Degree Outcomes Statement

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Effective from August 2026

Contents

Effective from August 2026 1

1.1 Introduction 2

1.1 Purpose 2

1.2 Scope 2

1.3 Applicability 2

2.0 Definitions 2

2.1 Key terms 2

2.2 Acronyms 2

3.0 Statement Overview 3

4.0 Degree Outcomes Statement 5

4.1 Institutional degree classification profile 5

4.2 Good Practice and Teaching and Learning Enhancement Activity 6

4.3 Assessment and Marking Practices 7

4.4 Quality Assurance 8

4.5 Academic Governance 9

4.6 Classification algorithms 10

4.7 Teaching practices and learning resources 12

4.8 Future Actions 13

5.0 Monitoring Compliance 13

6.0 Supporting documents and sources of support 13

1.1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The University of Manchester has published this Degree Outcomes Statement in line with guidance from the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA). The guidance recommends that all higher education institutions (HEIs) across England publish a Statement to outline how we ensure the value of degrees are protected in line with sector-recognised standards. The Degree Outcomes Statement explains how final degree classifications are calculated, and how the University meets standards set out in Office for Students' ongoing conditions of registration (B4 and B5) and the UK Quality Code.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 The Degree Outcomes Statement provides the results of internal reflection and review of the arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment of students, academic regulations, and academic governance.

1.3 Applicability

1.3.1 This document applies to the University's undergraduate and postgraduate taught awards and to students registered on those programmes.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Key terms

2.1.1 Pedagogy: methods and practice of teaching.

2.1.2 QAA: Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education responsible for ensuring quality and standards in UK higher education.

2.2 Acronyms

2.2.1 APP: Access and Participation Plan

2.2.2 IMD: indices of multiple disadvantage

2.2.3 OBL: Online Blended Learning

2.2.4 OfS: Office for Students

3.0 Statement Overview

3.0.1 **Institutional Degree Classification Profile:** The University's Degree classification Profile shows the percentage of degree classifications awarded by the University since 2018. The University operates in accordance with the Universities UK Degree Classification: Statement of Intent, which outlines a commitment to protect the value of UK degrees. The University's Access and Participation Plan outlines the University's strategy to reduce the awarding gap between students of different sex, area backgrounds, ethnic groups, disabled and non-disabled students, and other groups who may experience barriers to higher education. The University monitors and publishes awarding gaps and the Access and Participation Strategy Group oversees the work of the University to widen participation and reduce progression and awarding gaps.

3.0.2 **Good practice and teaching and learning enhancement activity:** The Teaching Excellence team at the University deliver a number of initiatives to foster a culture of sharing good practice in teaching, learning, assessment and student support, such as the University's AdvanceHE Fellowship Scheme (formerly LEAP), the annual Teaching and Learning Conference, and the New Academics Programme. The Teaching Excellence Team develop various toolkits and resources to support teaching staff to enhance their practice.

3.0.3 **Assessment and marking practices:** The Assessment Framework creates a consistent basis for the approach to assessment at the University, including conducting and undertaking assessment, and the outcomes of assessment such as marking, moderation and feedback. Details of intended learning outcomes, including how assessment criteria will enable students to demonstrate achievement of these outcomes must be published in programme specifications. The Teaching Excellence Team offer resources, such as the Online Blended Learning (OBL) toolkit, to support appropriate assessment design and promote good practice.

3.0.4 **Quality assurance:** The University of Manchester has a robust institutional framework to support consistency and alignment with expected standards and quality for all programmes. All programmes should also be aligned to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, discipline-specific Subject Benchmark Statements, and The Framework for Higher Education. Scrutiny from student partners, industry professionals, academic peers, external advisors, and external examiners is an important part of programme approval and major amendment. All colleagues are responsible for the quality assurance of programmes, and a cyclical schedule of continuous monitoring is in place to enable critical reflection on the

quality of programmes and to maintain high standards.

