meeting in November considers these reports and the dissertations themselves.

The MSc project mark is the weighted average of the marks for the project overview and plan and for the MSc dissertation. The MSc project contributes 90 Credits towards the 180 credits of the master's degree.

Diploma Project

Although full-time students are not admitted to diploma programmes, a student whose grades do not meet the requirements for masters could be transferred to the diploma programme (see Chapter 4 for details). The diploma project is only 30 Credits, and thus requires less time, and is assessed by way of a smaller diploma dissertation.

Students may be identified for transfer to the diploma programme at different points in the year, and this affects the precise process followed in relation to diploma projects. In all of these cases, the student should consult with their academic advisor, the project coordinator and their project supervisor to agree precisely how to proceed. The cases are as follows:

- It is clear from exam results for periods one and two that the student cannot meet the criteria for masters (discovered in February). Expected process: the student transfers to diploma in February, the assigned project is scaled back, and the student submits a diploma dissertation at the end of the examination period for semester two. The diploma dissertation is based on the structure of the MSc project overview and plan, extended with a section that describes the work carried out in the reduced diploma project.
- It is clear from exam results in periods one to four that the student cannot meet the criteria for masters (discovered in July). Expected process: a plan is made to wind down the work on the project in July and early August, when the student submits a diploma dissertation. The diploma dissertation is based on the structure of the MSc project overview and plan, extended with a section that describes the work carried out in the reduced diploma project.
- It is clear from exam results in periods one to four and from the resit results that the student cannot meet the criteria for masters (discovered in September). Expected process: where the student has already submitted a master's dissertation when the need to transfer to diploma becomes known, the MSc project overview and plan (which was submitted and assessed earlier) and the submitted dissertation are assessed against the requirements for a diploma project.

Chapter 4: Assessment and Examinations

The defining regulations and procedures for the MSc programme are laid down in the [university's ordinances and regulations](#).

General Assessment Requirements

The assessment for the MSc consists of two parts:

- the assessment of the taught course units undertaken;
- the assessment of the project.

Taught Component

Taught course units are normally assessed by a combination of coursework and examination, though some may be coursework or exam only. The assessment method for each unit is confirmed on the [syllabus page](#).

Coursework

Coursework is likely to include practical laboratory exercises, written reports and essays, seminar presentations, and/or other forms appropriate to each individual course unit. The weightings of coursework and examination marks used in computing the course unit results are given in the course unit descriptions.

Make sure that you understand all issues related to academic malpractice, as summarised in Chapter 8, and the following issues pertaining to coursework.

Group and Individual Work: there are two types of coursework, group and individual. Students may not elect to undertake a given assignment as group work when it has been set as individual work.

Individual Work: individual work is an assessment of your own ability to complete the coursework. It should not be tackled in a group, and you are responsible for ensuring that you submit your own original work.

Group Work: some coursework requires students to work in groups. The marks awarded for a student can be generated in two ways:

- a group mark: all members of the group will be awarded the same mark irrespective of the contribution of the individual team members;

- an individual mark: each member of the group will gain an individual mark that will be based on their individual contribution to the group.

Where given, an individual mark is often computed from a group mark (awarded to the entire group) and an individual mark that will be based on observation by members of staff and/or the assessment of an individual report.

Late Submission

The University has the following policy on work that is submitted after the advertised deadline:

- the mark awarded will reduce by 10% of available marks per 24 hour period from the deadline until the assignment is submitted or no marks remain.

This [policy](#) will apply to the project, and to coursework other than in specific cases where you have been told otherwise. Deadlines may be extended for students with mitigating circumstances (see Chapter 8).

Examinations

The examinations usually consist of a two hour paper for those course units with examinations. The examinations take place at the end of each semester. Past examination papers are available via the [department's website](#).

Some examinations may be open book, in which case material may be taken into the examination room. Sometimes this material will be prescribed. Most examinations, however, are not of this form and no supporting material may be taken into the examination room.

Resitting Examinations

If you fail the examination component of your programme, the board of examiners will determine which examinations you must retake in accordance with The University of Manchester progression rules set out in the [ordinance and regulations](#) for the degree of master, postgraduate diploma and postgraduate certificate. If you are required to resit any examinations then you are responsible for ensuring that you are able to attend. An examination timetable will be sent to you before each examination period. For resit exams, you may not attend lectures and laboratory classes except by arrangement with the PGT programme director.

Use of language translation dictionaries in the exam: students who are registered on these programmes of study are not allowed the use of a dictionary during examinations.

Remarking of Examination Papers and Coursework

The department offers exam script feedback sessions after semester one and semester two results are released to help you review your exam scripts and see where your answer score was high or low. The details for these sessions are emailed out during the academic year.

It is the practice of the Department of Computer Science not to selectively remark examination papers or coursework on request. Examination papers and coursework will only be remarked where the department officers (PGT programme director or examinations officer) have good cause to believe that there has been a marking irregularity and, under such circumstances (which would be exceptional), all examination papers or coursework would be remarked. The department will not remark work simply because you believe that you should have obtained a better mark than that shown on your transcript.

Project

The MSc project mark is the weighted average of the marks for the project overview and plan and for the MSc dissertation. The MSc project contributes 90 credits towards the 180 credits of the master's degree.

