

Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations

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Effective from September 2026

***This version of the Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations applies to taught students who commenced their programme of study on or after 1st September 2026. For further information, see section 1.3 Applicability.**

Read this if: You are a staff member or taught student at the University of Manchester who is reading the Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations. This Guide provides further context and examples to aid understanding and implementation of the regulations.

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Definitions

Key terms

All key terms for this document, as well as the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations can be found in the [Taught Degree Regulations Glossary of Terms](#).

Acronyms

PSRB - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies

ESFA - Education and Skills Funding Agency

UG – Undergraduate

PGT – Postgraduate Taught

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this guide is to provide an explanation on the principles underpinning the Degree Regulations and their implementation. 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.
- 1.1.2 The section headings of this document align with those in the Degree Regulations. This guide must be read alongside the Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Degree Regulations. The latest versions of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations can be found at: [Degree Regulations | Teaching and Learning Delivery | StaffNet | The University of Manchester](#).

1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 This guide applies to all Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught programmes at the University of Manchester. It expands on and explains **the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations**, providing practical context and clarification to support their consistent interpretation and application.

- 1.2.2 This Guide applies to the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations approved from September 2026 (V3.1 and V4.1 respectively), and cannot be applied to previous versions. Previous versions of both the Guide and the Degree Regulations can be found at: [Degree Regulations | Teaching and Learning Delivery | StaffNet | The University of Manchester](#).
- 1.2.3 The Guide is intended for use by staff and students as an explanatory aid. It does **not** replace or override the Degree Regulations, which are the authoritative, Senate-approved requirements.
- 1.2.4 In addition to the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations, this accompanying guide should be read alongside the following documents:
- [Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of students \(Regulation XX\)](#)
 - [Glossary of terms for Degree Regulations](#)
 - [Guidance on External Examiners Procedures](#)
 - [Guidance on Examination Boards](#)

1.3 Applicability

- 1.3.1 This document applies to the September 2026 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree Regulations, and the taught students registered from this date onwards.
- 1.3.2 Students registered prior to September 2026 will remain under the same set of Degree Regulations outlined in their offer letter throughout their entire programme of study, including students who repeat an entire academic year of study.
- 1.3.3 Applicability of the regulations by cohort are outlined in the table below:

Table 1: Applicability of Degree Regulations by Entry Year

Student status	Academic year 2026/27 regulations applied
Student first registered on a programme from September 2026 onwards	NEW: September 2026 Degree Regulations
Student first registered on a programme before September 2026	OLD: Pre-September 2026 Degree Regulations

Student first registered before September 2026 and required to repeat an entire year of study in 2026/27- (this includes repeating postgraduate programmes and repeating the first year of an undergraduate programme).	OLD: Pre-September 2026 Degree Regulations
Student who commenced a foundation year in 2025/26 , where the foundation year is integrated into the degree programme (e.g. 1+3) and no application through admissions was required for 2026/27.	OLD: Pre-September 2026 Degree Regulations
Student who commenced a foundation year in 2025/26 , where the foundation year is not integrated , and the student re-applied through admissions for entry in 2026/27.	NEW: September 2026 Degree Regulations
Student is returning from interruption in 2026/27 and first registered on a programme before September 2026.	OLD: Pre-September 2026 Degree Regulations
Student first registered on a programme before September 2026 but is course changing to a new programme after September 2026.	If the student receives a new offer letter from Admissions for 2026, then the NEW September 2026 Degree Regulations will apply If the student did not need to reapply through Admissions but transferred internally, they will remain on the OLD pre-September 2026 Degree Regulations.

- 1.3.4 Students commencing their studies will be subject to the version of the Degree Regulations which were in place at the time of their registration.
- 1.3.5 Students who are returning after a period of interruption will be subject to the version of the Degree Regulations that were applicable when they first registered on their programme of study, unless the student grants fully informed consent to move onto the latest version of the Degree Regulations at their return-to-study meeting with the programme team. Students will not be asked to accept any latest versions of the Degree Regulations if they are less favourable to them. ([See Staff Guidance for Interruptions Section 3.4.2](#)).
- 1.3.6 The version of the Degree Regulations applicable to each student will be recorded in Campus Solutions and this information will be made available to the relevant Examination Board.

2.0 The Guide

2.1 General Overview

- 2.1.1 The Regulations are written 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 (PSRBs), the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), or to fit non-standard programmes for example, part time programmes, or programmes with a start date other than September. Where this is a requirement, students must be informed via Programme Handbooks and any variances must be approved through the [Variations to Degree Regulations Process](#).
- 2.2.2 Throughout the Regulations there is acceptance that modifications can be made as a result of approved mitigating circumstances (see [Policy on Mitigating Circumstances](#)).

3.0 Credit and Award Framework

Please refer to Section A of the UG and/or PGT Regulations

- 3.0.1 The UG and PGT regulations use [The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) (FHEQ) levels instead of the year number. For example, FHEQ level 4 is used instead of year 1 to encompass all student journeys.
- 3.0.2 Table 1 in Section A of the UG and PGT regulations sets out the credit requirements for University taught awards. It is used to set out the minimum credit requirements for progression from one level to another and for final awards, in accordance with the Programme Specification and Degree Regulations (Section D UG Regulations and Section E PGT Regulations). It is also used to decide the appropriate exit awards for students leaving the programme part-way through, again in accordance with the Degree Regulations and Programme Specification. More information on exit awards can be found in [section 10](#) of this document, and section J of the UG and PGT regulations.
- 3.0.3 Standard University practice should be that Ordinary degrees are intended as an exit award only and that 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 [Section 12](#) further information about distinguishing between the award of a Third and an Ordinary degree).

