

University College Birmingham Classification Scheme
(pre 2019/2020 cohort)

Approved by Academic Regulations Committee

Reviewed: 3rd December 2020



1. Introduction

This classification scheme is applicable to Bachelors' cohorts with a first registration up to and including February 2020. For Bachelors' cohorts enrolling from September 2019/2020 onwards refer to the relevant University Classification Scheme.

2. Degree Classifications and Calculations

The approach used in this University is to take into consideration:

- a. The fact that many students progress into the final year of a bachelors' degree having completed (and taken academic credit for) a HND or similar qualification. As a result, they do not have second year marks which can be counted in the calculation and as a result there needs to be a different form of calculation using final year marks only.

- b. The principle of 'exit velocity'. That is, to view performance in assessment taken closer to the end of a programme as being a more accurate indication of student ability than performance in assessment at the start, given that the purpose of education is to improve student knowledge and skills over time. However;

- c. There are many examples of students achieving performance in assessment which is not finally reflected in an arithmetic mean calculation. For instance, gaining module marks of 71% in 100 credits-worth of final year modules, but not being awarded a 1st because the arithmetic mean calculation results in a 68% total.

3. Methods of calculation

To provide a fairer calculation, a student's final classification will be determined through consideration of

either

a. the arithmetic mean calculation of final level marks, or

b) the arithmetic mean calculation of penultimate **and** final level marks, or

c) a calculation based on a specified weighted number of credits being achieved at a particular level,

.....whichever is the most beneficial to the student.

The following calculation will be used to determine the arithmetic means defined above. (In determining degree classifications, the term 'second level refers to a student's second full level of study at the University. In the case of a student on a programme involving a cross-year placement in levels 5 and 6, the second level means the semesters spent in study at the University before and after the placement – Semesters 3 and 6.)

- a. Where the second and final level marks are to be counted, the mean marks for the two levels will be weighted in the ratio of 1:3 (second level:final level).
- b. The mean mark for the second level (or equivalent for sandwich programmes) is calculated by multiplying the overall mark obtained in each module by the credit value of that module, adding together these totals and dividing the result by the total value of all the credits in the second level. This is the Mean Mark for Level 2 (MMS2).
- c. The mean mark for the final level is calculated by multiplying the overall mark obtained in each module by the credit value of that module, adding together these totals and dividing the result by the total value of all the credits in the final level). This is the Mean Mark for the Final Year (MMFS).
- d. The Overall Mean Mark (OMM) used to determine classification is calculated by multiplying the MMFS by 3, adding to this the MMS2, then dividing the result by 4.

4. Degree Classifications

Final classifications for Bachelor's degrees with Honours are determined as follows. These are based on the determination of boundaries, which denote differences in classification by reference to a threshold score (see General Assessment Regulations). These calculations recognise that boundaries between classifications cannot be regarded as having simple binary characteristics, requiring a method of determining classification that supports this.

First Class

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain either:

- a. An OMM of at least 70%, *or*
- b. A MMFS of at least 70%, *or*
- c. A MMFS of at least 66% and a mark of at least 70% in modules with a combined value of at least 80 credits (from all final year modules) *or*
- d. A MMFS of at least 66% and a mark of at least 70% in modules with a combined value of at least 60 credits (from all final year modules), and a MMS2 of 70%

Second Class, Division One

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain either:

- a. An OMM of at least 60%, *or*
- b. A MMFS of at least 60%, *or*
- c. A MMFS of at least 56% and a mark of at least 60% in modules with a combined value of at least 80 credits (from all final year modules) *or*
- d. A MMFS of at least 56% and a mark of at least 60% in modules with a combined value of at least 60 credits (from all final year modules), and a MMS2 of 60%

Second Class, Division Two

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain either:

- a. An OMM of at least 50%, *or*
- b. A MMFS of at least 50%, *or*
- c. A MMFS of at least 46% and a mark of at least 50% in modules with a combined value of at least 80 credits (from all final year modules) *or*
- d. A MMFS of at least 46% and a mark of at least 50% in modules with a combined value of at least 60 credits (from all final year modules), and a MMS2 of 50%

Third Class

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain

- a. an OMM of at least 40% *or*
- b. A MMFS of at least 40%

Bachelor's Degree (without Honours)

In the following case a Bachelor's degree without Honours or Pass degree may be awarded:

On the completion of an honours degree programme, to a student whose performance merits the award of a degree, but who has not achieved the requisite number of credits and is therefore not eligible for the award of a classified honours degree.

A pass degree may be awarded on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners to a student who has achieved at least 300 credits including at least 80 credits at level 6.