



Academic Regulations for Students: Postgraduate (Masters Level) Taught Programmes, Section 2: General Regulations

2013-2014 Academic Session

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Links to recent changes and/or additions to the published regulations

2.1.2 [Interruption of Study](#)

Introduction to General Regulations

The General Regulations apply to all University College London (UCL) taught master programme students, including students enrolled on MRes programmes and Erasmus Mundus programme students when they are attending UCL.

The Academic Regulations for Students: Postgraduate (Masters Level) Taught are UCL's overarching regulations and students and staff should read these regulations together with the regulations for their programme of study and with local regulations for the department and faculty housing their programme of study and take account of their programme's scheme of award as detailed in programme handbooks and departmental/divisional literature.

These regulations also broadly apply to affiliate students except where the nature of their programme of study renders the regulations inapplicable. In such cases any issues arising should be referred to the Study Abroad team in the Student Centre (email studentrecords@ucl.ac.uk) and will be dealt with on a case by case basis. See paragraph 2.12 for the regulations for the structure of programmes for affiliate students.

These are the regulations for taught postgraduate programmes based on the 180 UCL Credits Scheme of Award.

There are special regulations for the following programmes:

- Master of Research (MRes)
- Fine Art and Master of Fine Art (MFA)
- Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA)
- International Masters
- European Master and the LLM.

There are also special regulations for all taught postgraduate programmes that are not 12 months in duration. Students and staff should refer to the regulations published by the department or division that delivers the relevant programme.

UCL Credit and European Credits Transfer System (ECTS)

2.5 UCL credits equates to 25 learning hours and 1 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation Scheme). The information in this publication is believed to be correct at the time of posting but subsequent amendments are possible.

Amendments and new regulations will be indicated on the webpage and will be incorporated into the main text for the next academic session.

[European Credit Transfer and Accumulation Scheme](#) – on the European Commission website

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2.1 Period of registration and interruption of studies

2.1.1 Period of Registration

- i) The academic year starts on the first day of September and ends on the last day of August in the following year.
- ii) The approved mode of attendance for a Master's degree is one calendar year of full-time study or two to five calendar years of part-time study.

Further guidance on period of registration

If students wish to change their mode of attendance, guidance should be sought from the Student Centre.

2.1.2 Interruption of Study

- i) Interruption of Study is for students who require a temporary break from their studies and plan to resume their studies at a future date.
- ii) Students holding a Tier 4 visa will be required to leave the UK for the duration of the interruption and re-apply for a new visa in order to return to UCL.
- iii) Such students must comply with visa requirements to safeguard their immigration status and future entry to the UK. Under the Points Based Immigration System (PBIS) UCL is legally required to notify the immigration authorities of any changes to a student's status.

Further guidance on interruption of study

Applications for interruption of study should be made in advance of the proposed interruption. Retroactive interruptions going back more than a month from when the interruption is received by Student and Registry Services require the approval of the Dean of Students (Academic). (See link at the end of this section.)

- i) Applications for first interruptions of up to one calendar year require departmental/divisional and Faculty approval. The Faculty will notify Student Records.
- ii) Applications for repeat interruptions or those in excess of one calendar year will require the approval of the Dean of Students (Academic), in addition to that of the department/division and Faculty.

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- iii) The Faculty must forward the form to the Student Records office within one month of effective date of interruption. If received later, the effective interruption date will be the date of receipt, not the date on the form.

Link for Section 2.1

[Interruption of Study Application form \(Word doc\)](#)

2.2 Table of approved structures of postgraduate programmes (Masters Level)

	120:60 Taught/Research Element UCL Credit Split	90:90 Taught/Research Element UCL Credit Split	Two Year Full- Time Taught Masters
Duration	One Calendar Year	One Calendar Year	Refer to specific programme regulations
Dissertation Word Length	10,000 to 12,000 words	15,000 to 18,000 words	Programme structures should be determined based on either the one-third or one-half dissertation models for one year full-time programmes (outlined above).
Dissertation / Project UCL Credit Value	60 credits	90 credits	See above
Dissertation / Project ECTS	24 ECTS	36 ECTS	See above
Total ECTS	72 ECTS	72 ECTS	144 ECTS
Dissertation / Project Learning Hours	600 hours	900 hours	See above

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Total learning hours	1800	1800	Refer to specific programme regulations
Exit Award Possible Yes/No¹	Yes	Yes	Yes

2.3 UCL approval for new modules and new degree programmes

- i) UCL approves all new modules and degree programmes proposed by departments/divisions and recommended by the faculty, having been scrutinised by a suitably qualified person external to UCL.
- ii) Such approval is granted for new module and degree programmes, and amendments to existing modules and programmes, when the rationale provided meets UCL's academic regulatory and strategic planning requirements.