- 3.0.4 Opportunities for both UG and PGT students to exit before the end of the programme must be made clear in the programme handbook, 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](#).

3.1 Duration of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes

- 3.1.1 For students who began their programme after September 2026, a maximum study period applies as per A3 in the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations. This is normally two years beyond the standard duration of the programme.

Table 2: Illustrating maximum period of registration for students commencing different programmes after September 2026 (*these examples are not exhaustive*)

Programme	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33
3-year, full-time UG	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Within maximum period of registration		Outside maximum period of registration	
4-year, full-time UG	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Within maximum period of registration		Outside maximum period of registration
1-year, full-time PGT	Year 1	Within maximum period of registration		Outside maximum period of registration			
2-year, part-time PGT	Year 1	Year 2	Within maximum period of registration		Outside maximum period of registration		

- 3.1.2 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.

4.0 Title of Taught Awards

Please refer to Section B of the UG and/or PGT Regulations

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

4.1 Clarification for award titles shown as "X (with Y)" or "X (Y)"

- 4.1.1 B6 (d) of the UG and PGT regulations outline the credit requirements for programmes with a bracketed specialism. Where "Y" is a *related specialist subject* of "X", credits from both "X" and "Y" can be counted together when checking whether the programme meets the requirement that at least two thirds of the credits (including in the final year of UG programmes) relate to subject "X", as set out in B6 (a). This is because "Y" is closely linked to "X" and forms part of the same overall subject area, rather than being a separate discipline.

Table 3: Examples of different award titles

Award Title Convention	Example Degree Title
"X"	BA Archaeology
"X and Y"	BSc Computer Science and Mathematics
"X with Y"	BSc Life Sciences with French
"X (with Y)" or "X(Y)"	BSc Management (Accounting and Finance)
"X (with Y) with Z*"	BSc Management (Human Resources) with Industrial/Professional Experience
*Z may be added as a suffix for a substantial period of study away from the University.	

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

Please refer to Section C of the UG and/or PGT Regulations)

- 5.0.1 The Degree Regulations detail the minimum requirements for AP(E)L, but colleagues and students should read and understand the [Principles and Guidance for the Application of AP\(E\)L](#) in full for more details.
- 5.0.2 C7 of the UG and PGT Degree Regulations states that 'to apply for AP(E)L, evidence of prior learning must date from within 5 years of the application', but Faculties may wish to take into account part-time study.
- 5.0.3 Students who require further advice and support for understanding AP(E)L should speak to their Academic Advisor in the first instance.

6.0 Rescinding Awards

Please refer to Section D of the PGT Regulations

- 6.0.2 All students attempting to gain admission to the University are subject to admission requirements regardless of previous enrolment status.
- 6.0.3 The formal rescindment of an existing award will be ratified by the Examination Board. Formal rescindment may also be ratified on behalf of the Examination Board by Chair's Action.
- 6.0.4 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](#)
- 6.0.5 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.
- 6.0.6 The University is able to rescind an award when academic misconduct within the award has been proven after graduation, in accordance with 'Ordinance XXXVIII: Degrees and other academic distinctions', paragraph 7 (see [Schedule of Ordinances](#)).
- 6.0.7 For further information about rescinding awards, please see the Appendix to the [Guidance on Examination Boards](#).

Example 1: Postgraduate Taught student requests to rescind an award to study a higher award

A student is studying on a Masters programme and decides to withdraw before completing the dissertation component. They have met the requirements outlined in **Table 1: Postgraduate Credit and Award Framework** in the [Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations](#) and their programme specification to be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma.

3 years later, they decide to apply to return to the University to complete the full masters award by completing the dissertation. The content of the programme is still relevant and so their application is accepted on the basis that they will rescind the Postgraduate Diploma upon achieving the Masters award.

The reason for this is that a student cannot hold two separate awards for the same programme at the same time*.

**For exceptions to this, such as dual/multiple awards, arrangements will be outlined in the programme handbook.*

7.0 Compensation

Please refer to Section E of the UG /Section F and H of the PGT Regulations

- 7.0.1 The purpose of compensation of failed course units is to reduce the need for referral assessment where the student has demonstrated academic ability. (See Example 2).
- 7.0.2 If study abroad contributes to credits on a UoM programme, it may be compensated.
- 7.0.3 Compensation awards credit but does not constitute a pass. Where the degree regulations or programme requirements specify a minimum number of credits that must be passed without compensation, compensated credits do not count towards that requirement.

7.2 Postgraduate-taught Compensation

- 7.2.2 Note that postgraduate dissertations are normally not compensable 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 G28 and G29 of the PGT Degree Regulations).

8.0 Reassessment

Please refer to Section F of the UG / Section G and H of the PGT Regulations

Note: Reassessment as a result of a fail is known as a 'Referral'. Reassessment on the original attempt as a result of approved and verified mitigating circumstances are known as 'Deferrals'. Deferrals may also be referred to as a 'first-sit'.