3.0.5 **Academic governance:** The Governance structure at the University of Manchester is comprised of several bodies. Senate acts as the University's principal academic authority and provides annual quality assurance reports to the Board of Governors. Senate is supported by several committees and groups, including two Academic Quality and Standards Committees, one for Teaching, Learning and Students, and one for Research. The Teaching, Learning and Students Committee is tasked with maintaining academic quality and standards in teaching and learning, and the enhancement of the student experience. Teaching and Learning Delivery are responsible for managing the Quality Framework, reviewing institutional teaching and learning policy and guidance, including student academic appeals and complaints, and maintaining the Student Protection Plan which identifies the risk to continuation of study for students. Any major issues that are identified are investigated by the relevant body or group and addressed.

3.0.6 **Classification algorithms:** The University's classification algorithms for its taught degree programmes are detailed in our Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations. Bachelors degree classification is determined using a weighted average for three-year degrees. These weightings are also used as a guide for four-year Bachelors programmes. For postgraduate taught students, degree classification for the award of merit and distinction is based on the weighted average mark across the programme. There may be variations to the classification algorithm, generally due to stricter requirements of professional or statutory bodies. The Degree Regulations also contain information on compensation, reassessment, and details of arrangements for considering students whose mark profiles sit in classification thresholds or borderlines. All students are informed of these classification algorithms through the Degree Regulations and School specific supplementary material.

3.0.7 **Teaching Practices and Learning Resources:** The University's strategy, Manchester 2035 sets the University's ambition for a flexible, connected and personalised learning experience. The Teaching Excellence team aim to support teaching quality and embed innovative teaching methods by enabling tailored, ongoing professional development for academic staff and the opportunity for staff to share best practice through their blog web page. Our on campus facilities include the University of Manchester Library, which provides a wide range of paper and electronic resources, and a welcoming study space for students. The Campus Masterplan, is a £1 billion ten-year plan to create a world-class campus with plans to further develop research labs, study space, and accommodation. The University also offers a range of wellbeing and support resources available to students, including the Counselling and Mental Health Service.

3.0.8 **Future actions:** There is a commitment to review this Degree Outcomes Statement

each year. The University has a wide range of plans to improve the quality of teaching, reduce differences in degree outcomes between student-groups, and improve the student experience. Annual priorities for improving teaching, learning and the student experience are approved by the Teaching, Learning and Students Committee (TLSC) each year.

4.0 Degree Outcomes Statement

4.1 Institutional degree classification profile

4.1.1 The University's degree classification profile shows the percentage of degree classifications awarded since 2018.

4.1.2 The University remains committed to the targets set out in our Access and Participation Plan and to implement strategic evidence-based interventions to remove the awarding gap for all students. While there has been welcome improvement in some gaps, including the white-Asian awarding gap, the University recognises that outcomes remain unequal for some student groups and as such sustained, evidence-led action is ongoing.

4.1.3 The University continues to see an awarding gap between white, black and Asian students. In 2022/23, the awarding gap between white and black students increased from 12.5% in 2021/22 to 18.6%, significantly higher than our milestone target. Since then, this awarding gap has decreased to 11.9% in 2023/24 and further decreased to 11.1% in 2024/25 but remains higher than our milestone target. The awarding gap between white and Asian students was 12.9% in 2022/23 and has continued to decrease to 10.5% in 2023/24 and 5.2% in 2024/25. At 0.9% we met our APP milestone target for the awarding gap between disabled and non-disabled students in 2022/23. Since then, this has increased to 2.4% in 2023/24 but has decreased slightly to 2.3% in 2024/25. The gap between IMD (indices of multiple disadvantage) Quintile 1 and 5 students has increased from 13.6% in 2021/22 to 14.3% in 2022/23. In 2023/24, this showed a further increase to 15.4% but decreased to 12.3% in 2024/25.

