

Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations

(to accompany the UG and PGT Degree Regulations from September 2016)

June 2016

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Purpose and Status

The purpose of this guide to the Taught Degree Regulations is to provide an explanation on the principles underpinning the Degree Regulations and their implementation following discussions with the Degree Regulations Network Group (DRNG). Note that only the University of Manchester Degree Regulations have the status of having been approved by Senate whereas this guide and accompanying glossary are intended as an aid to their understanding and have not been subject to Senate approval.

Context and versions of Degree Regulations

The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations were approved by Senate on the 2nd May 2012 and implemented for all new students from September 2012. Minor amendments were made to both sets of Degree Regulations in February 2013 and June 2014.

Further updates were made in February 2016 but the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations were superseded by updates approved by Senate in June 2016. The latest versions are therefore as follows:

- For all UG students (registered from September 2012 onwards; including those registering in September 2016), they will be subject to version 2.4 (September 2016) of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations.
- For PGT students, new students registering from September 2016 onwards will be subject to version 3.4 (September 2016) of the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations.
- Progressing PGT students (registered from 2012 but before September 2016) will be subject to the set of PGT Degree Regulations under which they registered.

Summary of versions of Degree Regulations applicable to students:

- Undergraduate Degree Regulations version 2.4 (September 2016): applicable to all progressing (from September 2012 onwards) and new UG students from September 2016.
- Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations version 3.2 (April 2014): applicable to PGT students registered between September 2012 and prior to September 2016
- Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations version 3.4 (September 2016): applicable to all *new* PGT students registering from September 2016.
- (version 3.3 of the PGT Degree Regulations was approved by Senate in February 2016 but superseded by version 3.4 approved in June 2016 and therefore never implemented).

There are additional complexities with regards to students returning from interruption and the particular set of Regulations they should be working to. Please see the section '*Students returning after Interruption*' (page 6 of this Guide).

Students may not self-select the set of Degree Regulations under which their work is assessed.

This accompanying guide should be read alongside the following documents, which are available on the TLSO website: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/>

- Work and attendance of students (Regulation XX)
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=1895>

- Glossary of terms for Degree Regulations
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=13146>
- Guidance on External Examiners Procedures
<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/external-examiners/>
- Guidance on Examination Boards
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=24362>

Further information is available at:

- Policy on Mitigating Circumstances
<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/assessment/reaching-decisions-from-assessment/mitigating-circumstances/>
- Records Retention Schedule
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=6514>
- The Assessment Framework
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=7333>

General Overview

The Regulations have been revised to ensure consistency in practice across the institution. There is still a need for some programmes to modify the Regulations for example to satisfy the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies. Where this is a requirement students must be informed via Programme Handbooks and any variances must be approved by the relevant Faculty.

The marking schemes for undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees including levels of compensation are provided in tables A, B and C at the end of this guide. Note that some programmes may adopt higher thresholds due to PSRB requirements, in which case these must be included in Programme Handbooks.

All variations from the standard University agreed Regulations must be approved by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

In addition there are areas where options exist and Schools are required to inform the Faculty and students of the regulation adopted across the school.

For UG, these are as follows:

- Schools must decide whether or not they wish to include level 4 (year 1) study in degree average calculations (see paragraphs K52 and L55 in version 2.3 of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations, and paragraphs K54 and L57 in version 2.4, from September 2016);
- and whether classification review includes the use of a Viva Voce (see Appendix A).

For PGT, the optional choice is as follows:

- School must decide whether or not the award of distinction is based on the overall average of the programme; or alternatively if it is based on the students achieving a level of distinction in

both the taught and research elements of a programme. The reason for this choice is that there are a wide range of credit weightings applied to taught and research elements across the University. Because of this choice there are two approaches to the determination of those students lying in the boundary zone for degree classification at the level of distinction (see PGT Degree Regulations Appendix A and table A1).

Throughout the Regulations there is acceptance that these can be modified in light of special circumstances, (see Policy on Mitigating Circumstances):

- <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/assessment/reaching-decisions-from-assessment/mitigating-circumstances/>

To aid communication with students an introduction to the Degree Regulations for students has been prepared for Schools/Faculties to use for inclusion in programme handbooks. This is available at

- <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/degree-regulations/faculty-school-info/>

The recording of results is based upon course unit final mark calculated as a whole number; whereas weighted degree averages for the determination of classification are calculated to one decimal place (see appendix A in the PGT and UG Regulations).

A student's final results after graduation will not indicate any special circumstances, but will have annotated course unit marks which have been compensated (c) and/or subject to referral (r). Undergraduate students marks will be reported by the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).

The following headings accord with those used in the Degree Regulations and are best read alongside the Regulations.

Credit and Award Framework

Table 1 in both the UG and PGT Degree Regulations is intended to be used for exit awards, not for deciding progression

For UG programmes the credit required to progress automatically from year 1 to year 2 is 120 credits. Standard University practice should be that Ordinary degrees are intended as an exit awards only and students are not normally expected to progress onto an Ordinary degree, for example due to course unit failure. However, students can progress onto an Ordinary degree on the basis of decisions made by a School or Faculty misconduct committee. (Please see page 15 for further information about distinguishing between the award of a Third and an Ordinary degree).