At the recommendation of the board of examiners, a student who achieves less than 50% for their MSc project mark but more than 30% will have one opportunity to resubmit the dissertation by a given deadline, normally within five months of the date of the publication of the result. To pass the MSc project, the resubmitted dissertation will count as 100% of the new MSc project mark and must achieve a mark of at least 50%, but will be capped to 40%, or the original mark, if this is higher.

Students who achieved less than 30% for the project will be deemed to have failed the MSc programme and may be eligible for an exit award of a postgraduate certificate or diploma, as appropriate.

Assessment Regulations for MSc, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate

Taught Course Units

For the MSc, each student will be assessed on 90 credits worth of coursework and/or examination questions. Further information is available in the [postgraduate degree regulations](#).

Pass Rules for Individual Course Units: a pass at MSc level is awarded if the overall mark for the course unit is at least 50%. For a pass at diploma or certificate level, an overall mark for the course unit of 40% is required.

Pass Rules for Course Units on MSc Programmes: a candidate for the MSc degree must pass 90 credits worth of taught course unit.

Failed course units may be resat, by resubmitting coursework and/or retaking exams, following recommendations from the MSc examination board. The resits will be considered a second attempt (called a referral). To pass referral students need to achieve 50% or more. Referral pass marks will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark of 40% unless the previous mark was within the compensation zone 40%–49.9%, in which case the original mark will stand. When a student is referred and fails a unit, the first mark stands.

In case of mitigating circumstances, and following the department's process (see Chapter 8), a student may be allowed to resit course units as a first attempt (called a deferral), where no cap will be applied.

Compensated Pass: students may be awarded a compensated pass for a master's degree when they receive a mark between 40-49% for those failed credits. No more than 30 credits can be compensated.

Failed Units: the maximum allowable cumulative failure of course units in a master's programme at the first attempt is 45 credits of the taught component of the programme.

A student whose failures at the first attempt exceed 45 credits will be deemed to have failed the programme. They will then be judged against the requirements for a pass on the postgraduate diploma programme. If this results in their failing less than

or equal to 45 credits at postgraduate diploma level, the student may resit those units failed at postgraduate diploma level to obtain the award of postgraduate diploma. The MSc examination board takes the final decision on whether a student passes.

Pass Rules for Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate

Postgraduate Diploma: the university regulations are available in the [Degree Regulations document](#).

A postgraduate diploma is awarded to a student who has been assessed on 120 credits worth of coursework and examination questions and will normally be considered as passing the units if all course units have been passed at 40% or more.

Students may be awarded a compensated pass for a postgraduate diploma programme when they fail no more than 30 credits and receive a mark between 30% and 39.9% for those failed credits.

The maximum allowable accumulative failure at postgraduate diploma level at first attempt is 45 credits of the taught component of the programme. These failed course units can be resat at postgraduate diploma level. The achieved mark of the resit will be taken into consideration to determine whether the course unit has been passed at diploma level, and it will be capped to 30%.

In addition, to complete the award of a diploma, students are required to achieve a mark of 40% or more on the assessment for a diploma dissertation.

Postgraduate Certificate: the university regulations are available in the [postgraduate degree regulations document](#). The postgraduate certificate is awarded to students who have passed 60 credits of course units at a level of at least 40% or more in each course unit. Students may be awarded a compensated pass for a postgraduate certificate programme when they fail no more than 15 credits and receive a mark between 30% and 39.9% for those failed credits.

Degree Classification: Distinction, Merit, Pass

An MSc can be awarded with distinction, merit, or pass, depending on the [following rules](#).

For the MSc:

- the pass level is 50% or above. Marks between 40% and 49.9% may be compensatable;
- the merit level is 60% or above. The boundary zone for the merit level is between 58% and 59.9%;
- the distinction level is 70% or above. The boundary zone for the distinction level is between 68% and 69.9%.

For a PG diploma or PG certificate:

- the pass level is 40% or above. Marks between 30% and 39.9% may be compensatable;

The overall mark for the taught elements of a master's programme is the weighted average of the overall marks obtained for the course units of the taught part of the programme, where the mark of a course unit or the dissertation is the mark of its first attempt, if no resit as second attempt (referral) has been taken or the mark of its second attempt, if a resit as first attempt was taken (this is only possible in case of severe mitigating circumstances for this course unit - see also [Chapter 8](#)). If the course unit is resat as second attempt and passed (with at least 50%) it is capped at the higher of 40% or the original mark (if this was in the compensation zone). If the course unit is resat at second attempt and failed (with less than 50%) then the mark of the first attempt stands.

A student passes the taught elements if:

- no more than three course units were failed at first attempt (for MSc and diploma – no more than two for PG Certificate), and
- after resits, and taking the uncapped resit marks into account, at most two course units are failed, and all failed course units are compensatable (for MSc and diploma – at most one for PG Certificate).

A student passes the MSc programme if he or she passes the

- taught elements, and
- the MSc project, i.e., if either the MSc Project Mark was 50% or above for the first attempt, or the uncapped resit mark for the project was 50% or above.

A student qualifies for the PG diploma if

- the student passes the taught elements (90 credits) (six course units) and a diploma project (30 credits) with a total of at least 90 credits at the diploma level and at most 30 credits compensatable.

A student qualifies for the PG certificate if

- The student passes 60 credits (4 course units) of the taught elements with a total of at least 40 credits at the certificate level and at most 15 credits compensatable.

A student qualifies for a merit on the MSc programme if

- he or she passes the taught elements, and
- the average of the taught elements and the MSc project mark is at merit level. In case that this average is in the merit level boundary zone, the student needs to have achieved at least 120 credits at merit level to qualify for a merit.

