

## **Heriot-Watt University**

## **Policy for Postgraduate Degree-Classification Borderline Cases**

Any award recommendation is a matter for the academic judgement of the Award Board and must be evidence based. The intention of this Policy is not to prescribe a formulaic methodology but to provide guidance on how Award Boards should deal with borderline cases. This Policy should be applied when a postgraduate degree candidate's overall average mark falls within the range of \*8.5 to \*9.9 (for example, 59.5%), as described below.

1. Average marks are to be presented to the Board to one decimal place. Averages that fall in the range \*9.5 to \*9.9% are to be rounded up to the next whole number. For example 59.5% would be rounded to 60%. Award recommendations are then to be based on the normal marks scale, viz

70% average or above	Postgraduate Masters with Distinction
60-69.4%	Postgraduate Masters with Merit
50-59.4%	Postgraduate Masters
40-49.4%	Postgraduate Diploma (refer to programme approval documentation)
Less than 40%	Refer to programme approval documentation

- 2. Paragraph 1 notwithstanding, the Award Board has the discretion to consider students falling just below these normal boundaries for receipt of the higher award. Specifically, students whose average lies in a discretion zone down to (and including) an average of \*8.5% (but no lower) may be considered for the next higher level of award.
- 3. This Policy relates to the consideration of an award based on the overall programme performance average. Therefore, in discussion of a borderline case for award of Postgraduate Masters with Distinction, the Board should take into consideration whether the dissertation mark and the majority of taught courses are at the higher grade.