- 8.0.1 Referral is an Examination Board decision, and is not an option available to students who simply wish to improve marks.
- 8.0.2 Referral pass marks are capped at the unit level so as not to disadvantage students who have been compensated, and do not get the opportunity to attempt the assessment again.
- 8.0.3 Stipulations around referral pass marks include dissertations.
- 8.0.4 Where students are permitted a resubmission following the application of a penalty due to academic malpractice, the resubmission is capped at the lowest compensable mark.

Example 2:

Table 4: Profile of a student at Level 4 of an Undergraduate Programme

Course unit	credit	mark%	(P pass, C compensated unit, R non-compensable 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

For programmes at this level, **compensation can be awarded for up to 40 credits**, (assuming these are not compulsory units and there are no additional requirements (e.g. PSRB requirements, which will be explained in the programme handbook).

In this student's case, there are no programme-specific rules in place that prevent compensation and none of the units are compulsory.

The student has **passed 80 credits**. They have been awarded **compensation in course unit B** (20 credits) and **course unit H** (10 credits), which is within the maximum allowable of 40 credits for the level. They have **failed course unit G**. Although there are 10 credits of compensation allowance left, they **cannot be awarded compensation for course unit G**, as the marks do not fall within the compensable range.

As the student has failed course unit G, they will have to **resit this examination**: this is known as a referral ([see section F of UG regulations](#)). If the mark gained after the resit examination is a pass mark, the student will have gained sufficient credits (i.e. 120) to progress to the next year of study, but their resit mark will be capped at the lowest compensable mark.

If the mark gained after resit is in the compensable range, as there are still 10 credits of compensation allowance available, the student would **receive the credit and pass the year overall**. Their resit mark will be capped at the lowest compensable mark (30R).

- 8.0.5 The postgraduate taught compensation and reassessment maximums are outlined in section H of the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations. The table 5 (below) demonstrates the maximum allowable credits for referral and compensation by programme composition.

Table 5: Examples of Postgraduate Taught Compensation and Reassessment maximums

Note: these examples are not exhaustive. Reassessment and compensation maximums for postgraduate taught programmes with alternative structures will be outlined in the programme handbook, using section H of the PGT degree regulations as a guide.

Programme composition	Number of taught credits allowable for referral	Number of taught credits allowable for compensation	Total number of taught credits allowable for referral and compensation COMBINED
180 credit Masters programme comprising of 120 taught credits and 60 credit dissertation or equivalent	60	40	60
120 credit Postgraduate Diploma programme comprising of 120 taught credits	60	40	60
60 credit Postgraduate Certificate programme comprising of 60 taught credits	30	20	30
Masters by Research programme comprising of 90 taught credits and 90 credits dissertation or equivalent.	45	40	45

9.0 Treatment of Deferral Marks

Please refer to Section G of the UG/ Section I of the PGT Regulations

9.0.1 Consider the following worked examples for the treatment of deferral marks:

Example 3: Treatment of Deferral Marks of a Level 5 Undergraduate Student

Table 6: Student A's profile at the June Examination Board

Course unit	credit	mark%	Examination Board Decision
A*	20	60	Offered a deferral over the summer
B*	20	38	Offered a deferral over the summer
C	20	70	Pass
D	20	65	Pass
E	10	78	Pass
F*	10	22	Offered a deferral over the summer
G	10	68	Pass
H*	10	75	Pass- deferral not offered

*Unit is covered by verified and approved Mitigating Circumstances.

At the June Examination Board, this student has **passed 90 credits** (units A, C, D, E, G & H). They have **failed course units F (10 credits) and B (20 credits)** and their mark for **course unit B (20 credits)** is in the **compensable range**.

The student has **mitigating circumstances approved that cover course units A, B, F and H**. Although the student has obtained a pass mark for course unit A (20 credits), the student has not performed as well in this unit as they have in unaffected units. Course unit H was covered by mitigating circumstances, but there is no evidence of underperformance compared with unaffected units. The Examination Board decides to offer the student deferrals over the summer in **course units A, B and F**.

Table 7: Student A's profile at the Reassessment Examination Board (following deferrals)

Course unit	credit	Resit mark% (with original mark at the June Board is shown in brackets)	Final mark	(P pass, C compensated unit, R non-compensable fail)
A	20	35 (60)	40	P
B	20	29 (38)	38	C
F	10	60 (22)	60	P

The student has failed the deferral in **course unit A** with a mark of 35. As the student originally passed the assessment with a mark of 60, the Examination Board allows the student to **pass the unit with a capped pass mark of 40**.

The student has failed the deferral in **course unit B** with a mark of 29. Their original mark of 38 for course unit B was in the compensable range. As the student has not previously been awarded any compensation at this level, they still have their full allowance of 40 credits available for compensation. The Examination Board awards them compensation in course unit B (20 credits) and **allows their original mark of 38 to stand**.

The student has **passed the deferral in course unit F** with a mark of 60. The Examination board awards them a pass for this unit and **the mark of 60 stands**.

Example 4: Treatment of Deferral and Referral Marks of an Undergraduate Student across Levels 4 and 5

Table 8: Student B's profile at the June Examination Board (Level 4)

Course unit	credit	mark%	Examination Board Decision
A*	20	48	Offered a deferral over the summer
B*	20	28	Offered a deferral over the summer
C*	20	25	Offered a deferral over the summer
D	20	65	Pass
E	10	78	Pass
F*	10	22	Offered a deferral over the summer
G	10	68	Pass
H	10	75	Pass

*Unit is covered by approved and verified Mitigating Circumstances.