4.1.4 Our degree classification algorithm is available in the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations and has remained the same, aside from additional arrangements put in place during and following the Covid-19 pandemic to seek to ensure that students studying during this period were not adversely affected by the pandemic; for example, the introduction of a 1% increase in the boundary zone between classifications. In accordance with the UUK Degree Classification 'Statement of Intent', the University monitors its degree-classification profile over time, including the proportion of first-class and upper-second-class awards, and

considers relevant Office for Students analysis of unexplained changes in degree outcomes. Trends are reviewed alongside changes in student characteristics, subject mix, teaching and student support, assessment and marking practices, and the operation of the classification algorithm. Where changes cannot be adequately explained, further analysis and appropriate action are undertaken through the University's academic assurance and governance processes. The University also considers whether the design or operation of its classification algorithm could contribute to changes in the distribution of awards. Any proposed regulatory change is assessed for its impact on academic standards and on the extent to which classifications accurately reflect students' demonstrated achievement.

4.1.5 The University is firmly committed to being an open and accessible university that pro-actively seeks out students capable of benefiting from higher education. The University's strategy for widening participation is set out in our Access and Participation Plan with the Office for Students (OfS) and is overseen by the University's Access and Participation Strategy Group. The Access and Participation Plan covers the whole of the student lifecycle, from increasing the entry rates of widening participation students into higher education to improving retention and attainment rates whilst at university and supporting progression into graduate-level employment or further study.

4.2 Good Practice and Teaching and Learning Enhancement Activity

4.2.1 The Teaching Excellence Team's Website and blog posts encourage sharing of good practice in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and student support (Academic Advising). Various teaching toolkits and resources have been designed to provide ideas, strategies and techniques to support teaching staff in enhancing key areas of their teaching, learning, assessment and advising practice.

4.2.2 The Teaching Excellence Team's annual Teaching and Learning Conference facilitates the sharing of good practice and cross-disciplinary networking on strategic themes. For example, the 2025 conference explored three key themes: inclusive education, building belonging and raising student voices, and redefining learning and teaching in higher education. From these themes, engaging sessions emerged covering a broad spectrum of topics including widening access to data-science teaching, embedding diversity within the curriculum, integrating applied practice into classroom settings and exploring the impact of interdisciplinary learning. The conference is also a pipeline for sharing material to improve practice through the TEA blog and the Open Workshops Programme. Recordings and resources are also made available on the Teaching Excellence website.

4.2.3 Assessment and Feedback is a popular strand of the Teaching Excellence's Open

Workshop Programme, which runs throughout the academic year and is open to all staff.

4.2.4 A Teaching and Learning Online Network (TALON) group is well established for colleagues to share good practice and find answers to queries relating to teaching, learning or assessment, with over 600 colleagues currently signed up. This is a peer-to-peer group which is self-sustaining and has led to active collaboration on education projects. The Teaching Excellence Team coordinates the University's Advance HE Fellowship Scheme (formerly LEAP) which is accredited by AdvanceHE to make awards against Descriptors 1-4 of the UK Professional Standards Framework. As part of their award alumni are invited to share their practice via One-Minute CPD videos or case studies. The scheme is available to all staff and there are various routes for students to gain awards through participation in relevant University activities.

4.2.5 Good practice is routinely brought into the New Academics and Fellows Programme with more units being delivered collaboratively across the three Faculty pathways. New academics are supported in gaining an Advance HE fellowship which is required as part of their probation.

4.2.6 The Teaching Excellence Team has a fellowship programme for colleagues to work on strategic projects and University-wide initiatives. Fellows work closely with student partners providing employment opportunities for students and bringing students into the heart of academic development initiatives.

4.2.7 Our Teaching and Learning Excellence at Manchester webpage provides information about fostering a culture of excellence for both students and academics. This aligns with our Teaching, Learning and Students (TLS) priorities and includes some of the examples highlighted above, plus details of initiatives to prepare future leaders for a challenging, ever-changing world, for example, through Stellify (co-curricular activities and volunteering opportunities) and Ethical Grand Challenges.

4.3 Assessment and Marking Practices

4.3.1 The University has an Assessment Framework in place which governs our approach to assessment across the institution and includes policies on marking, moderation, feedback, examination board procedures and mitigating circumstances. We also have a set of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations which contain the regulations specific to a student's programme of study, including details concerning assessment and progression, reassessment and classification.