It follows that the opportunities for both UG and PGT students to exit before the end of the programme must be made clear, most notably where a student has failed the requirements of a professionally accredited programme. Updates to exit awards can normally be handled through the programme amendment process via the Faculty.

FHEQ levels have been used rather than year e.g. FHEQ level 4 is equivalent to year 1 because of possible confusion for students on part time degrees or non-credit bearing study.

FHEQ level 7 is equivalent to postgraduate study because of possible confusion for students on part time degrees or non-credit bearing study who are taking course units from lower FHEQ levels.

Title of Taught Awards

The authority to approve titles of degree awards lies with Senate.

The title of a programmes or an award will normally follow the following conventions:

The title “X” signifies that at least two thirds of the credits of the programme relate directly to the subject X.

The title “X and Y” signifies that the distinct subjects X and Y each comprise more than one third of the credits of the programme and of the credits in the final year.

The title “X with Y” signifies **either**

- (i) that subject X is studied with subject Y, where Y comprises at least one quarter but no more than one third of the credits of the programme and of the credits in the final year; **or**
- (ii) that subject X is combined with a substantial period of study Y (typically one academic year) away from the University.

The titles “X (with Y)” or “X (Y)” may be used to signify that subject X is studied with subject Y where Y is another subject or pathway that comprises less than one quarter but at least one sixth of the credits of the programme and of the credits in the final year.

Titles of awards will not normally include more than two subjects, to which “with Y” for a period of study Y as above may be added where applicable.

Duration of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes

A Degree of Master will normally be a one-year programme and the date for the end of the programme and submission of the dissertation (or equivalent) will be published in the programme handbook.

There is no set maximum Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught length of study specified in the Degree Regulations, although it is generally accepted that the period of time for part-time Degree of Masters students to complete their programmes would not exceed five academic years. The length of study for both UG and PGT students depends on whether a student has exhausted their resit opportunities, whether there are any mitigating circumstances or periods of interruption, or if there are any variances approved by the Faculty, as stated in programme handbooks. However, Schools will have to be mindful of visa requirements when taking action which may extend a student's duration of study and should also consider whether the content of the programme is still current when looking at agreeing to extend a student's length of study.

Students returning after Interruption

Students commencing their studies from September 2012 will be subject to the 2012 Degree Regulations (or the subsequent version of the Degree Regulations which were in place at the time of their registration). Students who are returning after a period of interruption should return to the set of

Degree Regulations they were originally registered upon if they have undertaken work or achieved credits which are counted towards their final degree classification.

In the case of a first year student who is returning after interruption and the work they have already undertaken is not counted in the final degree classification, they would return on the latest set of Degree Regulations if they agree to this. It is important that the student agrees to the transfer to the new set of Regulations as a condition of their return and that this is carefully documented with a transparent audit trail which would need to be available in the case of an appeal or complaint.

A second year student would normally return on the original Regulations under which they registered. However, if their first year does not count towards their final classification, they can agree to transfer to the latest Regulations. Again, there would need to be agreement from the student and a clear paper trail regarding their agreement to the transfer.

Students applying to take an interruption should be given details of how their interruption is likely to affect the set of Regulations they would return on, taking into account the fact that there could be advantages or disadvantages of transferring to a different set of Regulations.

Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (AP(E)L)

While we wish to acknowledge prior learning, it is a principle that at least half of the programme should be assessed at the University of Manchester, for UG programmes, unless (see C6 of the Undergraduate Regulations) exceptional circumstances apply.

For PGT programmes, C6 of the PGT Regulations confirms the maximum amount of credits which are permitted for each programme for AP(E)L, ranging from 15 credits for a PG Certificate to 60 credits for a Masters award.

There should be a time limit on the period between prior learning and award normally set at five years but Faculties may wish to take into account part time study. The principle is that prior learning is relevant and current to the award.

With regards to exit awards, students on both UG and PGT programmes are permitted to receive exit awards if they have AP(E)L credits in their profile, as long as at least half of their total credits have been awarded by the University of Manchester.

Rescinding Awards

It is not a right to rescind an award. All students attempting to gain admission to the University are subject to admission requirements regardless of previous enrolment status.

Students who have received an exit award as a result of academic failure may not rescind and be readmitted as they have exhausted all assessment opportunities previously.

The formal rescindment of an existing award will take place at the Examination Board, once the replacement award has been ratified.

The administrative rescindment of the award will take place after re-admittance has been accepted, using the SSO guidance and the certificate should be placed on the student's file:

- [SSO guidance on readmit and rescinded awards](#)

If due to failure, the subsequent award is not conferred, the original award will remain in place and the original certificate returned to the student.

The University is able to rescind an award when academic misconduct has been proven after graduation, in accordance with [Statute XX](#) paragraph 7.

Assessment and Progression

For undergraduate Programmes, progression is based upon obtaining sufficient credit e.g. 120c to progress from level 4 to level 5, 240c to progress from level 5 to level 6. Students who fail more than two thirds i.e. 80 credits are deemed to have failed the level and paragraph D12 sets out the options available to Examinations Boards.