At the June Examination Board, this student has **passed 70 credits** (units A, D, E, G & H). They have **failed course units B, C and F (50 credits)**.

The student has **mitigating circumstances approved that cover course units A, B, C and F**. Although the student has obtained a pass mark for course unit A (20 credits), the student has not performed as well in this unit as they have in unaffected units. The Examination Board decides to offer the student deferrals over the summer in **course units A, B, C and F**.

Table 9: Student B's profile at the Reassessment Examination Board (following resits) (Level 4)

Course unit	credit	Resit mark% (with original mark at the June Board is shown in brackets)	Final mark	Examination Board Decision
A	20	29 (48)	40	Pass
B*	20	- (28)	28	Offered a deferral in the next possible reassessment period (i.e. next academic year)
C	20	29 (25)	29	Offered a referral in the next possible reassessment period (i.e. next academic year)
D	20	N/A	65	Passed at June Exam Board
E	10	N/A	78	Passed at June Exam Board
F	10	72 (22)	72	Passed at Resit Exam Board
H	10	N/A	75	Passed at June Exam Board

*Unit is covered by verified and approved Mitigating Circumstances.

The student has failed the deferral in **course unit A** with a mark of 29. The student's original mark at the June assessment board was a pass mark and so the **Examination Board caps the mark at the pass mark for Undergraduate students (40)**.

The student was absent from the resit exam for **course unit B** with approved and verified mitigating circumstances. The Examination Board offers the student a deferral in the next available reassessment period (next academic year) and meanwhile **allows the student to progress to Level 5**.

The student has **failed the deferral in course unit C** with a mark of 29. The Examination Board offers the student a referral in the next available reassessment period (next academic year).

...Example 4: CONTINUED Treatment of Deferral and Referral Marks of an Undergraduate Student across Levels 4 and 5

Table 10: Student B's profile at the June Examination Board (Level 5)

Level 5 course units				
Course unit	credit	mark%	Examination Board Decision	
I	20	64	Pass	
J	20	52	Pass	
K	20	31	Compensated	
L	20	30	Compensated	
M	10	63	Pass	
N	10	55	Pass	
O	10	70	Pass	
P	10	58	Pass	
Delayed reassessment course units from Level 4				
Course unit	credit	Resit mark% (with original mark from previous academic year is shown in brackets)	Final mark	Examination Board Decision
B	20	33 (28)	33	Compensated
C	20	65 (29)	30	Pass but capped at lowest compensable mark due to being a referral.

At the June Examination Board, this student has **passed 80 credits from level 5** (units I, J, M, N, O & P). They have **failed course units K, and L (40 credits)** but their marks are in the compensable range.

The Examination Board decides to award the student **compensation at Level 5 in units K and L**.

In addition to their Level 5 course units, **the student has taken delayed reassessments from Level 4, a deferral in course unit B and a referral in course unit C**.

The marks obtained for **course units B and C will contribute to the students' Level 4 average for the purpose of classification**.

The student gains a mark of 33 in the deferral in course unit B. As the course unit will contribute towards the student's Level 4 average, and **the student still has compensation allowance available for Level 4, course unit B can be compensated**.

The student gains a mark of 65 in the referral in course unit C. As the reassessment was a deferral, a penalty is applied to the mark **to cap the mark at the lowest compensable mark**.

10.0 Carrying forward failed credit on Undergraduate Programmes

Please refer to Section H of the UG Regulations

- 10.0.1 The intention is that the 20 credits would be taken *in addition to* the 120 credits required for the subsequent year so the student would study 130/140 credits in a year, not just the 10/20 carried over.
- 10.0.2 Undergraduate students permitted to carry 20 credits into a subsequent year will be required to cover any [additional costs](#) associated with the course unit(s) concerned, e.g. mandatory field trips.

10.1 Resit without Attendance

- 10.1.1 '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 difficult position with regards to their unemployment and visa status. As a result, resit without attendance is to be avoided unless exceptional circumstances apply. Staff members must seek advice from the Student Immigration Team (visa@manchester.ac.uk) with regards to students on a student visa in respect of Resit without Attendance.

11.0 Exit Awards

Please refer to Section J of the UG and/or PGT Regulations

- 11.0.1 Exit Awards are defined in the [glossary of terms](#). As an example, this may happen when a student registered on a 3-year Bachelor's course exits the University without the credit needed to be awarded a Bachelor's degree. If the student has achieved 120 credits, they may be awarded a Certificate of Higher Education instead. Similarly, a student registered on a Master's programme, may exit the University with enough credit for a Postgraduate Diploma. Exit awards must comply with Table 1 of the UG and PGT regulations and additional requirements must be clearly explained in the student's programme handbook.
- 11.0.2 The opportunities for a student to exit before the end of the programme should be made clear, most notably where a student has failed the requirements of a professionally accredited programme. Updates to these arrangements can normally be handled through the [programme amendment process](#).

12.0 Special Compensation

Please refer to Section K of the UG Regulations

12.0.1 Consider the following worked example for applying special compensation:

Example 5: Examples of Special Compensation applied in the final year (Level 6) of a Bachelor's programme

Table 11: Final year (Level 6) Bachelor's student in receipt of Special Compensation (without penalty)

Course Unit	Credit	Mark %	(P pass, F fail)
A	40	75	P
B	20	68	P
C	20	45	P
D	20	38	C (special compensation)
E	20	18	C (special compensation)

As the student is in their final year, they are not eligible for reassessment. This student has passed a total of 80 Credits, and failed 40 credits. making them eligible for special compensation under K49 of the UG regulations.