A student qualifies for a distinction if

- he or she passes the taught elements, and
- all course units were passed at first attempt (and none were compensated), and both the taught elements mark and the MSc project mark are at distinction level, or
- either the taught elements mark or the MSc project mark is at distinction level, the other one is in the distinction level boundary zone, and either the average of both is at distinction level or at least 120 credits are at distinction level.

The above boundaries and rules are strict: no other measures of leniency are permissible other than in cases of mitigating circumstances.

Procedures for Students Who Fail

Students who fail the assessment for the taught part of the programme can be permitted single resits of failed examinations on the next occasion that the examinations are set, based on the decisions of the board of examiners.

Resubmission of coursework may also be required. If a candidate satisfies the criteria for a diploma or certificate, they may exit with the award of diploma or certificate. If in the opinion of the examiners, a candidate fails to meet acceptable

standards of performance, they will be excluded from the programme and their registration will be cancelled. In all such circumstances, the academic advisor will discuss the candidate's circumstances with the aim of achieving the most satisfactory outcome for the student.

Appeals

No appeal can be made against the academic judgment of examiners. However, a student has a right of appeal on procedural grounds, on the grounds of prejudice or bias or of inadequate assessment, and on grounds that the examiners were not in possession of information relating to circumstances that may have affected the student's academic performance. Full details can be found on the [university policy webpage](#).

Chapter 5: Student Support Services

The department and university offer a wide range of student support services. You are encouraged to make use of these services - they are there for you. If you need any help, whether it be academic help, in finances, in your personal life, with relationships or the family, in legal matters, or with health, there are services provided for you. Do not hesitate to use these services.

It is important that any factor that affects your work is communicated to the Department, usually directly to your academic advisor or [Student Support Office](#). This is entirely confidential. Such factors may be taken into consideration during the assessment process, and we can compensate for any disruption to or difficulties during your work here.

If you have difficulties of any sort that you do not want to talk to the programme management about, you may want to consult the university's counselling service or other advice teams. A collection of useful links to all sorts of services can be found at [A - Z of Services](#).

- [The Student Counselling Service](#)
- The [Student's Union](#) has a wide range of services, including a welfare officer.
- The [Student Occupational Health Service](#)

- The [Accommodation Office](#)
- [Manchester Student Homes](#)
- The [Careers Service](#)
- The [International Students Advice Team](#)
- The [University Language Centre](#)

Students with Additional Support Needs

The University of Manchester welcomes students with additional support needs arising from a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, a medical condition, a mental health difficulty or a disability or impairment. The university has a central disability advisory and support service (DASS) which can offer confidential advice and organise support. In order to access the full support that the university can offer, you should [contact](#) DASS to discuss your support requirements.

Text Mobile Number (text only for deaf students): 07899 658 790

Alternatively, just drop into the DASS offices where you can speak in confidence to a disability adviser about [your needs](#).

If you are a student with support needs and have not yet informed DASS, then please do contact them directly. DASS can also organise screening tests for students who [think that they might have dyslexia](#).

In addition to this, each faculty and department has a disability coordinator. For our Department this is [Hannah Cousins](#), with whom DASS liaises to organise support in the department.

International Students

The university provides special facilities and support for overseas students. [The International Society](#) provides a meeting point for overseas students, provides support and advice and organises many activities, including welcome activities in the first few weeks of the academic year. See their website for more details.

Confirmation of Registration: if you are an international student, please note that if you require a letter for your visa application, visa extension or your sponsor

confirming that you are registered in this department, you must provide one week's notice of this request to the Student Support Office.

Useful Forms

- [Interruptions and Extension Forms](#)
- [Mitigating Circumstances](#)

Chapter 6: University of Manchester Library

The University of Manchester library provides you with resources and support throughout your programme. The Main Library, located at the end of Burlington Street, houses all the essential textbooks. The library also has an extensive collection of printed books (4 million) as well as access to an unparalleled range of electronic resources including over 40,000 e-journals, 500,000 ebooks and a comprehensive range of [databases](#).

Facilities

The Main Library offers group study rooms, individual study spaces and computer clusters. Wi-Fi is available throughout the building and a cafe lounge can be found on the ground floor.

The Alan Gilbert Learning Commons provides a 24/7 learning environment, offering flexible open learning spaces, multimedia facilities, computer clusters and bookable group study rooms. The Learning Commons also runs a wide range of study skills workshops throughout the academic year. The location of all library sites and opening hours are available on the [library website](#).

The Learning Commons also runs a wide range of [study skills workshops](#) throughout the academic year.

Getting Started

All the information you need to get started in the library is found on the Students Area on the [library website](#). You will need your student card to access all library sites around the campus. Many of the services and resources also require you to confirm that you are a registered student. This authentication can be your student card, the

ID number on the card, your library pin or the central username and password you use to log on.

Library Search

Visit the [library website](#) to find books, e-books, online journals and articles. If the library does not have a copy of the book or journal article that you require for your studies, then document supply and interlibrary loans may help. More information on how to make a request is available at [requesting books](#).

Library Subject Guides

The [library subject guides](#) are a great way to find useful information and resources to support your studies. Here you can find information on which databases are useful for your programme and how to find relevant journal articles and books. There is also information on reference management, research support, searching techniques and much more.