Excluding the requirements of programmes with Professional accreditation, progression in postgraduate programmes is often determined at the transition from taught to research element. Given the variation in forms and timing of the research element the requirement for this progression should be determined by the programme and stated in the Programme Handbook.

Compensation

Compensation of failed course units is a measure to reduce the need for referral assessment where the student has demonstrated academic ability.

Some programmes e.g. due to professional accreditation requirements may wish to adopt higher standards such as not allowing compensation. In such cases these must be agreed by the Faculty and included in Programme Handbooks.

Credit-rated experience away from the University, such as certain types of study abroad that constitute part of the credit of a UoM programme, may be compensated.

Unless the unit has been defined as non-compensatable, compensation is normally automatic; however, under Paragraphs E21 of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations and E15 of the Postgraduate Taught Regulations, the decision on how to apply compensation is at the discretion of the Examination Board.

Undergraduate Compensation

Compensation of failed course units is a measure to reduce the need for referral assessment where the student has demonstrated academic ability through passing at least two thirds i.e. 80 credits at levels 4 and 5. In the final year a different process applies and is referred to as 'Special Compensation' (see section J of the Undergraduate Regulations).

Compensation for undergraduates applies to marks between 30 and 39 (see appendix A of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Table A in this guide).

Please see the following example.

Box 1 An example of end of year compensation and referral decisions for a 120 credit undergraduate programme

Course unit	credit	mark%	(P pass, C compensatable fail, R uncompensatable fail)
A	20	55	P
B	20	38	C
C	20	60	P
D	20	40	P
E	10	70	P
F	10	65	P
G	10	25	R
H	10	35	C

In this example the student has passed 80 credits, they have gained a compensatable fail in course unit B and course unit H but have failed course unit G. The student would normally be compensated in course units B and H, to a total of 30 credits which is within the maximum allowable of 40 credits, (assuming the compensated course units are not compulsory and that additional accreditation rules do not apply- if there are such additional requirements e.g. for professional degree programmes they will be explained in the programme handbook).

The student in this case has failed course unit G and will have to resit this examination known as a referral. If the mark gained after the resit examination is 45% the student will have gained sufficient credits i.e. 120 to progress to the next year of study. The mark recorded for this student in course unit G will be 30 as this is the maximum allowable for a referral when the first sitting mark was an uncompensatable fail.

In the event of a student failing a course unit with a mark less than 30, and then obtaining a compensatable fail in the resit where there is compensation available, the student would receive the credit and pass the year overall. The student's mark would be capped at 30R.

Postgraduate Compensation

At postgraduate level, it is felt that the University should increase standards and require students to only be compensated up to 30 credits for PG Diploma/Masters or 15c for PG certificate.

Compensation for postgraduates applies to marks between 40 and 49 for Masters programmes and between 30 and 39 for PGDip/ PGCert programmes (see tables B and C in this guide, page 20)

Note that postgraduate dissertations are normally not compensatable because of their high credit weighting, but a failed dissertation can be resubmitted, as long as it achieves a mark of 30 or above (see paragraphs F23 to F25 of the PGT Degree Regulations).

Reassessment

Undergraduate Reassessment

Reassessment is available for undergraduate course units with marks below compensation i.e. 29 or less; or where more than 40 credits are in the compensation zone. Note that reassessment is not available for improving marks. The Examination Board should decide which course units should be referred e.g. when more than the maximum allowable are in the compensation zone.

The UG Degree Regulations state that reassessment may be taken unless in the final year (or level 6) of a Bachelors degree or the final years of an integrated masters (level 6 or 7). For clarification, work which was undertaken in any year preceding the final year of a programme can be reassessed (or referred) in the final year (subject to the referral limits set out in the Degree Regulations). Similarly, work/assessments from the any year preceding the final year that are deferred due to mitigating circumstances, can be taken in the final year. However, work which was undertaken as part of the final year of a programme cannot be reassessed during the final year. This is where 'special compensation' may apply.

In order to record student achievement rather than failure the uncompensatable fail mark can be replaced in final degree classification with the mark gained in referral to a maximum of the lower limit of compensation, which is 30%. This will show on a student's transcript as 30R. The reason for capping a referral mark is not to disadvantage students who have already been compensated hence not allowed to resit such courses for a higher mark.

For all referred assessment, the original pass mark will stay the same; therefore for Undergraduate referred assessment, a student will have to achieve a mark of 40 to pass, but this mark will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark (30%). This includes dissertations.

Referrals are capped at the lowest compensatable mark (30%). The capped mark is applied to the unit level mark, not just the failed element.

In the event of a student failing a course unit with a mark less than 30, and then obtaining a compensatable fail in the resit where there is compensation available, the student would receive the credit and pass the year overall. The student's mark would be capped at 30R. Where students are permitted a resubmission following the application of a penalty due to academic malpractice, the resubmission is capped at 30R.