Further guidance on UCL approval for new modules and degree programmes

Further information is available about new programmes and module proposals. (See link at the end of this section.)

Postgraduate modules can be:

- i) **Compulsory Modules for a Programme:** Students registered on a programme must enrol on modules deemed compulsory for that programme of study. These modules are identified by the letter 'C' in the programme diet on PORTICO, UCL's student records system. Students should select and confirm all compulsory modules as well as any available optional and electives module units. Students registered for programmes where all modules are compulsory are also required to confirm the modules for their programme of study, unless otherwise specified.
- ii) **Optional Modules for a Programme:** Optional modules provide students with a choice of specified module options for their programme and are identified by the letter 'O' in the programme diet on PORTICO. Student

¹ Such approved exit awards are available for students who do not undertake the research element of the programme for whatever reason, but who have successfully achieved 60 credits for a PG Cert and 120 Credits for a PG Dip.

selection of the optional modules is subject to the overarching rules for modules governing the programme.

- iii) **Elective Modules for a Programme:** Elective modules are not specified in the programme diet and are identified by the letter 'E' on PORTICO. Student selection of elective modules is subject to the overarching rules for modules governing the programme.

Link for Section 2.3

[UCL Procedures and Forms for Programme and Module Proposal, Amendment and Review](#)

2.4 Permitted modes of study for postgraduate taught programmes

Full-time Mode of Study

Students are enrolled on all modules within the normal time span of the programme i.e. one calendar year for most taught postgraduate programmes.

Part-time Mode of Study

- i) Students are enrolled on all modules over a period double the length of the normal time span of the programme, which is two calendar years for most masters programmes.
- ii) Students who are repeating a year can also be changed to part-time.

Flexible Mode of Study

Students are enrolled on a programme over a maximum period of 5 years. Students registered as being on a flexible mode of study can take less than 5 years and this could, in theory, be within one calendar year for a taught postgraduate degree.

Further guidance on modes of study

- i) Students who were on a full-time mode of study who have failed but are paying for additional registration/teaching may have their mode of study amended as appropriate.
- ii) Students enrolled on a flexible mode of study can be given advice by programme organisers about the recommended period of time in which to complete their studies.

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- iii) Decisions relating to the mode, or modes, of study offered by programmes are at the discretion of the programme organiser with the agreement of the Head of Department and Faculty.

2.5 The selection of modules (including programmes with compulsory modules)

- i) UCL decides the combinations of modules students may follow. Some degree programmes have all compulsory modules.
- ii) Students are expected only to select modules offered by UCL, unless otherwise specified in the regulations for individual programmes of study.
- iii) UCL departments are free to develop, not only combinations of modules which form or fall within one or more of the conventional subjects, but also combinations which fall across the boundaries of faculties, but which still, in the opinion of the department and UCL, form a coherent degree programme.
- iv) Confirmation of module selection by both the teaching and home departments (when these are not the same) is the indication of UCL approval that those selected have met the requirements for an individual programme of study.
- v) All module selections must be made by the deadline specified by UCL.

Further guidance on the selection of modules

The annual deadlines for the selection and UCL confirmation of modules are:

- Whole modules: end of October
- Half modules running in the first term: end of October
- Half modules running in the second/third term: end of January

Note: Students selecting optional or elective modules should, in the first instance, seek approval from the home department /division for their degree programme before enrolling on any modules that are not specified in the literature relating to their chosen programme.

2.6 Selection of modules outside UCL (University of London and other Universities)

- i) Students must only select modules offered by UCL unless the option to select modules outside UCL is clearly specified in information on their programme of study.