Training and Support

The library delivers information skills sessions and clinics, which run throughout the year, and there is an extensive range of online research and academic skills resources available to you. For more information on how the library can support you with your studies, whether that be face-to-face or online, then please go to [My Learning Essentials](#). For general enquiries, e-resources support and feedback on our services, [contact](#) the library in person, via phone or online.

My Learning Essentials: students can access and undertake the My Learning Essentials [online resources](#) in their own time. The resources are categorised into themes such as research skills, exam techniques, planning and writing assignments, presentations, career skills and research skills. Keep up to date with the latest library developments via [Twitter](#).

Chapter 7: Health and Safety

This health and safety section provides a summary of the major health and safety issues of which all staff and students should be aware. For further details, see the department [Health and Safety Policy document](#).

Fire, Emergencies and First Aid

Fire Safety Arrangements and Requirements

All staff and students are expected to respond promptly to all fire alarm activations (except the weekly tests at specified times). Staff who are responsible for groups of students or visitors at the time of an alarm are expected to stop teaching or speaking, and to lead the whole group in the evacuation procedure.

Fire Detection: Kilburn and IT Buildings are fitted with automatic detectors supplemented by break glass points located throughout each building. These activate the buildings audible alarm in the event of fire or smoke. The automatic detectors allow early detection of any developing fire.

If you discover a fire and the building alarm is not sounding, activate the nearest break glass point on your escape route and evacuate the building immediately. Make your way to the building assembly point and await further instruction. If possible, you should inform security of the event and supply them with as much information as possible in order for them to evaluate the risk and to take appropriate action.

Fire Alarm: the audible alarm for Kilburn building is a two-stage system:

- **Stage 1** is an intermittent alarm – be prepared to evacuate the building.
- **Stage 2** is a continuous alarm – evacuate the building immediately.

The audible alarm for the IT building is a single system. Upon hearing the fire alarm, it is necessary to evacuate the building.

In the event of the alarm being activated, security will attend in the first instance.

Fire Evacuation Procedure: On hearing the fire alarm all occupants should evacuate the building immediately by their nearest available exit.

- Do not use lifts
- Do not return to the office to collect belongings
- Go to the Building Assembly Point

Fire action notices are located throughout all buildings on campus summarising the specific local fire safety arrangements. Local fire notices also indicate the nearest fire assembly point. Evacuation marshals are located throughout the building (identified

by hi-visibility vests in an alarm situation) and are instructed to provide assistance and direction in the event of the fire alarm being raised.

The Building Assembly Points are:

- Kilburn – covered area outside Crawford house
- IT building – open area outside George Kenyon building

Do not re-enter the building until the emergency services or security have advised you that it is safe to do so.

Means of Escape: means of escape are signed throughout the building. Green running man signs indicate the nearest emergency exit. You should familiarise yourself with the nearest means of escape within your local working area, as well as alternative routes should your main means of escape become inaccessible.

Fire Alarm Test: the fire alarm is tested weekly at the following times, and should last for no longer than 20 seconds:

- IT Building - Thursday at 2pm
- Kilburn Building - Wednesday at 1.45pm

Fire extinguishers: fire extinguishers are provided extensively throughout all University buildings and should only be used by personnel specifically trained in their correct operation.

Automatic door closers: throughout the Kilburn and IT buildings, many of the fire doors are allowed to remain open during the day by means of an automatic fire detection door closing system. These units are designed to release the door following a continuous constant sound of 65 decibels and above, for a period of 20 seconds or more.

Link Bridge: the Kilburn and IT buildings have separate fire alarm systems in place. The link bridge between the Kilburn and IT buildings has been fitted with a flashing beacon, connected to the fire alarm system, which is activated during an emergency. A marshal will be stationed on the bridge to assist occupants of the vulnerable building to escape in an orderly manner and to prohibit re-entry.

Emergencies

In the event of any emergency, medical or otherwise, please contact the emergency services by calling 9999 on an internal or 999 on an external line. The university security office must also be informed once the emergency services have been alerted by calling 69966 on an internal or 0161 306 9966 on an external line. The department health and safety advisor must be notified of any emergency by calling 56232 on an internal or 0161 275 6232 on an external line.

The university security telephone number can be found on the reverse side of your university staff/student card.

The department health and safety advisor must be notified of any emergency by calling 56232 internal number, or 0161 275 6232 if dialled externally (07917558862 mobile number).

First Aid

The department has a number of trained first aiders in the Kilburn and IT buildings who are able to provide basic first aid as required. Details of [current first aiders](#) are available on first aid notices located next to each fire notice and can be found near to every exit point of the building, and on notice boards throughout the building. If local first aiders are not available or assistance is required outside normal working hours, security can be contacted to provide first aid by calling 69966 on an internal or 0161 306 9966 on an external line. The nearest defibrillator is located inside the double doors by the goods entrance, opposite university place.

Accidents and Incidents

All accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses must be reported in the first instance to the department safety advisor and documented as necessary using the correct form. Accident and incident forms are available via the [safety services website](#).

Reporting of accidents and incidents are necessary for the following reasons:

- to comply with legal requirements depending upon the nature of the accident or incident;
- to investigate the accident / incident and take steps to prevent recurrence;

- to keep records in case of possible future litigation;
- to allow collation of accident statistics.

Near misses should also be reported to your department safety advisor, as acting upon near misses will prevent accidents occurring.