Box 2 An example of end of year compensation and referral decisions for a 120 credit undergraduate programme

Course unit	credit	mark%	(P pass, C compensatable fail, R uncompensatable fail)
A	20	30	C
B	20	38	C
C	20	60	P
D	20	40	P
E	10	70	P
F	10	65	P
G	10	25	R
H	10	35	C

In this example the student has passed 60 credits, they have gained a compensatable fail in course unit, A, B and course unit H but have an uncompensatable fail in course unit G, (assuming the compensated course units are not compulsory and that additional accreditation rules do not apply- if there are such additional requirements e.g. for professional degree programmes they will be explained in the programme handbook).

As the student has compensatable fails of more than 40 credits, in this case 50 credits, they cannot all be compensated. In these circumstances the Regulations require the Examination Board to make the decision which course unit (s) should be compensated fails and which are uncompensatable fails. The reason for this is that the composition of the assessment might need to be taken into account, also the course unit credits along with the need to pass compulsory courses.

In this example let us assume the Examination Board concludes the 10 credit course H should not be compensated, the two 20credit course units A and B are compensated and the student will resit course units G and H.

Postgraduate Reassessment

Reassessment is available for course units with marks below compensation or where more than allowable number of course units have been compensated. Note that reassessment is not available for improving marks. The Examination Board should decide which course units should be referred e.g. when more than the maximum allowable are in the compensation zone.

In order to record student achievement rather than failure the fail mark can be replaced in final degree classification with the mark gained in referral to a maximum of the lower limit of compensation. The reason is not to disadvantage students who have already been compensated hence not allowed to resit such course units for a higher mark.

For all referred assessment, the original pass mark will stay the same; therefore for Postgraduate Taught referred assessment, a student will have to achieve a mark of 50 to pass, but this mark will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark (40%), unless the previous mark was within the compensation zone, in which case the original mark will stand. This includes dissertations.

In theory a student could pass all course units e.g. with marks of 50 for a Masters programme with some at the level compensation and this would produce an overall average below 50%. For this reason the classification of pass degree at masters in table A1 (PGT Degree Regulations) is set at 59.9% or less providing the credit requirement from Table 1 in the degree regulations is satisfied; i.e. passing 180 credits for a Masters irrespective of the average

programme weighting. It is key to remember that the award is based on the achievement of required amount of credit rather than the average mark.

Paragraph F26 of the PGT Regulations state that “Referral pass marks will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark for Postgraduate Taught students, unless the previous mark was within the compensation zone, in which case the original mark will stand. This mark is used in the weighted average mark for the final award. The capped mark is applied to the unit level mark, not the failed element.” It should be noted that it is the *unit level mark* which is capped, *not* the failed element. Some of the principles behind the way referrals are handled are as follows:

- If a student passes a course unit by resit, then they should not end up with a lower mark than they obtained at the first sit. So if a PGT student gets 45% in the first sit (which is a fail), and then they get 60% in the resit, then their final mark should be 45R and not 40R.
- A student who got a low mark in the first sit of an exam should not gain an advantage compared to a student who got a relatively good mark in the first sit. So, for example, if a PGT student got 23% in the first sit and then 60% in the resit, their final mark will be 40R. That is, their resit mark is capped at the compensation level. This final mark is lower than that of the student in the first example, above, as intended.

So the basic rule is that if the student **passes** the resit, then the resit mark is capped at the compensation level. However, if the original first-sit mark was in the compensation range, then this original mark is retained.

However, if a student **fails**, then the first-sit mark stands and would be recorded without a suffix of ‘R’.

Re-sitting a failed component to meet programme or Professional Body requirements

Where a variation to the Degree Regulations has been approved, in cases where an undergraduate student is required to re-sit a failed component of a unit in the final year (even though they may have achieved an average pass mark in the unit) in order to meet the requirements of the programme or of a professional body, the marks will be capped at the pass mark to determine the class of degree awarded to the student.

Carrying forward failed credit on Undergraduate Programmes

It is agreed that a student can take up to 20 failed credits in attendance, but this should be a decision of the Examination Board and not a right, and should be taken with due consideration of the burden on the student the availability of facilities. The intention is that the 20 credits would be taken **in addition to** the 120 credits required for the subsequent year so they would study 130/140 credits in a year, not just the 10/20. The Examination Board would have to make the decision based on whether the student is able to pass with a heavier load. This may not be in their best interests but there might be some students who are capable of redeeming themselves.

Undergraduate students permitted to carry 20 credits into a subsequent year will not be charged any additional tuition fee but will be required to cover any additional costs associated with the course unit(s) concerned, e.g. mandatory field trips.

Resit without Attendance

Significant discussion took place in the development stages of the Taught Degree Regulations concerning carrying forward fails, studying and resitting these without attendance. 'Resit without Attendance' has the potential to be a poor experience for students as they can be unsupported and this status can place students in an invidious position with regards their unemployment and visa status. As a result resit without attendance is to be avoided unless exceptional e.g. mitigating circumstances apply. Staff members must seek advice from the Student Immigration Team (visa@manchester.ac.uk) with regards to students on a Tier 4 visa in respect of Resit without Attendance.

