

EXECUTIVE MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (EMPA)

SCHEME FOR THE AWARD OF A TAUGHT MASTERS DEGREE: PROGRAMMES COMPRISING COURSES TO THE VALUE OF EIGHT HALF UNITS FOR STUDENTS ENTERING IN OR AFTER THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2014/15

This classification scheme is approved by the Graduate School Board of Examiners. Last updated: June 2015

This scheme should be read in conjunction with the General Academic Regulations, Regulations for Taught Master's Degrees, the relevant Taught Master's degree programme regulations, the relevant online Taught Master's course guides and the Code of Good Practice for Taught Master's Programmes: Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

1. Mark and Grade for a Course:

- 1.1 The examiners for each course will decide a numerical mark for each student using the following scale:

| Grade | Mark |
|-------------|------------|
| Distinction | 70 - 100 |
| Merit | 60 - 69 |
| Pass | 50 - 59 |
| Fail | (x+1) - 49 |
| Bad Fail | 0 - x |

Each Department, Institute and Group shall specify the value of x as 19, 29 or 39 for all its courses, and this shall be clearly published in the School Calendar and in departmental student handbooks.

- 1.2 The grade of Bad Fail will be used internally to indicate when a fail cannot be compensated and, therefore, must be re-attempted. It will not appear on official transcripts.

2. Eligibility for Award

- 2.1 In order to be considered for a degree, a student must have completed all elements of assessment required for the course as listed in the corresponding programme regulations.
- 2.2 A student who makes no serious attempt at any element of summative assessment for a course, as set out in paragraph 33 of the General Academic Regulations, will be considered not to have completed the course. Moreover, the absence of a serious attempt will count as one of the attempts allowed for the course unless it is authorised by the Chair of the Sub-Board of Examiners responsible for the programme, in accordance with section 10 of the Regulations for Taught Master's Degrees.
- 2.3 A student will not be recommended for the award of a degree if s/he has failed courses to the value of one or more units, subject to the penalty rules for failed courses in section 3.3 or, if in the judgement of the examiners, the fail is a direct result of medical and / or exceptional circumstances in accordance with section 10 of the Regulations for Taught Master's Degrees.

3. Calculation of the Award

- 3.1 The following classification rules apply to students completing the EMPA through twenty months of study at the LSE.
- 3.2 The Sub-Board of examiners can designate a half-unit course (or equivalent) as being critical to assessment for a programme and establish a 'local rule' whereby it will be given special consideration in the awarding of the degree: for example, a degree cannot be awarded unless the designated course has been passed or the award classification cannot be higher than the result awarded in the designated course.¹
- 3.3 Where a student receives a Fail mark in any course, the following penalty rules shall apply:
- 3.3.1. A Bad Fail mark in any course of any unit value will result in an overall Fail for the degree.
- 3.3.2. A Fail (but not a Bad Fail) in a course(s) of 0.5 unit value does not require compensation.
- 3.3.3. A Fail (but not a Bad Fail) in courses to the value of 1.0 units will result in an overall Fail unless all failed courses are compensated either:
- (i) by a mark of at least 60% in courses of an equivalent value for each failed course.
 - (ii) by a compensation aggregate mark of 330 in the non-failed courses.
- If compensated, a Fail shall result in a drop in the overall award classification where a Distinction or Merit would otherwise have been awarded. It shall have no further impact where a Pass is to be awarded.
- 3.3.4. A Fail (but not a Bad Fail) in a course(s) of more than 1.0 unit will result in an overall Fail for the degree.