Electrical Equipment

Any electrical equipment brought into the department for use in offices, laboratories or workshops must be suitable for the intended purpose, meet UK requirements for safety, and display the CE universal quality standard mark. The department health and safety advisor must be informed regarding any electrical equipment (excluding portable devices such as phones and laptops) brought into the department other than via the normal purchasing system. For the department to comply with health and safety legislation it is essential for all portable appliances, including those built at The University of Manchester, to be checked and tested on a regular basis. The department carries out portable appliance testing in accordance with university guidelines and maintains a database of all such equipment. Checks and tests are carried out at regular intervals.

High risk portable appliances (heaters, power supplies, electric drills, kettles, etc) are checked and tested annually.

Lower risk items like computer workstations, which are classed as semi-permanent fixtures, are checked and tested every four years.

All portable appliances, including separate mains cables will be clearly labelled upon completion of the test. A recommended retest date will be indicated on the label.

Please ensure that **all** heaters and high load non-essential appliances within your working area are switched off before you leave the building.

Lone Working and Out-of-Hours Working

Lone Working: lone working is defined as working without close or direct supervision, and without contact from others. To reduce the risks associated with lone working it is the policy of the Department of Computer Science not to permit any lone working activity beyond normal office based activities without first completing a risk assessment for the activity.

The requirements of the university guidance on lone working should be followed at all times. Details of these requirements and a definition of lone working are available in the University Health and Safety Arrangements [document](#).

Out-of-Hours Work: Normal opening hours for the Kilburn and IT buildings are 8am to 6pm weekdays, excluding weekends, bank holidays and any other days when the building is closed (for example Christmas closure period).

On occasion, it may be necessary to use the facilities available in the Kilburn and IT buildings outside normal working hours. This can only be done when your university ID card has been [approved for Out-of-Hours access](#). During this time, the presence of security or department staff members cannot be guaranteed. It is therefore extremely important that all occupants know what to do should an emergency occur within the department such as a fire, or the need for medical attention.

Out-of-Hours Work in the Kilburn Building

Use of the Kilburn building outside normal working hours will be permitted following successful completion of the out-of-hours induction online training course. Upon successful completion of the out-of-hours induction training, the following access times will be made available for master's students: 6pm – 11.30pm Monday – Friday and 8am – 11.30pm Saturday and Sunday.

Outside normal working hours, the Kilburn Building is to be used for study and research (office-based) purposes only, and access is restricted to the Lower First floor. No social events or gatherings will be permitted unless an appropriate member of staff has been notified and has agreed to the event. Depending upon the details of the event it may be necessary to complete a risk assessment. Please contact the department safety advisor, James Fields, for guidance and further information.

Out-of-Hours Work in the Information Technology Building

Outside normal working hours, access into the IT building is gained via the south entrance door only. Swipe access is required and all users detailing name, work location and times of entry and exit must sign the out-of-hours book. The swipe card access system for the IT building is only enabled for staff and postgraduate students based in the IT building who have undertaken the necessary local and health and safety inductions.

Occupants of the Building Remaining on Site outside of Normal Working Hours

Any person wishing to remain in the buildings outside normal working hours must have an ID card which has Out-of-hours authorisation.

The department reserves the right to spot check anyone on site outside normal working hours to ensure that this procedure is being followed. Anyone found not to have followed the correct procedure may be asked to leave the building and may be suspended from out-of-hours activities for a period.

Please remember that authorisation to use The Kilburn and IT buildings outside normal working hours is a privilege, and not an automatic right, and that there is no right of appeal for anyone excluded from out-of-hours access to these buildings.

Chemical Safety

Any chemical(s) brought into the department for experimental, practical or general use must be controlled and a risk assessment carried out to ensure that the chemical is used, stored and disposed of safely. University guidance on chemical safety is available on the [safety services webpage](#).

Department Smoking Policy

To comply with current government legislation, The University of Manchester promotes a no smoking policy within all buildings, irrespective of their use or location. This policy also applies to e-cigarettes. To safeguard staff, students and visitors from the adverse effects of second-hand smoke, and to show unity with other departments, the Department of Computer Science has adopted a no smoking exclusion zone within five metres of all department entrances and exits of the department buildings. Smoking is also prohibited directly outside open windows where smoke may drift into Department premises. Your assistance in keeping the Department of Computer Science a safe and healthy place to work and study in is much appreciated.

Chapter 8: University Regulations, Procedures and Policies

The university website contains details of university regulations, procedures and policies, including those for work and attendance, for MSc dissertations, for appeals, on plagiarism, etc.

Attendance

Attendance at the timetabled sessions of the taught course units is compulsory. During the project phase, students are expected to be in Manchester, up until submission of their dissertation, to allow them to have your regular meetings with you're their supervisor face to face.

We monitor students' attendance during the taught part by weekly completion of class registers and checking coursework submission, and during the project phase of the programme via brief, fortnightly student progress updates with supervisors' comments. Non-attendance and non-engagement with the programme may result in students being excluded from assessments and even in programme exclusion, as detailed in the [postgraduate degree regulations](#).

The Student Support Office should be notified of absences due to illness of less than seven days by means of self-certification forms, which are available from the Student Support Office. A medical note signed by a general practitioner or hospital doctor must certify longer absences. It is in your interests to keep us fully informed of medical or other problems you have so that the affect these may have on your work can be taken into account in examination meetings.

The university's policy regarding work and attendance of students is available from the [policy webpage](#).

In particular, all international students who are studying under a visa have to follow the rules associated with their visas, and attendance as well as active engagement with their programme are part of these rules; for more information, see Chapter 1.