Exit Awards

See table 1 (Credit and Award Framework) in both the UG and PGT Degree Regulations. The opportunities for a student to exit before the end of the programme must be made clear, most notably where a student has failed the requirements of a professionally accredited programme. Updates can normally be handled through the degree amendment process.

Repeating the Level/Year (or part of a year)

This is a decision of the Examination Board and not a right on either UG or PGT programmes.

If a student has failed the level/year, the Examination Board can make the decision to permit the student to repeat the year (or part thereof).

If a student fails and is allowed to repeat, fees are payable for the repeated period of study:

Undergraduate students permitted to repeat a year of study are charged full tuition fees at the rate applicable for the academic year concerned. As mentioned above under '*Carrying forward failed credit on Undergraduate Programmes*', Undergraduate students permitted to carry 20 credits into a subsequent year will not be charged any additional tuition fee but will be required to cover any additional costs associated with the course unit(s) concerned, e.g. mandatory field trips.

If there are proven mitigating circumstances and the School feels that they are serious enough, they can decide that a student shouldn't be charged fees to repeat the period of study, but the final decision would be a School one.

Classification

Classification in Postgraduate Taught programmes

As noted above, if a student gains the required credit listed in Table 1 of either the UG or PGT Degree Regulations, they are eligible for that award e.g. 180 credits for 1 year Masters programme.

Course unit marks are recorded as whole numbers; weighted averages are calculated to one decimal point.

Overall average is based upon course unit credit weighting.

In addition there is one regulation where an option exists and Schools are required to inform the Faculty and students of the regulation adopted across the school. This is whether the award of distinction (see paragraph H34 of the PGT Degree Regulations) is based on the overall average across the programme; or alternatively the level of distinction must be obtained in both taught and research i.e. dissertation elements. The reason for this choice is that there are a wide range of credit weightings applied to taught and research elements across the University. Because of this choice there are two approaches to the determination of those students lying in the boundary zone for degree classification at the level of distinction (see PGT Degree Regulations Appendix A and table A1).

Appendix A of the PGT Regulations states that a student whose total mark at the first assessment is within the specified boundary zone found in table A1, must be considered for the higher award; this relates to students who fall within the boundary zones between pass/merit and merit/distinction.

Students who lie within the pass/merit boundary zone can be considered for the higher award if they have some compensation or resits within their profile, as long as they have achieved at least 120 out of 180 credits.

Students who lie within the merit/distinction boundary can only be considered for the award of distinction if they have no compensation or resits within their profile.

The Regulations state that students should be “considered” for the higher award. Award of the higher classification is automatic if the criteria are met.

Final Year of an Undergraduate (including Integrated Masters) programme

A student must be awarded 360 credits for a 3 year Bachelors degree and 480 credits for a four year Integrated Masters degree; hence allowance must be made for course unit failure in the final year(s) as there are no referrals. Paragraphs J48 to J50 are based upon the existing Degree Regulations and allow up to 40 credits to be failed for 2:2; 2:1 and 1st class degrees; and up to 60c for third class degrees. Note that there is no change in marks as this ‘special’ compensation is for credit only.

Classification of Integrated Masters Programmes

The principle of level/year weightings is that early year(s): final year(s) of the Integrated Masters are weighed 1:2 e.g. 0; 0.2; 0.4; 0.4 (level 4 to 7).

Programmes may decide to include level 4 (year 1) performance in degree classification or not. This is a pedagogic decision based on the curriculum and/or professional requirements. This decision must be contained in Programme Handbooks and communicated to the Faculty.

Course unit marks are recorded as whole numbers; weighted averages are calculated to one decimal point.

Classification in Bachelors Programmes

The principle of level/year weightings is that earlier year(s): final year of the Bachelor degree are weighed 1:2 e.g. 0; 0.33; 0.67 (level 4 to 6).

Programmes may decide to include level 4 (year 1) performance in degree classification or not. This is a pedagogic decision based on the curriculum and/or professional requirements. This decision must be contained in Programme Handbooks and communicated to the Faculty.

Course unit marks are recorded as whole numbers; weighted averages are calculated to one decimal point.

Classification in cases of Direct Entry students

When students have been accepted onto a year after the first year of study, the weighting across the remaining years of the programme should be calculated on the following basis.

From the implementation of the 2012 Degree Regulations onwards, Schools/Faculties have been asked to state the weighting for each year of a three or four year undergraduate degree, e.g. for a three year Bachelors programme, Y1 to Y3 (L4 to 6 FHEQ) using weights of 0.0 (L4), 0.33 (L5), and 0.67 (L6) or Y1 to Y3 (L4 to 6 FHEQ) using weights of 0.1 (L4), 0.3 (L5), and 0.6 (L6).

If a student bypasses year 1 by directly entering in year 2 of a Bachelors programme for which the School/Faculty has opted for the second choice of weighting (0.1/0.3/0.6), the weighting for the final two years of the programme should be 0.33/0.67 in order to retain the same ratios of weightings for the final two years.

When a student enters by direct entry purposes into year 3 of a four-year programme, the same principles would apply to weighting of the remaining years, in order to retain the same ratios.