4.3.2 Processes for designing assessment are in place whereby specific assessment criteria are produced in order to demonstrate that students' intended learning outcomes are achieved. Schools publish details of their programmes' intended learning outcomes in a programme specification set up for each individual programme.

4.3.3 The Teaching Excellence Team has produced an Online and Blended Learning (OBL) Assessment Toolkit which outlines the University's key assessment principles and recommended inclusive online assessment types. This guidance has been developed to help colleagues to make decisions about assessments in an online, blended and flexible learning environment. The team also provides other resources for staff around assessment, including a contract cheating toolkit, which aims to raise awareness about contract cheating as a form of academic malpractice, and offer ways in which to combat it. More work around Assessment Security generally (anti-cheating measures) has taken place in recent years in order to identify the issues and encourage students in good practice.

4.4 Quality Assurance

4.4.1 The University of Manchester protects the integrity of its degree outcomes through a collective responsibility for quality assurance. Colleagues across the university (and where delivery takes place at a validated partner) operate closely and collaboratively, and within a robust institutional framework designed to support consistency and alignment with expected standards and quality. The University's Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Taught Collaborative Provision have undergone a major review this academic year to align with the QAA Advice and Guidance: Principle 8- Operating partnerships with other organisations.

4.4.2 Objective scrutiny is an integral component of our quality framework where student partners, industry professionals, academic peers and external examiners are a prominent feature of programme approval and major amendment processes, the latter of whom are also required to attend examination boards. Such critical inspection supports challenge, calibration and continuous improvement across and within subject areas and supports compliance with sector expectations. A coordinated programme to review practices is being strengthened across this academic year and future years, including partnering with those outside the immediacy of the Programme Team which will form part of this process.

4.4.3 A cyclical schedule of continuous monitoring, review and enhancement supports continuing dialogue and action, the maintenance of standards and the enhancement of the student experience at the University. The Annual Academic Assurance Report considers classification data as part of its scope, and an extended meeting of the Teaching, Learning and Students Committee (TLSC), provides a summative

opportunity to join up critical reflection from throughout the year. An aggregated institutional report of external examiner feedback and a summary report of those submitted by Collaborative Academic Advisors, as well as Faculty quality statements and consideration of all major changes to programme portfolios are scrutinised for their compliance with regulatory and sector requirements. This annual review of teaching and learning also ensures we can be satisfied that assessment practices have taken place in accordance with our University Assessment Framework and the University Quality Framework/programme enhancement processes, managed by Teaching and Learning Delivery, Division of Student and Academic Services (SAS).

4.4.4 External Examiners are appointed at the University at programme, subject, faculty and University level with a specific remit to ensure assessment procedures have been properly discharged, and the standard of our awards and student performance maintain at least nationally comparable standards. Faculty-approved appointments of External Examiners are subject to recruitment, induction and supporting practices to ensure their role in assuring degree outcomes are in line with QAA's core practices and expectations on externality. External examiners are asked to draw upon their comparative experience of sector norms to review all core assessments leading to classification, as well as to moderate work to reconfirm alignment and level of rigour as applied in practice by academic colleagues. Annual External Examiner reports are shared with students as part of a transparent system of quality assurance based on partnership.

4.4.5 External academic advice is an integral part of programme approval. Advisers are engaged during programme development, with their substantive feedback and the programme team's response forming part of the evidence considered at full academic approval.

4.5 Academic Governance

4.5.1 The University of Manchester's governance structure is comprised of a number of authoritative bodies, some of which include both officers of the University and lay members.

4.5.2 The Senate plays a key role in the governance of the University of Manchester, acting as the University's principal academic authority. A large number of the statutory powers reserved to Senate are regulatory in nature and control the academic business of the University. The Senate is responsible to the Board for the promotion of research and for monitoring standards in teaching.

4.5.3 Senate is supported by two Academic Quality and Standards Committees, for Teaching, Learning and Students (AQSC TLS), and for Research (AQSC-R). AQSC TLS is

tasked with assuring Senate regarding the maintenance of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning, and the enhancement of the student experience.