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- ii) Where modules can be selected outside UCL, the University of London, or other Higher Education provider, is responsible for the management of the student experience at the module level.

Further guidance on selection of modules outside UCL

- i) When specified within the regulations for the programme of study, students can select modules from other educational institutions in place of UCL module units.
- ii) Before students can select these courses, UCL approval must be granted to any student wishing to enrol on a module at another institution and evidence provided from the institution offering the module that they are willing to accept the student. Approval is granted by the Dean of Students (Academic).
- iii) Approval is usually restricted to another institution within the University of London. However it should be noted that, in some cases, agreements between UCL and other institutions are already in place.
- iv) Departments/ divisions, Faculties and the Examinations Office can give guidance on this. Cases in support for any such request should be made via the Examinations Office.
- v) For educational and administrative reasons, the institution providing the module (known as the principal provider) 'owns' the module unit, and is therefore responsible for awarding credit and has responsibility for quality assurance of the teaching and learning experience. It also takes the primary role in assessing and confirming student achievement on the particular module.
- vi) Students should note that other institutions may operate different regulations for the award of credit, credit value and marking systems. They should also note that the academic year at other institutions may be different and their examinations may not necessarily take place during the normal UCL examination period.

Link for Section 2.6

[UCL Examinations](#)

2.7 Change of degree programme

An application for changes in degree programme requires UCL approval. Transfer between degree programmes cannot be guaranteed. The deadline for the transfer between modules is set by UCL.

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2.7.1 Inter-Faculty Degree Programme Transfers

For inter-faculty transfers, the following criteria will apply and will be used by the Dean of Students (Academic) when making a decision.

- i) The student must have met the standard entrance requirements and must not have received a rejection to a previous application.
- ii) A supportive reference, concentrating on attendance and engagement, from the faculty or department at which the student is currently or was last based, commenting upon the student's attendance and engagement.
- iii) Detailed comparison of the degree programme and the modules taken showing the equivalence or otherwise in the accompanying case for APL
- iv) Confirmation that there is sufficient capacity within the gaining department/division in terms of student numbers.

Further guidance on inter-faculty transfers

When considering a request to transfer to another programme academic staff should, in the first instance, identify what is the main driver for the request, i.e., was a poor decision made about the initial choice of degree or is the subject beyond the student's academic capability, etc. Having identified the substantive reason for the request to transfer, academic staff should note that items i), iii) and iv) above must be applied. Any other information in support of the transfer may also be included in the reference, see item iii) above.

The usual deadline for the transfers between degree programmes is the end of October to be compatible with module selection. Later transfers may be possible provided the programme diets are compatible or can be made compatible.

2.7.2 Intra-Faculty Degree Programme Transfers

For intra-faculty transfers the above criteria should also apply. However, if a student does not satisfy one or more of the criteria, a case should be made to the Dean of Students (Academic).

Further guidance on intra-faculty transfers

Further information is available about intra-faculty transfers on our website. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 2.7

[Changes to your registration status](#)

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2.8 Change of module selection

An application for changes in module selection requires UCL approval. Transfer between modules cannot be guaranteed. There must be places available and the changes should be consistent with the student's programme of study. The deadline for the transfer between modules is set by UCL.

Further guidance on changing module selection

- i) Students who are in any doubt about the modules they have selected should discuss the matter with their Personal Tutor or Faculty Graduate Tutor immediately. Information on module selection should have been recorded on PORTICO and must be amended to reflect any change.
- ii) Unless stated to the contrary, it will be assumed that a change of module selection will be effective as from the start of the current session.

2.9 Deadlines for the completion of module selection including student, teaching and home department

2.9.1 Confirmation of Student Module Selection

- i) UCL approval for a student's programme of study has been conferred once the deadlines set by UCL have passed for the completion of module selection and any changes to module selection, or a change of degree programme, either within the same department/division and faculty or between faculties.
- ii) Any amendment to a programme of study thereafter requires special permission from UCL.

Further guidance on confirmation of student module selection

The usual deadlines for the completion of changes of module selection including student, teaching and home department confirmations are as follows:

- Whole modules: end of October
- Half modules running in the first term: end of October
- Half modules running in the second/third terms: end of January
- The deadlines above are for the completion of this activity. Students will have earlier deadlines for the commencement of module selection that will be notified to them by UCL annually.