The student receives special compensation, this is for credit only and the original marks are recorded to calculate the degree classification.

Table 12: Final year (Level 6) Bachelor's student in receipt of Special Compensation (with penalty)

Course Unit	Credit	Mark %	(P pass, F fail)
A	40	89	P
B	20	78	P
C	20	39	C (special compensation)
D	20	38	C (special compensation)
E	20	28	C (special compensation)

Here, the student has passed 60 credits and failed 60 credits. The student is still eligible to receive special compensation as they have passed 60 credits. As they have also failed 60 credits, a penalty is applied according to K50 of the UG regulations. This means that the classification of this student's final award would be reduced by one class (i.e. from a 2:1 to a 2:2).

12.1 Final Year of an Undergraduate (including Integrated Masters) programme

Please refer to Section K of the UG Regulations

- 12.1.1 Usually there is no referral at level 6 of a Bachelor's programme, or at levels 6 or 7 of an Integrated Masters programme, unless it is a requirement of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA). Therefore, allowance must be made for course unit failure in the final year(s) as there are no referrals. This is known as special compensation.

- 12.1.2 The rules and credit allowances for the award of special compensation are outlined in K49-K55 of the UG Degree Regulations.
- 12.1.3 The credit allowance for special compensation applies to level 6 of a Bachelor's programme. In Integrated Masters programmes, the allowance applies across Levels 6 and 7 combined. For example, where a maximum allowance of 40 credits applies, this is in total across both levels, not 40 credits at each level.

13.0 Classification

Please refer to sections L and M of the UG Regulations and/or Section K of the PGT Regulations.

- 13.0.1 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 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)/Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requirements, in which case these must be included in Programme Handbooks.
- 13.0.2 There are some options for Schools set out within the regulations, and Schools are required to inform the Faculty and students of the regulation adopted across the school through a [Variation to the Degree Regulations](#).

For Undergraduate, these options are as follows:

- Schools must decide whether or not they wish to include level 4 (year 1) study in weighted average degree average calculations, (see paragraphs L56 and M59 in the Undergraduate Degree Regulations). 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.

For PGT, the optional choice is as follows:

- Schools must decide whether the award of distinction is based on the overall average of the programme; or whether it is based on the student 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).

- 13.0.3 If Schools wish to amend the degree classification algorithm being used for existing programmes, they would need to demonstrate that they have modelled that the change would not have an inflationary effect on final degree classifications before approval could be considered.
- 13.0.4 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).
- 13.0.5 A student's final results after graduation will not indicate any approved mitigating circumstances but will have annotated course unit marks which have been compensated (C) and/or subject to referral (R). Undergraduate students' marks will be reflected in their Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).
- 13.0.6 Degree classification is based on a weighted average of marks. Units with a higher credit value contribute more to the total than those with a lower credit value.

13.1 Classification in Bachelors and Integrated Masters Programmes

Please refer to Sections K and L of the UG Regulations

- 13.1.1 Programmes may decide whether to include level 4 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.

13.2 Classification in Postgraduate Taught programmes

Please refer to Section K of the PGT Regulations

- 13.1.2 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.
- 13.1.3 Students who lie within the pass/merit boundary zone can be awarded the higher award even if they have some compensation or resits within their profile, as long as they have achieved at least 2/3 of the credits (excluding AP(E)L and non-numeric pass/fail units)

which are equal to or higher than the final award, and providing the programme has no specific accreditation requirements which do not allow this (please see paragraph J39 of the PGT Degree Regulations).

- 13.1.4 Students who lie within the merit/distinction boundary can be considered for the award of distinction even if they have compensation or resits within their profile, unless the programme has specific accreditation requirements which do not allow this (please see paragraph J39 of the PGT Degree Regulations).
- 13.1.5 Award of the higher classification is automatic if the criteria are met.
- 13.1.6 A Master's degree at the level of a pass is awarded based on earning the required number of credits, not on the weighted overall average mark. This is because a student could technically pass every course unit in a Master's programme by achieving the minimum pass mark (for example, 50%), including some units that are only passed through compensation. If this happens, the student's overall average could still end up below 50%. Because of this, the regulations define a pass at Master's level not by achieving a 50% overall average, but by meeting the credit requirement. This is why the classification table lists a pass as 59.9% or below. As long as the student has successfully completed 180 credits, they can be awarded the degree.

13.5 Classification in cases of Direct Entry students

Please refer to sections L and M of the UG Regulations and/or Section K of the PGT Regulations.

- 13.5.1 When a student joins a programme after the first year of study, their degree classification is calculated using only the years they complete at the University. The weighting applied to those years should preserve the same relative balance between years as would apply to a student who completed the full programme (see Example 5 for worked examples of this principle).
- 13.5.2 For example, a student who enters directly into Year 2 of a Bachelor's programme will have their degree classification based on Years 2 and 3 only. The weighting of those years should maintain the same proportion as in the standard programme structure.