Ill Health

It is a requirement of your registration with the University of Manchester that you register with a local general practitioner (GP). A list of GP practices can be obtained from the student health service, any university hall of residence or a local pharmacy. According to guidance issued by the general medical council, it would not be

regarded as good practice for a family member to be the registered GP or to offer treatment except in the case of an emergency.

You should always consult your GP (or for emergencies the Accident and Emergency Department of a hospital) if your illness is severe, if it persists or if you are in any doubt about your health. You should also consult your GP if illness keeps you absent from the university for more than seven days including weekends. If you do consult a GP and they consider that you are not fit for attendance at the university, then you should obtain a note from the doctor to that effect or ask them to complete part III of the university form '[Certification of Student Ill Health](#)'.

If your condition is not sufficiently serious to cause you to seek medical help, then the university will not require you to supply a doctor's medical certificate unless you are absent from the university due to illness for more than seven days. You must, however, contact the [Student Support Office](#) as soon as possible and self-certify your illness (that is, complete and sign the certification of student ill health form to state that you have been ill) as soon as you are able to attend your department. You should do this if your illness means you are absent from the university for any period up to seven days, or if you are able to attend the university but your illness is affecting your studies.

The following explains what you should do if your illness affects your attendance at compulsory classes or if you consider that your performance in your studies/examinations has been impaired. If you are unwell and feel unable to attend the university to take a compulsory class, assessment or examination then you must seek advice by contacting the [Student Support Office](#) immediately. This is to ensure that you understand the implications of being absent and the consequences for your academic progress, which might be quite serious. You must do this as soon as possible so that all options can be considered and certainly no later than the day of your compulsory class, assessment or examination.

You may be unwell but able to proceed with an assessment or examination and yet you feel that your performance will have been impaired. If you wish this to be taken into account as a mitigating circumstance, you must inform the Student Support Office about this on the day of the assessment or examination, and complete a [mitigating circumstances](#) form.

If, because of your illness, you wish to seek an extension to a deadline for submitting assessed coursework, you must complete a [Certification of Student Ill Health](#) form and discuss it with your Academic Advisor. The application for extension must be made before the deadline and not retrospectively. If you are found to have been deceitful or dishonest in completing the Certification of Student Ill Health form you could be liable to disciplinary action under the University's General Regulation XVII: Conduct and Discipline of Students.

Mitigating Circumstances

Evidence of illness or any other mitigating circumstances that affect assessments are considered by the department's Postgraduate Mitigating Circumstances panel, which makes recommendations to examiners. It is therefore particularly important that any periods of ill health are properly documented, and that such documentation is deposited with the Student Support Office at the time of the illness. Other mitigating circumstances, which disrupt your studies, will also be considered. If you wish the Mitigating Circumstances panel to consider your case you must complete a [mitigating circumstances form](#).

You will normally need documentation, such as a medical note, to support your application. All mitigating circumstances should be discussed with your Academic Advisor.

For the dissertation project, the likely outcome of any mitigating circumstances request is an extension. Any extension requests for the dissertation should be made at the earliest opportunity. Unless a credible and compelling reason is provided (with appropriate evidence), it is unlikely that an extension will be approved that exceeds the number of days between the submission of the extension request and the current deadline.

Examples of Mitigating Circumstances Outcomes

Some examples of possible mitigating circumstances outcomes:

Example 1. A student submits a piece of coursework seven days after the deadline. They apply for mitigating circumstances and provide a letter from their doctor confirming that they were ill for a week or more. The mitigating circumstances panel accepts this and allows the assessment to be marked with no penalty.

Example 2. A student submits a piece of coursework 10 days after the deadline. They apply for mitigating circumstances but provide no evidence. The mitigating circumstances panel decide not to accept the claim due to insufficient evidence. The late submission penalty is applied, leading to a mark of zero.

Example 3. A student submits a piece of coursework 21 days late. They apply for mitigating circumstances and provide evidence from their doctor confirming that they were ill and unable to work for one week. The mitigating circumstances panel decide that the evidence is insufficient for the length of the delay. The late submission penalty is applied, leading to a mark of zero.

Example 4. A student is late to submit a piece of coursework worth up to 30% of the unit grade. By the time they can submit the lecturer has been through the answers with the class. They apply for mitigating circumstances and provide evidence from their doctor that they have been ill for the relevant period. The mitigating circumstances panel accepts this and the exam board agrees to discount the affected coursework from the unit grade.

Example 5. A student is late to submit a piece of coursework worth over 30% of the unit grade. By the time they can submit the lecturer has been through the answers with the class. They apply for mitigating circumstances and provide evidence from their doctor that they have been ill. The mitigating circumstances panel accepts this and the exam board agrees to allow the student to submit an alternative piece of work during the re-sit period.

Example 6. A student begins to feel ill during an exam. They finish the exam but feel that they did not perform as well as they could have. They submit mitigating circumstances and provide evidence from their doctor that they have been ill. The mitigating circumstances panel accepts this. Due to a poor result in this exam the student failed the unit. The exam board agrees to allow the student to re-sit the exam as first attempt during the exam period.

Example 7. A student begins to feel ill during an exam. They finish the exam but feel that they did not perform as well as they could have. They submit mitigating circumstances and provide evidence from their doctor that they have been ill. The mitigating circumstances panel accepts this. The student has passed the unit,

however their mark is much lower than for their other units. The exam board agrees to allow the student the option to re-sit the exam as first attempt during the exam period if they wish.