In cases where a student is admitted with direct entry into the final year (year 3 of a three-year programme or year 4 of a four-year programme), all the weighting would be based on marks achieved in year 3.

Distinguishing between the award of a Third and an Ordinary Degree

In boundary zone	Other stipulations	Resulting award or classification
37.0 to 39.9	- Have a total of at least 300 credits with 60 credits at Level 6 - Meet the criteria set at top of page 11 of UG Degree Regulations (i.e. 2/3 of the credits at Level 6 are equal to/higher than the classification threshold of a Third – 40.0)	Student is awarded a Third class degree
37.0 to 39.9	- Have a total of at least 300 credits with 60 credits at Level 6 - Do not meet the criteria above	Student is awarded an Ordinary degree.
36.9 or less	Have a total of at least 300 credits with 60 credits at Level 6	Student is awarded an Ordinary degree.

Examination Board Arrangements

When decisions are made regarding student progression, this must be conducted by an Examination Board. Often review of semester 1 results, e.g. in February, are for moderation and do not require decisions on progression. The role of the External Examiner is governed by the 'Guidance on External Examiner Procedures'. This will clarify Year 1 and Year 2 progression decisions and the review of referral results.

Appendix A – Undergraduate Classification Scheme

The figure below presents the steps for calculation of programme average, determination of classification, consideration of students in the boundary zone through mark distribution followed by classification review. (Please also refer to 'Appendix C – Classification Review Guidance' for further details of Classification Review).

Two key considerations arise, firstly the use of External Examiners in classification review; secondly the use or not of a viva voce to determine degree classification of those in the boundary zone. Many programmes will not find the use of a viva voce suitable; those that do opt for viva to conclude classification review are required to gain prior Faculty approval (see guidance on use of viva voce below).

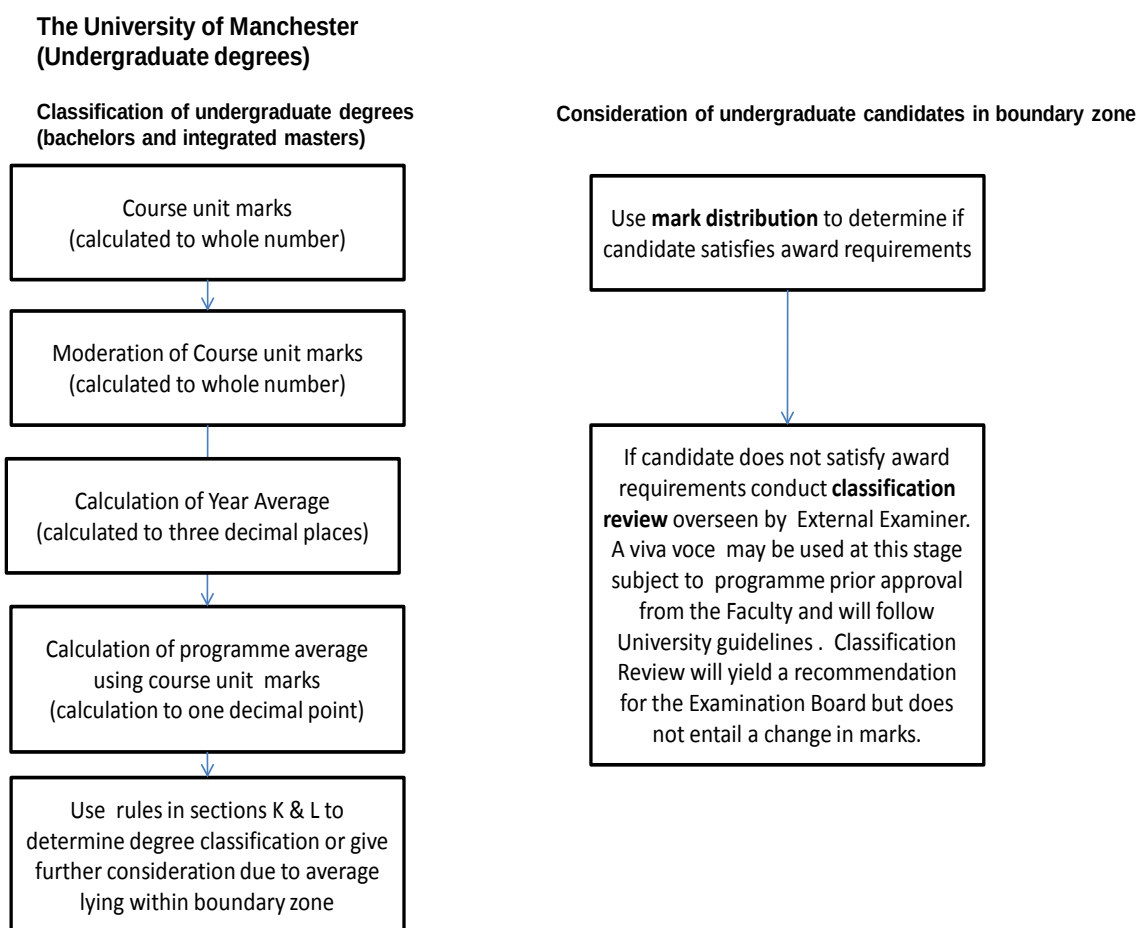


Figure 1 Flow chart for undergraduate degree classification

Mark distribution i.e. pattern of final year assessment is conducted before classification review and those students who gain a higher classification based on their mark distribution are not then subject to classification review. The use of 75 credits for Integrated Masters and 80 credits for bachelor degree

in the Degree Regulations is because the former can include level 7 courses taught as 15 credit course units whereas course units at levels 4, 5 and 6 are in multiples of 10 credits.