2.9.2 Changes to Programmes of Study when the Deadline has Passed

- i) When the deadlines for changes to a programme of study have passed, any changes including module selection, withdrawal from a module unit, withdrawal from examination of a module unit, a change of programme requires UCL approval.
- ii) Approval of changes to a programme of study once the deadline for doing so has passed cannot be guaranteed.

2.9.3 Withdrawing from a Module after the End of January

- i) Students wishing to withdraw from a module after this point should seek advice from the Programme Organiser and/or the Examinations Office.
- ii) Students who absent themselves without prior approval from any assessment will be marked as being absent and deemed to have made an attempt. Therefore any further attempt will be determined as a re-sit examination.
- iii) Postgraduate students should refer to Academic Regulations for Students: Postgraduate (Masters Level) Taught Programmes Section 3: Academic Assessment for further information on withdrawal/deferral procedures.

2.10 Completion of Masters Level Programmes

2.10.1 Scheme of Award

In order to be considered for an award from UCL, students must satisfy the Board of Examiners that the academic requirements as set out below have been met in full, together with any other requirements associated with the programme as set out in the programme literature.

2.10.2 Completion of Assessments

For students on postgraduate taught courses, a module is complete when a student has been declared complete on all components for that module taking into account the following.

Coursework

- i) Where the coursework component represents more than 20% of the overall module assessment, a threshold for completion, such as a requirement to submit at least a specified fraction of the coursework, must be set by a department and be clearly publicised to students enrolled on the module.

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- ii) If the coursework component represents less or 20% equal to the overall module assessment, no coursework completion criteria need be set by the department.
- iii) In the event that any threshold set is not reached, the result for the component will be “incomplete” regardless of the mark obtained. Otherwise, the threshold criteria are met and the candidate is declared “complete” on the component.
- iv) If no coursework threshold criteria are set then the mark obtained by a student, including zero, is returned for this component and the overall mark calculated in the usual way and the candidate declared “complete” on the component.

Unseen Examinations

An unseen examination component is deemed complete if a student has submitted an answer that can be academically assessed. The mark awarded, however, might be zero. If a candidate makes little or no attempt at the examination, this will be deemed “incomplete” and the module as a whole will also be deemed “incomplete”.

2.10.3 Re-sit and Substitute Modules

- i) The higher of the marks achieved at the first attempt and the re-sit attempt will apply.
- ii) Marks of re-taken or substitute modules will be included in the calculation for the average mark of the weighting year from which they were originally taken rather than in the year that they were re-taken.

2.10.4 Criteria for the Award of a Postgraduate Certificate

- i) For an award of a Postgraduate Certificate students must have completed 60 UCL credits or the equivalent 600 learning hours and obtained an overall average mark of 50% or greater.
- ii) A maximum of 25% of the programme may be condoned at 40 – 49%.
- iii) The award of distinction and merit cannot be given for Postgraduate Certificates.

2.10.5 Criteria for the Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

- i) For an award of a Postgraduate Diploma students must have completed 120 UCL credits or the equivalent 1200 learning hours and obtained an overall average mark of 50% or greater.
- ii) A maximum of 25% of the programme may be condoned at 40 – 49%.

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- iii) The award of merit cannot be given for Postgraduate Diplomas.
- iv) The award of distinction must be given to students on Postgraduate Diploma programmes if they have satisfied all of the following criteria:
 - a) The overall average mark, based on 120 credits, is 70% or greater; and
 - b) There are no marks below 50%, no condoned marks, no re-sit marks, and all marks are first attempts.

2.10.6 Criteria for the Award of a Masters Degree

- i) For an award of a Masters degree students must have completed 180 UCL credits or the equivalent 1800 learning hours and obtained an overall average mark of 50% or greater which must include a mark of 50% or greater for the dissertation.
- ii) A maximum of 25% of the programme's taught element (i.e. excluding the dissertation) may be condoned at 40 – 49%.
- iii) A student may be required to make specified amendments to their dissertation within one month provided that:
 - a) The amendments are minor and the dissertation is otherwise adequate; and
 - b) The student has satisfied all other requirements for the award of a Masters degree.
- iv) The award of merit must be given if students have satisfied all of the following criteria:
 - a) The overall average mark, based on 180 credits, is 60% or greater; and
 - b) The mark for the dissertation, after rounding to the nearest integer, is 65% or greater; and
 - c) There are no marks below 50%, no condoned marks, no re-sit marks, and all marks are first attempts.

