

THE NEW SCHEME OF DEGREE CLASSIFICATION

The rules should be applied in descending order, starting at the Pass/Fail threshold, so that fail students are excluded from further consideration.

Pass/Fail threshold for the programme *(at the first attempt an overall failure entails a resit; at the second attempt it entails course termination)*

Students who fail modules to the value of 45 credits or less may be considered for the award of a degree under the rules below, unless the department has specifically required a pass in a given module, in which case the student will fail the programme.

Students who fail modules to the value of 50 credits, or have a weighted average mark of less than 35%, will fail the programme.

First

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 70% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 65%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Or Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 70%

2.1

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 60% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 55%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Or Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 60%

[Or: Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 65% and modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 70% or better, and modules to the value of 40 or 45 failed credits
(Dropped class from 1st because of failures)]

2.2

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 50% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 45%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Or Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 50%

[Or: Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 55%, modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 60% or better, and modules to the value of 40 or 45 failed credits
(Dropped class from 2.1 because of failures)]

Third

Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 40%

[Or: Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 50% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 45%, and 40 or 45 failed credits
(Dropped class from 2.2 because of failures)]

Pass

Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 35%

Additional Rules

(a) Calculating the weighted average

Three-year Programmes

In order to calculate the weighted average, the scheme fixes the relative weighting of the third-year and second-year marks in three-year programmes at 60:40, on the grounds that most students perform better in their final year. The weighted average is to be calculated on the basis of all second and third year marks. The second year and third year averages are calculated first, and then combined with a weighting of 60:40 in favour of the final year average. If the modules in a year have different credit values (e.g. some 10 and some 20) then they are weighted by their credit value in calculating the year average. If all modules in a year have the same credit value then the average for the year is a simple average.

For the purposes of identifying students' best performances on a module-by-module basis in order to meet the 120 credit threshold for a particular class, all second and third year modules are equal (only differentiated by their credit value where applicable). Differential weighting is only for the purposes of calculating the average mark between the two years.

Integrated Four-Year Programmes

The same general principles apply to the calculation of the weighted average as for three-year programmes, but the second, third and fourth years are included, with a relative weighting of 20:30:50. For the purposes of identifying students' best performance on a module-by-module basis, all second, third and fourth year modules are equal, but the credit threshold for a particular class is 180 rather than 120 credits.

Four Year Programmes with a year out

In the case of four-year programmes in which the year out does not count towards the final classification, the second and fourth years are used in determining the degree class, according to the standard scheme for three-year programmes.

(b) Borderlines

External examiners will be involved in the consideration of borderline cases, and of those just below the borderline with special/mitigating circumstances. *Viva voce* examinations may still be permitted where there is a genuine need to substantiate the information available to a Board of Examiners, but it is anticipated that the current trend away from *vivas* will continue as the new rules become embedded.

Candidates will be considered for promotion to the next higher degree class under the following borderline rules:

First

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 68% or better, including modules to the value of at least 90 credits at 70% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 65%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits.

2.1

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 58% or better, including modules to the value of at least 90 credits at 60% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 55%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

2.2

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 48% or better, including modules to the value of at least 90 credits at 50% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 45%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Note: for four-year integrated programmes, the requirement is 180 credits at the 68/58/48% level and 150 at the 70/60/50% level.

Allowance should be made for exceptions to the borderline rules for individual students with an extraordinary profile of marks, but such exceptions should be rare, and not be made a pretext for generating a sub-set of rules. The single scheme does not take away the discretion of Boards of Examiners, but seeks only to ensure that this is exercised in the context of a clear set of standard procedures.

(c) Limits on the number of failed modules

A student cannot graduate with more than 45 failed credits. A fail mark is a mark below a pass for credit: i.e. 34 or less.

Timetable for implementation

The new single scheme should operate:

- From 2005/06 for first-year students on courses in which performance in the first year does not count towards the final degree classification
- From 2006/07 for first year students on all other courses.