Classification review is based upon inspection of a final year student's work to determine whether there are any academic grounds for the award of a higher degree. Note that this does not involve changing marks and that External Examiners should support this process e.g. through advice on standards but they are not expected to act as a 'third examiner'. This holistic approach is to ensure that every consideration has been given to marginal candidates. Classification review will make recommendation to the Examination Board, which will take the decision on degree classification.

University of Manchester course unit marking scheme for undergraduate students

Table A. Undergraduate course unit marking scheme

Mark (class) descriptor	Mark range (whole numbers)
First Class	70 to 100
Upper Second	60 to 69
Lower Second	50 to 59
Third	40 to 49
Compensatable fail	30 to 39
Non-compensatable fail	Less than 30

Use of *Viva Voce* for Undergraduate students during Classification Review

(Please also see Appendix C – Classification Review Guidance).

1. The *viva voce* guidelines presented here are for Classification Review of borderline candidates. This does not preclude other meetings between External Examiners and students nor programme nor course unit oral examinations.
2. Degree programmes wishing to use the a *viva voce* during Classification Review will need to obtain Faculty approval based upon:
 - Preparation of students for oral examination of their work as evidenced by programme intended learning outcomes.
 - Notification to students of use of *viva voce* in programme handbooks with advice on what to expect and how to prepare.
 - Arrangements for the prior notification to students on *viva* arrangements and date(s).
 - Suitable logistical arrangements for numbers of candidates and external examiner(s).

The rest of these guidelines apply only to programmes that are using a *viva voce* during Classification Review of borderline students.

3. A major role of the Preliminary Examination Board meeting will be to consider which borderline students should receive a *viva voce* examination.
4. Immediately following the Preliminary meeting of the Examination Board, a list of students for *viva voce* examination should be sent to External Examiner(s) along with the marks and any other information that the External Examiner may request.
5. Following the preliminary meeting of the Examination Board a list of all candidates selected for *viva* will be emailed to all students on the programme and a list will made available in the School. The onus will be on the student to ascertain whether or not they are required for a *viva voce* examination. The programme Examination Officer will be responsible for informing students of the method by which they can obtain this information.
6. The *viva* will be conducted by one or more External Examiners. The Programme Director (or suitable deputy) will also be present as an observer and will take notes on the *viva* which may be used to assist the Examination Board in making a decision on final degree classifications.
7. The content of the *viva* will be decided by the External Examiner(s) who will make recommendations to the Examination Board but these will not be conveyed to the student at the end of the *viva*.

Appendix B – Postgraduate Degree Classification Scheme

The figure below presents the steps for calculation of programme average, determination of classification, consideration of students in the boundary zone through mark distribution followed by classification review. We have not approved the use of *viva voce* to determine postgraduate degree classification because of problems around equal treatment of students following the completion of the course i.e. a viva would normally take place at the time of the final Examinations Board when some students would not be available. This does not preclude the use of oral assessments as part of the programme but the principle of equal treatment for students must be upheld. A key consideration concerns the use of External Examiners in classification review.