Further guidance on the criteria for awarding a masters degree

Regarding the award of merit, if the overall mark is 59% (after rounding to the nearest integer) a candidate is in the borderline zone.

The award of distinction must be given to students on Masters programmes if they have satisfied all of the following criteria:

- i) The overall average mark, based upon 180 credits, is 70% or greater; and

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- ii) The mark for the dissertation, after rounding to the nearest integer, is 70% or greater; and
- iii) There are no marks below 50%, no condoned marks, no re-sit marks, and all marks are first attempts.

Regarding the award of distinction, if the overall mark is 69% (after rounding to the nearest integer) a candidate is in the borderline zone.

- i) Rounding should be applied to obtain the integer marks given above (e.g. a mark of 64.4 should be rounded to 64%, and a mark of 64.5 should be rounded to 65%).
- ii) Regarding condoned marks, students may choose to resit the failed module(s) (i.e. modules for which they received a mark of 40–49). If resits are chosen, Withdrawing from a Module after the End of January should be noted (see paragraph 2.9.3). The Postgraduate Examination Regulations should also be noted.
- iii) MRes students progressing onto an associated Research Degree Programme for which the MRes is an integral part of the doctoral programme should note the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Students.

2.10.7 Programmes of More Than One Year's Duration

- i) Students registered on programmes of more than one year's duration must satisfy the requirements specified in the programme literature with regard to progression between each year of the programme.
- ii) For students progressing onto a Research Degree Programme from an associated MRes, which is an integral part of a doctoral programme, the length of the MRes programme should be extended to one calendar year and one month to allow Boards of Examiners time to determine awards prior to students registering on the associated EngD or PhD programme.

2.10.8 Criteria for Award on Non-Modularised Taught Postgraduate Degrees

Special regulations apply for the award of the LLM, MFA, MArch MCLinDent, EMPA, International and European Masters Degrees and reference should be made to the programme literature published by the relevant department/division.

2.11 Transfer to equivalent masters level programmes on academic grounds

- i) Students should be awarded the qualification for which they are registered. However, there may be circumstances where a Masters degree or Postgraduate Diploma student does not wish to complete all the requirements for the award for which they are registered or they are unable to meet all the requirements prescribed for the award.
- ii) Students showing indications early in their registration that they are unlikely to be able to meet the academic requirements of the programme should be advised to:
 - a) Leave the programme as early as possible; or
 - b) Transfer to the equivalent Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate programme (where such programmes exist).
- iii) Students on Masters programmes who fail the dissertation but satisfy the requirements prescribed in the scheme of award for the equivalent Postgraduate Diploma may:
 - a) Opt to be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma (where one exists) rather than re-submit the dissertation for the Masters degree; or
 - b) Be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma following unsuccessful re-submission of a dissertation for the Masters degree.
- iv) Students who fail to satisfy the requirements for a Masters degree or Postgraduate Diploma but satisfy the requirements prescribed in the scheme of award for the equivalent Postgraduate Certificate may:
 - a) Opt to be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate rather than re-sit the failed/incomplete modules for the Masters degree or Postgraduate Diploma; or
 - b) Be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate following unsuccessful re-sit for the Masters degree or Postgraduate Diploma.

2.12 The structure of programmes for postgraduate affiliate students

2.12.1 Definition of a Postgraduate Affiliate Student

- i) Postgraduate Affiliate students are students registered at other Higher Education Institutions.

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- ii) Postgraduate Affiliate students must be fully enrolled on a Masters level programme at their home institution before they come to UCL.
- iii) During their period of affiliation, Postgraduate Affiliate students may not qualify for a UCL Degree.