Example 6

Tables 13-17: Classification Weightings for Direct Entry Students

Standard Programme weightings for a 3-year UG programme using Bachelor's Classification Weighting Option 2		Weightings applied for a Student directly entering Year 2	
Year 1	0.1	Year 1	N/A
Year 2	0.3	Year 2	0.33
Year 3	0.6	Year 3	0.67

Standard Programme weightings of a 4-year Integrated Masters (IM) Programme using IM Classification Weighting Option 1		Weightings applied for a Student directly entering Year 2	
Year 1	0.0	Year 1	N/A
Year 2	0.2	Year 2	0.2
Year 3	0.4	Year 3	0.4
Year 4	0.4	Year 4	0.4

Standard Programme weightings of a 4-year Integrated Masters (IM) Programme using IM Classification Weighting Option 1		Weightings applied for a Student directly entering Year 3	
Year 1	0.00	Year 1	N/A
Year 2	0.2	Year 2	N/A
Year 3	0.4	Year 3	0.5
Year 4	0.4	Year 4	0.5

Standard Programme weightings of a 4-year Integrated Masters (IM) Programme using IM Classification Weighting Option 2		Weightings applied for a Student directly entering Year 2	
Year 1	0.06	Year 1	N/A
Year 2	0.19	Year 2	0.2
Year 3	0.375	Year 3	0.4
Year 4	0.375	Year 4	0.4

Standard Programme weightings of a 4-year Integrated Masters (IM) Programme using IM Classification Weighting Option 2		Weightings applied for a Student directly entering Year 3	
Year 1	0.06	Year 1	N/A
Year 2	0.19	Year 2	N/A
Year 3	0.375	Year 3	0.5
Year 4	0.375	Year 4	0.5

14.0 Distinguishing between the award of a Third Class and an Ordinary Degree

Please refer to Section K of the UG Regulations

Table 18: Distinguishing between third class 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 out in the section on 'Consideration of Bachelor Degree students within the boundary zone by mark distribution' in the UG Degree Regulations (i.e. 2/3 of the credits (excluding AP(E)L and non-numeric pass/fail units) taken in the awarding academic year 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

15.0 Examination Board Arrangements

Please refer to Section O of the UG Regulations and/or Section M of the PGT Regulations

- 15.0.1 When decisions are made regarding student progression, this must be conducted by an Examination Board. In general, progression decisions are not made after semester 1 results are available, e.g. in February. These reviews of semester 1 results are often for moderation and to identify students who may need wellbeing support, although progression decisions may be made where a student has failed to meet work, attendance, or engagement requirements. The role of the External Examiner is governed by the Guidance on External Examiner Procedures and is also highlighted in

the Guidance on Examination Boards which sets out details of Examination Board types and responsibilities. This will clarify Level 4 and Level 5 progression decisions and the review of referral results.

16.0 Supporting documents and sources of support

Further information is available at:

- Policy on Mitigating Circumstances
[Policy on Mitigating Circumstances and Extension Requests \(The University of Manchester\)](#)
- Records Retention Schedule
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=6514>
- The Assessment Framework
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=7333>

Appendix A – Undergraduate Classification Scheme

Please refer to sections L and M of the UG Regulations

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' for further details of Classification Review).

The University of Manchester (Undergraduate Degrees)