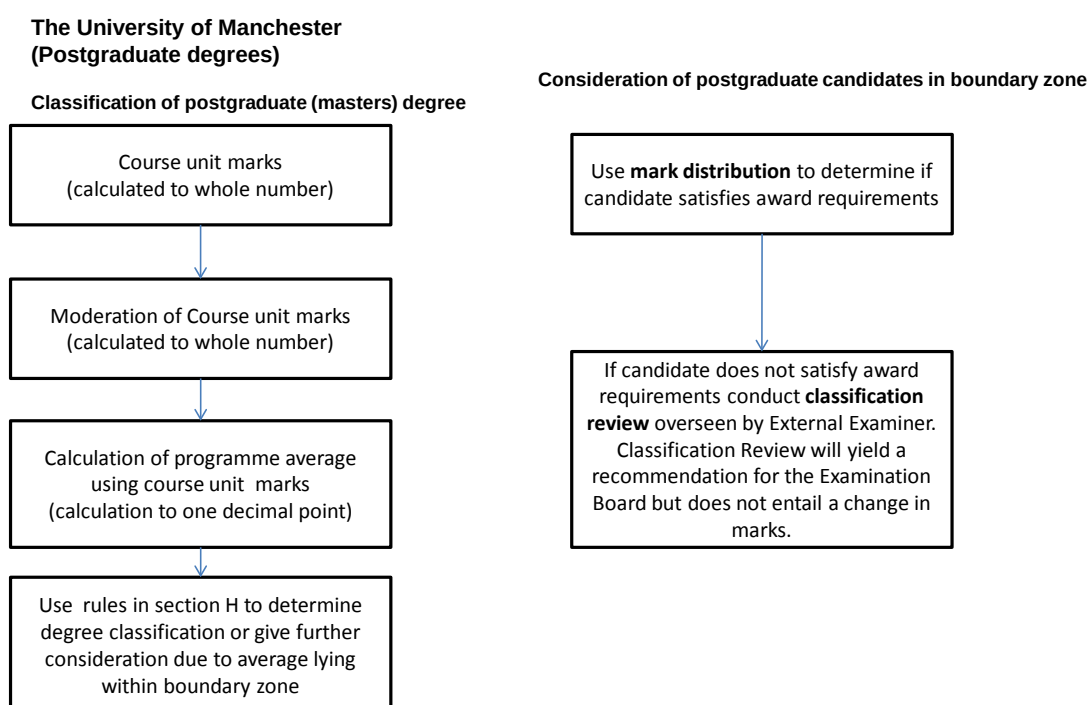


Figure 2 Flow chart for postgraduate degree classification

Mark distribution i.e. pattern of marks obtained is conducted before classification review and those students who gain a higher classification based on their mark distribution are not then subject to classification review. Note that boundary zone conditions are specified differently for those following the award of distinction based upon programme average as opposed the award of distinction based upon both taught and research elements.

Classification review is based upon inspection of the student's marks to determine whether there are any academic grounds for the award of a higher degree. Note that this does not involve changing marks and that External Examiners should support this process e.g. through advice on standards but they are not expected to act as a 'third examiner'. This holistic approach is to ensure that every

consideration has been given to marginal candidates. Classification review will make recommendation to the Examination Board, which will take the decision on degree classification. If a student's classification is raised as a result of classification review, this would not be noted on the student's transcript.

University of Manchester course unit marking scheme for Postgraduate Taught students

Table B Postgraduate (Masters) course unit marking scheme

Mark (class) descriptor	Mark range (whole numbers)
Distinction	70 to 100
Merit	60 to 69
Pass	50 to 59
Compensatable fail	40 to 49
Non-compensatable fail	<u>39 or less</u>

Table C Postgraduate (Dip, Cert.) course unit marking scheme

Mark (class) descriptor	Mark range (whole numbers)
Pass	40 or more
Compensatable fail	30 to 39
Non-compensatable fail	<u>29 or less</u>

Appendix C – Classification Review Guidance

Classification Review (formerly referred to as Mark Review) is very difficult to prescribe as its purpose is to allow some flexibility to apply academic judgement to borderline cases, when a mechanistic approach is inappropriate, in exceptional cases.

Classification Review applies to students in the boundary zone and after the mark distribution rule has been applied. It provides a final opportunity for an Examination Board to use its academic judgement on degree classification for those who remain in the boundary zone.

It is **NOT** the intention that every student who is in the boundary zone and does not meet the criteria for a higher classification is subject to Classification Review. It allows the Examination Board to consider those cases which it believes as a group, merits further consideration.

It is difficult to be prescriptive on what circumstances might merit a subsequent review, as this falls within the realms of academic judgement. Therefore, the judgement of which cases should be subject to Classification Review is at the discretion of the Examination Board and must have the support of External Examiner(s).

To guide this judgement, Classification Review should be used in exceptional circumstances with the expectation that the majority of students in the boundary who do not satisfy the rule for mark distribution should not be raised to a higher degree classification.

It is not the case when a final year set of marks show a lack of progression which is disappointing but reflects the achievement of the student. In many programmes there will be no need for Classification Review to be applied.

Students who fall into the boundary zone, who have credits awarded via Special Compensation may also be considered for Classification Review as follows:

- An Undergraduate student who had failed 40 credits at Level 6 with an overall mark of less than 40 would not be eligible for a referral, but may be considered for Classification Review, with academic discretion being used to determine whether the student should receive, for example, a Third Class Honours Degree or an Ordinary Degree if their numerical classification merits that.
- Undergraduate students who have more than 40 and up to 60 credits of Special Compensation should not be considered under Classification Review, as this would be counterintuitive to paragraph 48 of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations, which requires a penalty of a reduction of one classification to be applied due to failing more than 40 and up to 60 credits.

Below are a few principles to assist Schools in the operation of Classification Review:

1. Classification Review does not remark or change marks.
2. Classification Review can only result in an increase in class to those cases which are in the borderlines and/or do not meet the criteria for the higher class for PGT programmes..
3. Classification Review does not result in a lower classification.
4. Not every student in the boundary zone is eligible to receive a Classification Review.
5. The Examination Board can exercise its collective academic judgement in deciding which cases can be subject to Classification Review.

6. Classification Review allows an Examination Board to reflect on the near misses, which do not meet the criteria for a higher class and confirm the decision was correct.
7. During Classification Review, External Examiners approve the rationale to increase a class; they do not look at individual assessments or remark.
8. Classification Review allows Boards scope for academic judgement in exceptional circumstances.

Applications for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account are subject to a different process and Examination Boards should ensure there is no duplication of consideration of mitigation during Classification Review.

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