4.5.4 An annual assurance report regarding quality and standards for Teaching, Learning and Students is provided to AQSC TLS and the Board's Audit and Risk Committee, before the report is submitted to a joint meeting of the Board of Governors and Senate.

4.5.5 The Teaching, Learning and Students Committee (TLSC) is chaired by the Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students. Its remit is to develop, promote and monitor strategies, policies and procedures for the delivery and enhancement of teaching and learning, as well as to develop and monitor policies and procedures for the maintenance of standards and the enhancement of the student experience (undergraduate and postgraduate taught, including collaborative provision).

4.5.6 Teaching and Learning Delivery within the Division of Student and Academic Services (SAS) manages the Quality Framework, including determining the processes by which reviews of the quality and standards of educational provision and the student academic experience take place, and has responsibility for managing and reviewing institutional teaching and learning policy and guidance, including student academic appeals and complaints.

4.5.7 The University's Student Protection Plan, a requirement for HEIs from the Office for Students, contains an assessment of risks to continuation of study for students, including measures to mitigate risks and links to refund policy.

4.5.8 Any major issues that are identified or brought to our attention by External Examiners, through internal quality processes, student appeals and complaints or by student representation methods, are investigated by the relevant body or group, with actions put in place to address such issues if required.

4.6 Classification algorithms

4.6.1 The University's classification algorithms for its taught degree programmes are detailed in our Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations. If specific Schools require any variations to the classification algorithms for particular degree programmes, they must seek approval from their Faculty; generally, any such variations would only be due to stricter requirements of professional or statutory bodies.

4.6.2 Bachelors degree classification is determined using a weighted average for three-

year degrees. These weightings are also used as a guide for four-year Bachelors programmes and those which also include a study abroad year or placement, unless there are alternative requirements for external accreditation by a professional or statutory body.

4.6.3 The Undergraduate Degree Regulations provide details of arrangements for consideration of students whose mark profiles sit in classification thresholds or borderlines, including the process of classification review. After allowances have been made for mitigating circumstances, students whose weighted average at the first assessment is within the boundary zone of a degree classification (2%, or 3% for Third Class), they must be awarded the higher degree classification as long as a number of criteria are satisfied: for undergraduate students, 2/3 of the credits taken in the awarding academic year are equal to/higher than the final award (for example, if the student is in the boundary between a 2.1 and a first, 2/3 of the credits must be at 70% or higher to fulfil this criteria and award the student a first class degree).

4.6.4 For postgraduate taught students, degree classification for the award of merit and distinction is based on the weighted average mark across the programme calculated to one decimal place, where marks for individual course units are recorded as whole numbers. Detailed arrangements for students within classification boundary zones, including mark-distribution requirements, any approved taught/research-element requirements and Classification Review, are set out in the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations.

4.6.5 Students qualify for an award by accumulating the required credit and meeting the requirements set out in the relevant Degree Regulations and programme specification. Where permitted, credit may be awarded through compensation or special compensation. Reassessment arrangements vary by award, level and any approved PSRB or ESFA requirements, as set out in the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations.

4.6.6 At undergraduate level, compensation is available for a maximum of 40 credits, per level, at levels 4 and 5 of an undergraduate programme.

4.6.7 Postgraduate taught programmes can be compensated up to 40 credits for PG Diploma/Masters and 20 credits for a PG Certificate. The number of credits referred and those compensated cannot exceed half the taught credits in total. The total number of credits allowable for referral for a PG Diploma/Masters is 60, of which 40 can be compensated. For a PG Certificate, the total number of credits allowable for referral is 30 credits, of which 20 can be compensated.

4.6.8 Students are informed about these algorithms via the Degree Regulations and

programme or School specific supplementary material in their programme handbooks or School intranet. External Examiners are provided with links to the Degree Regulations and other related policies and procedures, so that they are aware of these as part of their role.

4.6.9 These algorithms and specifications of the Degree Regulations are the standard arrangements for all taught programmes, unless programmes are accredited by professional bodies which may have alternative arrangements.