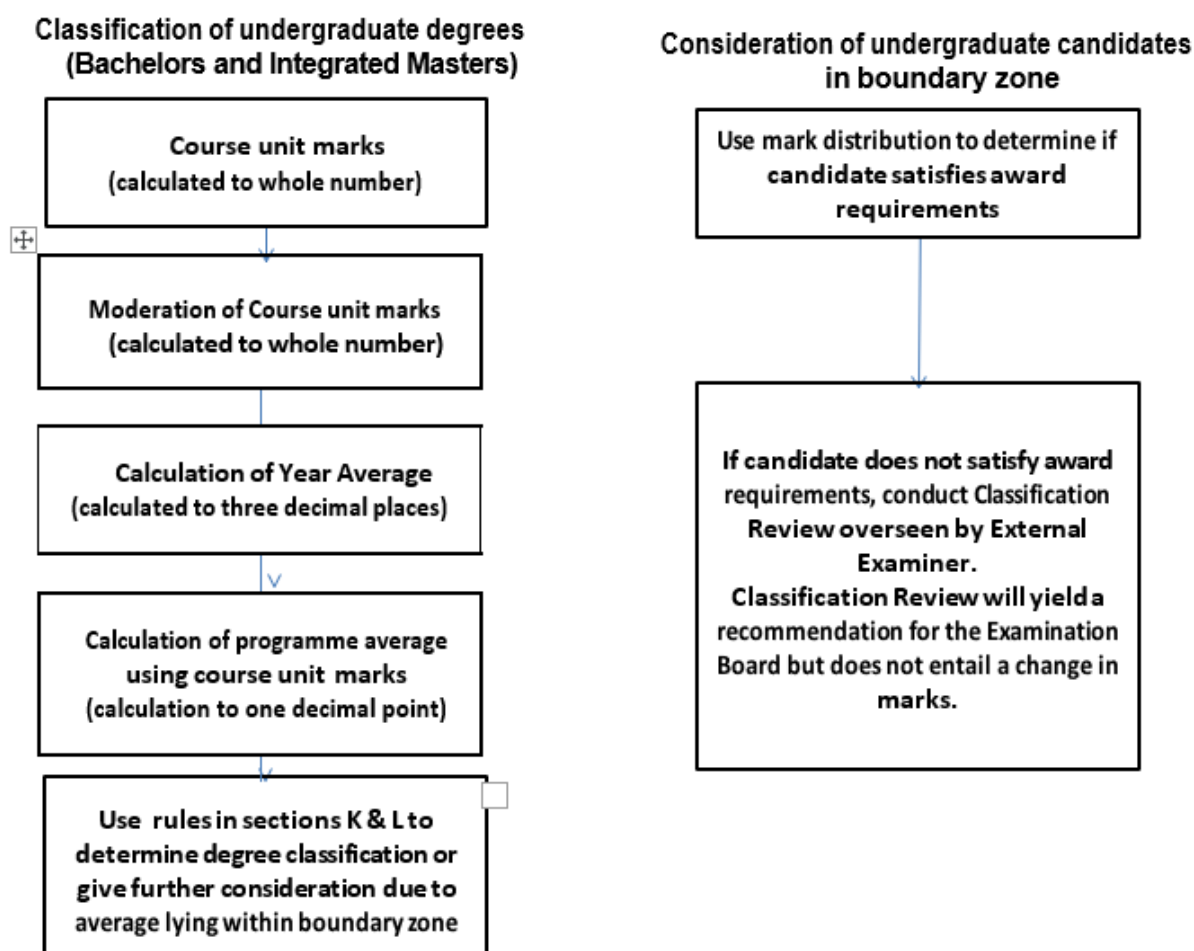


Figure 1 :Flow chart for undergraduate degree classification

Promotion by 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 degrees in the UG 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 recommendations to the Examination Board, which will then take the decision on final degree classification.

University of Manchester course unit marking scheme for undergraduate students

Table A. Bachelors 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
Fail*	39 or less

**compensation or special compensation may be available. See sections E and K of the UG regulations.*

Table B. Final year (level 7) of Integrated Masters course unit marking scheme

Mark (class) descriptor	Mark range (whole numbers)
Distinction	70 to 100
Merit	60 to 69
Pass	50 to 59
fail*	49 or less

**special compensation may be available. See section K of the UG Regulations.*

Appendix B – Postgraduate Degree Classification Scheme

Please refer to Section K of the PGT Regulations.

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.

The University of Manchester (Postgraduate Degrees)

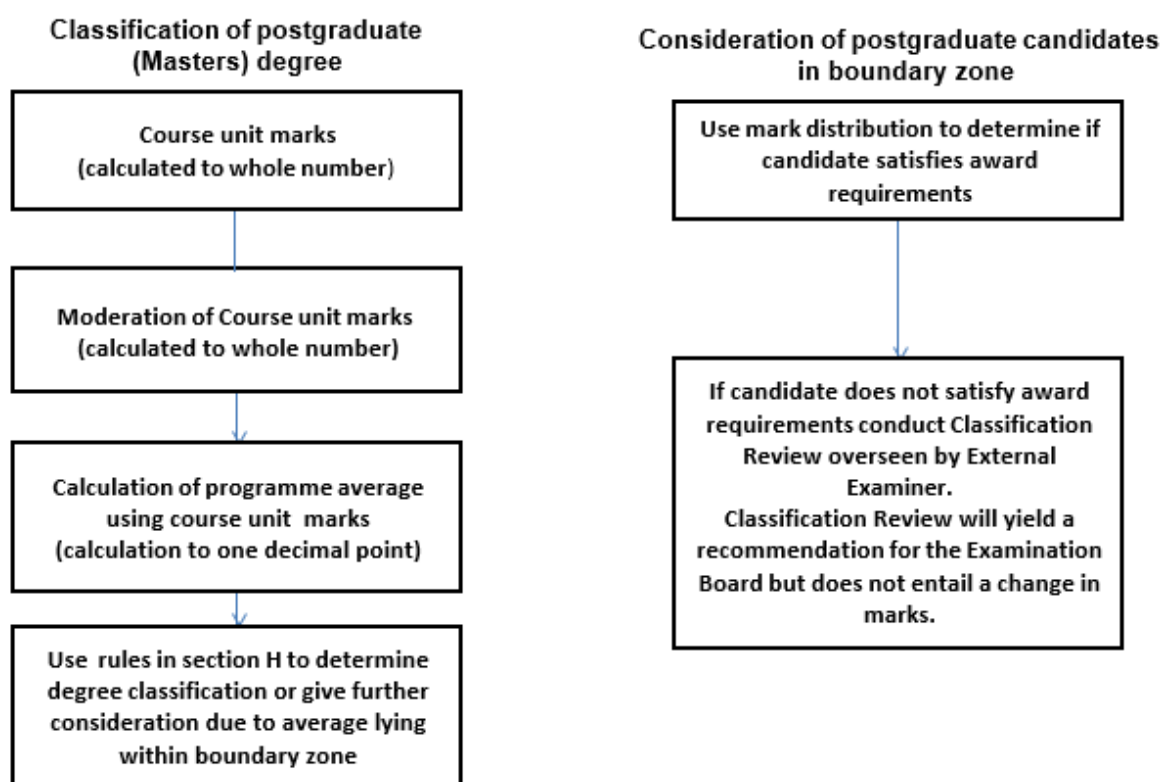


Figure 2: Flow chart for postgraduate degree classification

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 to 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 recommendations to the Examination Board, which will then 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 C Postgraduate course unit marking scheme

Mark (class) descriptor	Mark range (whole numbers)
Distinction	70 to 100
Merit	60 to 69
Pass	50 to 59
fail*	49 or less

**Compensation may be available. See section F of the PGT Regulations*

Appendix C – Classification Review

Please refer to Appendix A of the UG regulations and/or Appendix A of the PGT Regulations

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 boundary zone and do not meet the criteria for the higher-class award.
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. The Examination Board can exercise its collective academic judgement in deciding which cases can be subject to Classification Review.
5. 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.
6. During Classification Review, External Examiners approve the rationale to increase a class; they do not look at individual assessments or remark.
7. 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.