Further guidance on the structure of programmes for postgraduate affiliate students

- i) In this context a Postgraduate Affiliate Student is a student from another university who has been accepted an offer by UCL to enrol on a postgraduate affiliate programme and register on modules that are academically assessed.
- ii) Postgraduate Affiliate students usually study on a full-time basis, although they may register on a part-time basis if this mode of study is available for their programme.
- iii) Postgraduate Affiliate students may have an enrolment period at UCL for one, two or three terms.

2.12.2 English Language Requirements for Postgraduate Affiliate students

Postgraduate affiliate students must satisfy UCL English Language requirements.

Further guidance on English language requirements for postgraduate affiliate students

At the discretion of a department/division and the Faculty, students admitted via the Erasmus programme may not be required to satisfy UCL English Language requirements.

2.12.3 Affiliate Student Exemption from Dual Registration Regulations

Postgraduate affiliate students are exempt from UCL's Dual Registration regulations.

2.12.4 Rights and Entitlements of Postgraduate Affiliate students

- i) Fully enrolled postgraduate affiliate students have the same rights and entitlements as all UCL postgraduate students.
- ii) Postgraduate affiliate students are subject to UCL's Academic Regulations for Students and all other terms and conditions of enrolment.

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Further guidance on rights and entitlements of postgraduate affiliate students

- i) Once fully enrolled, postgraduate affiliate students have the same rights and entitlements as all UCL students and are therefore subject to UCL Academic Regulations for Students and all other terms and conditions of enrolment.
- ii) Arrangements for re-assessment opportunities are managed by the affiliate student's department/division and should be conducted as closely as possible to the UCL norms for re-assessment.
- iii) Postgraduate affiliate students should seek advice from their home institutions regarding their policy for the recognition of re-sit marks.

2.12.5 The Structure of Postgraduate Affiliate Student Programmes

Postgraduate affiliate student programmes may have the following structures:

Time Spent at UCL	Generic Programme Diet Requirements
Term 1 only	A minimum of 15 and a maximum of 60 credits
Terms 2 and 3	A minimum of 15 and a maximum of 60 credits
Terms 1, 2 and 3	A minimum of 15 and a maximum of 120 credits

2.12.6 Postgraduate Affiliate Student Module Selection

Postgraduate affiliate students must select 50% of the required modules from their home department/division. The choice of all modules must be agreed by their home department/division.

Further guidance on postgraduate affiliate student module selection

- i) Postgraduate affiliate students who have accepted an offer of a place at UCL should agree their module selections with their home department/division before proceeding with module selection.
- ii) All postgraduate affiliate programmes diets must be included in the annual process of academic review and confirmed as being correct and available for the next academic session.
- iii) Department/divisions must ensure that Postgraduate Affiliate students are enrolled on the correct programme route code and that a diet has been generated to enable module selection.

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- iv) The home department/division of a postgraduate affiliate student is responsible for ensuring that the modules selected include 50% from the home department/division.
- v) Postgraduate affiliate students enrolling on modules from other departments are subject to the UCL norms for the approval of module selections by teaching and home departments/divisions.
- vi) Postgraduate affiliate students who undertake the same assessment for a module as UCL students should be enrolled on the main module and not an ancillary version. However, Postgraduate Affiliate students who undertake different assessment from the parent module must be enrolled on an ancillary version of the parent module.
- vi) Departments/ divisions should inform Postgraduate affiliate students when marks for academic assessment will be published if these are different from UCL norms.

2.12.7 The Management of Postgraduate Affiliate Student Transcripts

Postgraduate affiliate students will be entitled to receive a transcript of their assessment achievement produced by the Student and Registry Services.

Any other certification required i.e. certification of UCL module credits/ ECTS for affiliate students will be produced by the Examinations Office.

Links for Section 2.12

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

[UCL English Language requirements](#)

[UCL Examinations Office](#)

2.13 Graduation ceremonies and academic robes

2.13.1 Graduation Ceremonies

UCL will organise Graduation Ceremonies and publish an annual deadline for ticket applications. Further information about Graduate Ceremonies is available. (See link at the end of this section.)

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2.13.2 Academic Robes

It is mandatory for all UCL graduates to wear academic robes to the graduation ceremonies. It is the responsibility of students to obtain appropriate robes from UCL's suppliers. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 2.13

[UCL Graduation Ceremonies](#)