4.7 Teaching practices and learning resources

4.7.1 The University's strategy, Manchester 2035, sets the University's ambition for a flexible, connected and personalised learning experience, combining high-quality in-person education, digital innovation and effective academic and student support.

4.7.2 The University's Teaching Excellence Team supports our strategic aim to deliver teaching excellence. Teaching Excellence is an academic centre created to support teaching quality, embed innovative teaching methods and lead on University-wide strategic projects. We are committed to fostering and celebrating a culture of teaching excellence. Through effective and collegial partnership, Teaching Excellence enables ongoing professional development for academic staff, supported and tailored to meet their needs, consequently supporting improvements in teaching quality and standards and thus, also improving the learning experience of students.

4.7.3 Teaching Excellence's blog web page contains regular new blog posts and provides the opportunity to share practice and experience around teaching and learning with colleagues, students and the wider public – how we Teach, Explore and Apply (as outlined in our blog pages).

4.7.4 The University's Learning and Organisational Development unit provides learning, training and development opportunities for all staff members, including for both academic and professional support staff. This, in turn, contributes to enhancing teaching and learning, and the student experience.

4.7.5 The University has a Campus Masterplan, which is a £1 billion ten-year plan to create a world-class campus for students and staff. As part of this, there has been recent substantial capital investment in teaching facilities and increased study space, including the Manchester Engineering Campus Development (MECD) now named the Nancy Rothwell Building. This building provides world-class sustainable research facilities, alongside flexible and innovative teaching and learning spaces that enable students to shape their own learning environment. Further plans are in place to develop the campus facilities to provide more research labs, teaching and study

spaces, as well as developments in student accommodation provision.

4.7.6 The University of Manchester Library provides a welcoming space for students to study, read and work, with a wide range of paper and electronic resources available to support student, and staff, learning and development. My Learning Essentials is the Library's award-winning skills programme, offering face-to-face workshops and a range of online resources for both students and staff members.

4.7.7 There are a range of wellbeing and support resources available to students (and staff members) including a student support microsite, which provides advice and information and directs students onto relevant offices, student support resources or external agencies. The Counselling and Mental Health Service provides a wide range of resources, face-to-face appointments, group sessions and online facilities for members of the University who require assistance in this area.

4.8 Future Actions

4.8.1 There is a commitment to review this Degree Outcomes Statement each year. Annual priorities for teaching, learning and improving the student experience are approved by the Teaching, Learning and Students Committee (TLSC), which works in close partnership with the Students' Union and contains student voice representation as an integral part of the group. TLSC, which reports to AQSC TLS, oversee the effective implementation of policies, procedures and structures that support these priorities across schools and faculties. The annual assurance report regarding quality and standards for Teaching, Learning and Students details the success of the implementation of these strategies and identifies areas for improvement.

5.0 Monitoring Compliance

5.0.1 Adherence against this document is expected and should be monitored by Heads of Schools (or their delegates) as part of a wider quality assurance process which supports the Annual Academic Assurance Process including, Schools, Faculties, Teaching, Learning and Students Committee, the Academic Quality Sub-Committee for Teaching, Learning and Students, and Senate.

6.0 Supporting documents and sources of support

- Undergraduate Degree Regulations
- Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations

Version amendment history box and Document control box

Version amendment history: Degree Outcomes Statement		
Version	**Date**	**Reason for change**
2.0	January 2025	Transfer of document onto new template and update to all sections, approved by TLSG Policy Review subgroup. Previous versions had been hosted on University webpages and updated annually since the document's creation in 2019.
2.1	August 2026	Minor amendments to entire document to maintain accuracy. Specifically: • Minor amendments throughout the entire document to reference the new Manchester 2035 strategy and changes to University governance structures. • Updates to 3.0.1 to include new Degree Classification data up to and including 2023/24. • Section 4.1 updated to include refreshed awarding gap data and analysis up to and including 2023/24. • 4.1.1 has been updated to reflect the University's new Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Taught Collaborative Provision.

Document control box	
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