- 3.4 The overall classification of an award shall, subject to the penalty rules for failed courses in section 3.3 above, be calculated as follows
- 3.4.1. For a Distinction:
- (a) marks of a Distinction grade in courses to the value of 3.0 units or more;
 - (b) marks of a Distinction grade in courses to the value of 2.5 units and marks of a Merit grade in courses to the value of 1.0 unit.
- 3.4.2. Either a Distinction (if no failed course) or a Merit according to the 'local rules' of the Sub-Board¹
- (c) marks of a Distinction grade in courses to the value of 2.5 units and a mark of a Merit grade in a course of 0.5 unit value;
 - (d) marks of a Distinction grade in courses to the value of 2.0 units and marks of a Merit grade in courses to the value of at least 1.0 unit and an overall aggregate mark of at least 520
- 3.4.3. For a Merit:
- (e) marks of a Distinction grade in courses to the value of at least 2.0 units;
 - (f) marks of a Merit grade (or higher) in courses to the value of 3.0 units or more;
 - (g) a mark of a Distinction grade in a course of 0.5 unit value and marks of a Merit grade in courses to the value of 2.0 units.
- 3.4.4. Either a Merit (if no failed course) or a Pass according to the 'local rules' of the Sub-Board¹
- (h) marks of a Merit grade in courses to the value of 2.5 units;
 - (i) marks of a Distinction grade in courses to the value of 1.0 unit and marks of a Merit grade in courses to the value of 1.0 unit.
- 3.4.5. For a Pass
- (j) marks of at least a Pass grade in courses to the value of 3.5 units;
 - (k) marks of at least a Pass grade in courses to the value of 3.0 units with compensation for the failed unit(s) as described under section 3.3.

4. Failure to Achieve an Award of Degree

- 4.1 If a student has not been awarded a degree, s/he shall normally be entitled to repeat the failed courses only (on one occasion) and at the next normal opportunity, in accordance with paragraph 30 of the General Academic Regulations.
- 4.2 If a student has met the requirements for the award of a degree having repeated failed courses, s/he can only be recommended for the award of a Pass degree unless, in the judgement of the examiners, the initial failure(s) was at least in part a direct result of medical and / or exceptional circumstances, subject to the provisions of section 7.

5. Diploma

Students who achieve passing grades (50 and above) in at least 6 half units are eligible for the award of Diploma. Candidates can opt for this award either once they have completed six courses (i.e. all courses in Year One plus two further half units) or once they have completed the programme if they are not eligible for the award of the degree. The Diploma is classified according to the Scheme for the Award of a Diploma.

6. Certificate

Students who have achieved passing grades (50 and above) in at least 4 half units are eligible for the award of Certificate. The Certificate is classified on a Pass/Fail basis only. Higher marks in one course cannot compensate a Fail mark in another course. The award of a Certificate or Diploma is subject to the application of the General Academic Regulations and the Certificate/Diploma regulations and classification schemes. The Certificate and Diploma are final exit awards with no option to subsequently be awarded the degree of Executive Master of Public Administration or Executive Master of Public Policy.

7. General Proviso

It is also open to a Sub-Board of Examiners to recommend to the Graduate School Board of Examiners any departure from this Scheme and / or from its 'local rules' if, in their judgement, this would be equitable for any individual student as a direct result of medical and / or exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances would need to be extraneous to the normal assessment process and would apply to that student only. The following conditions also apply:

- 7.1 That the student is very close to the next higher classification boundary (within 3 marks in a single paper or 5 marks on aggregate);
- 7.2 that the student has marks in the higher classification range;
- 7.3 that the student has demonstrated that the assessment or set of assessments were significantly and negatively affected by exceptional circumstances that were sudden, unforeseen, out of the student's own control and proximate to the assessment(s) in question;
- 7.4 that the student has demonstrated that his / her performance in the affected assessment(s) was significantly out of line with his / her performance in other, unaffected assessments.

Footnotes

¹Each Sub-Board of Examiners shall establish clear 'local rules' about: (i) what special consideration will be given to any course designated as 'critical to assessment' and (ii) when and how the overall classification of an award will be determined where two options are available. Each Sub-Board will also ensure its 'local rules' are published in the relevant departmental student handbook(s). The Academic Registrar's Division will also maintain an authoritative central website about 'local rules'.

See the [Calendar](#) for further information about Programme Regulations, Course Guides, School and academic Regulations.