Examples of Classification Review:

The examples below provide illustrative scenarios in which Classification Review may be appropriate. **It is important to note these examples are intended to offer additional context and are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive.** Classification Review is a matter of academic judgement and should be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the principles outlined above.

Example 1: Near-miss with strong performance in core final-year units

Context

A student's weighted average places them within the boundary zone. They do not meet the automatic criteria for the higher classification. Their overall profile shows consistent achievement across the programme, with particularly strong performance in the final year and in units central to the discipline.

Board consideration

The Examination Board identifies this case as a *near miss*. While the student falls short of the automatic rules, several unit marks lie very close to the higher classification threshold. The Board notes that these differences are likely to fall within the normal limits of marking precision.

The Board also considers the structure of the programme and agrees that the student's strongest performance is in academically and professionally core areas, indicating attainment at the level of the higher award.

Decision

Using Classification Review, the Board exercises academic judgement to award the higher classification.

Rationale recorded

- Borderline weighted average with close unit marks near the threshold
- Strong and consistent achievement in core disciplinary units
- The Board judged the overall profile to be representative of achievement at the higher classification when recognising inherent limits in mark precision

External Examiner role

The External Examiners confirm that the rationale is sound and that the judgement is consistent with sector norms. No individual assessments are reviewed.

Example 2: Borderline case reviewed and classification confirmed (no uplift)

Context

A student's weighted average falls within the boundary zone but does not meet the automatic promotion criteria. There are no mitigating circumstances, and the overall profile shows mixed performance across the programme.

Board consideration

The Examination Board considers whether Classification Review should result in an uplift. While some unit marks are close to the boundary, others are further away, and the pattern of achievement does not demonstrate consistently stronger performance in key areas.

The Board reflects on the case as a *near miss* but concludes that the current classification accurately represents the student's academic performance.

Decision

The Examination Board confirms the original classification. No uplift is applied.

Rationale recorded

- The student is within the boundary zone but does not demonstrate a profile indicative of the higher classification
- The Review process was used to confirm, rather than change, the decision
- Classification Review does not require an uplift in all cases

External Examiner role

External Examiners agree that the Board's judgement is appropriate and that the decision not to promote is academically defensible.

Example 3: Borderline case with mitigating circumstances and unusual programme structure

Context

A student is in the boundary zone and does not meet the automatic criteria for the higher classification. Approved mitigating circumstances affected part of the assessment period and could not be fully addressed through unit exclusion. The student performed very strongly in subjects and placements central to professional competence but was affected by lower performance in a less central unit.

Board consideration

The Examination Board confirms that mitigating circumstances have already been considered through the formal mitigation process and ensures there is no duplication. However, the Board recognises that the *academic impact* of those circumstances remains visible in the overall profile.

Taking account of the programme structure and professional outcomes, the Board determines that the student's attainment in core theory and practice demonstrates achievement consistent with the higher classification.

Decision

Following Classification Review, the Board awards the higher classification.

Rationale recorded

- Borderline average with a clear near-miss profile
- Strong academic and professional performance in core areas of the programme
- Residual effects of mitigating circumstances contributed to a less representative overall average
- Academic judgement applied in an exceptional but justified case

External Examiner role

External Examiners endorse the Board's rationale and confirm the uplift reflects appropriate academic judgement rather than adjustment of marks.

Version amendment history box and Document control box

Version amendment history: Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations		
Version	Date	Reason for change
1.10	October 2022	Updates made to paragraph numbers, to tie in with updated UG and PGT regulations
2.0	Add date	Creation of a new version to accompany a major review of the UG and PGT Degree Regulations for September 2026 implementation. Amendments include: • Complete rationalisation of the previous version and removal of any information repetitious of the Degree Regulations. • Restructure of the document to mirror the Degree Regulations. • Improved signposting between this document and relevant sections of the Degree Regulations. • Creation of additional worked examples. • Further information added to Appendix C, including illustrative examples to provide additional context. These examples should not be treated as exhaustive.

Document control box	
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Next review date:	2029/30
Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations	Regulations Academic-related regulations Regulation XX Monitoring Attendance The University of Manchester
Related Policies:	• Undergraduate Degree Regulations for students registered from Sept 2026. Updated March 2026 (v3.1) (The University of Manchester) • Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations for students registered from Sept 2026 onwards (v4.1) (The University of Manchester) • Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance and Engagement (The University of Manchester)
Related Procedures and Guidance:	Procedures for the Award of Posthumous and Aegrotat Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degrees
B Conditions Met:	B4, B5
Policy owner:	Head of Student and Academic Services (SAS)
Lead contact:	Teaching and Learning Manager, Policy teaching-policy@manchester.ac.uk <i>(for student enquiries, please contact your local Student Support Hub: Student Support / Student Support Hubs / The University of Manchester)</i>