Example 8. A student begins to feel ill during an exam. They finish the exam but feel that they did not perform as well as they could have. They submit mitigating circumstances and provide evidence from their doctor that they have been ill. The mitigating circumstances panel accepts this. They have passed the unit and their result is in line with other units. The exam board does not permit a re-sit as they do not think it is required.

Example 9. A student has issues working with an external website which is required for their project. They submit mitigating circumstances in the middle of August asking for a two week extension for their dissertation and provide correspondence with their supervisor confirming the issue had been ongoing. The mitigating circumstances panel accept this and allow a two week extension.

Example 10. A student has issues working with an external website which is required for their project. They submit mitigating circumstances two days before their deadline asking for a two week extension for their dissertation and provide correspondence with their supervisor confirming the issue had been ongoing. The mitigating circumstances panel decline the two week extension as the request was submitted too close to the deadline. They allow the student a two day extension.

Interruptions

An interruption is a formal break, usually of one month or longer, in your programme of study. A request is made via the Academic Advisor and circumstances will dictate whether and under what terms it may be granted. The university is generally under an obligation to inform any sponsor if an interruption is granted and it may affect your visa status. The university is sympathetic and helpful in genuine cases of difficulty. The university's policy regarding interruptions is available from the [interruptions webpage](#).

Guidance on Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Malpractice

Guidance for plagiarism and academic malpractice can be found in the [university document](#). There is further guidance on the [department's webpage](#).

As a student, you are expected to cooperate in the learning process throughout your programme of study by completing assignments of various kinds that are the product of your own study or research. Whether unwittingly or otherwise, students may commit what is known as plagiarism or some other form of academic malpractice when carrying out an assignment. This may come about because students have been used to different conventions in their prior educational experience or through lack of understanding of what is expected of them. This guidance is designed to help you understand what we regard as academic malpractice and hence to help you to avoid committing it. You should read it carefully, because academic malpractice is regarded as a serious offence and students found to have committed it will be penalized. You are very likely to receive a reduced mark for the piece of work in question, but it could be worse. You could be awarded zero (with or without loss of credits), fail the whole unit, be demoted to a lower class of degree, or be excluded from the programme.

Academic malpractice includes plagiarism, collusion, fabrication or falsification of results and anything else intended by those committing it to achieve credit that they do not properly deserve.

Please note that work you submit may be screened electronically to check against other material on the web and in other submitted work. Plagiarism is an important disciplinary offence. You should make sure you understand exactly what it is and how to avoid it. There is a compulsory online course to help you during Welcome Week. All students must take this course.

All written work submitted for assessment must be free of plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the ideas, work or words of other people without proper, clear and unambiguous acknowledgement. It also includes self-plagiarism (which occurs where, for example, you submit work that you have presented for assessment on a previous occasion), and the submission of material from essay banks (even if the authors of such material appear to be giving you permission to use it in this way). A blatant example of plagiarism would be to copy another student's work. Hence, it is essential to make clear in your assignments the distinction between:

- the ideas and work of other people that you may have quite legitimately exploited and developed, and

- the ideas or material that you have personally contributed.

To assist you, here are a few important dos and don'ts:

- Do get lots of background information on subjects you are writing about to help you form your own view of the subject. The information could be from electronic journals, technical reports, dissertations, etc;
- Don't construct a piece of work by cutting and pasting or copying material written by other people, or by you for any other purpose, into something you are submitting as your own work. Sometimes you may need to quote someone else's exact form of words in order to analyse or criticize them, in which case the quotation must be enclosed in quotation marks to show that it is a direct quote, and it must have the source properly acknowledged at that point.

Any omissions from a quotation must be indicated by an ellipsis (. . .) and any additions for clarity must be enclosed in square brackets, e.g. '[these] results suggest that . . . the hypothesis is correct'. It may also be appropriate to reproduce a diagram from someone else's work, but again the source must be explicitly and fully acknowledged there. However, constructing large chunks of documents from a string of quotes, even if they are acknowledged, is another form of plagiarism.

If any direct quotations are taken from the literature and included in the report, it is vitally important that these are visually distinct and are clearly referenced.

Quotations are made distinct by enclosing them in quotation marks, for example 'this is a quotation' (anonymous source 2014). Longer quotations should be put into separate quote marked and indented paragraphs, for example,

"The rise of capitalism and the expansion of the world market have made international trade an essential part of modern society. The industrialised core has developed, and continues to maintain its lifestyle, by exploiting the labour and resources of the periphery.

Because the developed countries hold the power they dictate the terms, not only with regard to pricing but also the uses to which resources are put.

The resource depletion cost of individual people in the North is much greater than that in the South: 80 per cent of the world's resource consumption is by 20 per cent of the people. This 20 percent live mainly in the North. Since many resources

are transferred (at prices favourable to the purchaser) from the South to the North, much of the cost is paid in the South.” (Kirby et al, 1995 p.4)

Note the addition of the appropriate page number to the reference above, this will help a reader to locate the exact quote. Where some text is removed, from a quotation this should be shown explicitly with an ellipsis (. . .) and where you add some of your own words to a quotation this is shown using square brackets.

Thus, the small earlier example might end up as ‘this . . . [small] quotation’ (anonymous source 2014).

- Do attribute all ideas to their original authors by appropriate acknowledgement and referencing. Written ideas are the product that authors produce. You would not appreciate it if other people passed off your ideas as their own, and that is what plagiarism rules are intended to prevent. A good rule of thumb is that each idea or statement that you write should be attributed to a source unless it is your personal idea or it is common knowledge. (If you are unsure if something is common knowledge, ask other students. If they do not know what you are talking about, then it is not common knowledge!)

As you can see, it is most important that you understand what is expected of you when you prepare and produce assignments and that you always observe proper academic conventions for referencing and acknowledgement, whether working by yourself or as part of a team.

In practice, there are a number of acceptable styles of referencing depending, for example, on the particular discipline you are studying, so if you are not certain what is appropriate, ask your project supervisor or the course unit coordinator for advice. This should ensure that you do not lay yourself open to a charge of plagiarism inadvertently, or through ignorance of what is expected. It is also important to remember that you do not absolve yourself from a charge of plagiarism simply by including a reference to a source in a bibliography that you have included with your assignment; you should always be scrupulous about indicating precisely where and to what extent you have made use of such a source.

So far, plagiarism has been described as using the words or work of someone else (without proper attribution), but it could also include a close paraphrase of their words,

or a minimally adapted version of a computer program, a diagram, a graph, an illustration, etc. taken from a variety of sources without proper acknowledgement. These could be lectures, printed material, the Internet or other electronic/AV sources. Note: plagiarism includes not only text but also other written matter including computer programs and diagrams.

Remember: no matter what pressure you may be under to complete an assignment, you should never succumb to the temptation to take a short cut and use someone else's material inappropriately. No amount of mitigating circumstances will get you off the hook, and if you persuade other students to let you copy their work, they risk being disciplined as well (see below).

Collusion

Collusion is any agreement to hide someone else's individual input to collaborative work. Where proved, it will be subject to penalties similar to those for plagiarism. Similarly, it is also collusion to allow someone to copy your work, and that will lay both you and the other student open to a charge of academic malpractice. You should ensure that:

- you do not leave work on printers;
- you do not give passwords to other students;
- you do not allow other students to use your home computer without taking adequate precautions;
- you do not show your coursework to other students.

It is vitally important that when you discuss coursework with others you do so in very general terms, and are not so specific that it leads to the same piece of coursework being submitted. The department will use whatever means it sees fit to test coursework for breaches of this regulation. This may include the use of software that checks submissions against each other. The department reserves the right to insist on electronic submission in specified formats.

Collaboration

On the other hand, collaboration is a perfectly legitimate academic activity in which students are required to work in groups as part of their course of research or in the preparation of projects and similar assignments. If you are asked to carry out such

group work and to collaborate in specified activities, it will always be made clear how your individual input to the joint work is to be assessed and graded. Sometimes, for example, all members of a team may receive the same mark for a joint piece of work. Whereas on other occasions, team members will receive individual marks that reflect their individual input.

If it is not clear on what basis your work is to be assessed, to avoid any risk of unwitting collusion, you should always ask for clarification before submitting any assignment.

Fabrication or Falsification of Results

For many students, a major part of their studies involves laboratory or other forms of practical work, and they often find themselves undertaking such activity without close academic supervision. If you are in this situation, you are expected to behave in a responsible manner, as in other aspects of your academic life, and to show proper integrity in the reporting of results or other data. Hence, you should ensure that you always document clearly and fully any research or survey that you undertake, whether working by yourself or as part of a group. Results or data that you or your group submit must be capable of verification, so that those assessing the work can follow the processes by which you obtained them. Under no circumstances should you seek to present results or data that were not properly obtained and documented as part of your practical learning experience. Otherwise, you lay yourself open to the charge of fabrication or falsification of results.

Penalties for Poor Practice vs. Malpractice

The university has strict rules for the handling of malpractice cases. The markers of your work will report any suspect work to one of the department's plagiarism officers. The plagiarism officer will decide whether they believe there is a case of either malpractice (the most serious), poor practice or that there is no problem with the suspected student assignment.

In all cases, penalties for submission of improper coursework will be applied in line with university policy. Students have a right of appeal as detailed in the university policy. Initially appeals should be discussed with the department. However, if needed, an [appeal](#) should be made to faculty within ten days for work and attendance matters.

Suspected first offences of malpractice in coursework will be heard by a panel within the department who will listen to the case against the student(s), to any defence presented by the student(s) and will examine the evidence. If malpractice is found to have taken place then typically marks will be reduced.

The department also normally offers some retraining in correct presentation of work to students found to have engaged in malpractice. If a second or subsequent offence is suspected then the case is passed to Faculty to deal with, and any penalty is likely to be more severe.

Complaints Procedure

Most complaints can be dealt with quickly and informally. Complaints should be made promptly, orally or in writing, to an appropriate member of staff, such as your course unit leader, project supervisor or academic advisor. If your complaint is of a general nature, it might be best to mention it to your student representative so that he/she can raise it at the relevant department committee.

If you are dissatisfied with the response, you should put the complaint in writing to the PGT programme director. If, having pursued the matter informally, you are still dissatisfied you should follow the university's formal [complaints procedure](#). Please note that this regulation also describes what it does not cover, where other mechanisms should be used.

If you need help using the procedure or guidance on where to refer your complaint, you can seek advice from any of the following: the [Students' Union Advice Centre](#) or the [Student Support and Advice](#) team located in the Atrium, University Place.

Dignity at Study and Work

The university is committed to creating a learning environment free of harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The relevant policy and reporting mechanisms are in the following [document](#).