

Degree outcomes statement

May 2022

Institutional degree classification profile

In academic year 2018/19 the University Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) created a working group to review the impact of the Academic Progression and Award Regulations (APAR) which were updated in 2015/16. The findings and recommendations were reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee in July 2020 and the decision was made to undertake the following changes from September 2020 for all students entering their qualifying year or part 1:

To change the borderlines to an overall average of *9 (2:1/1st) at all borderlines except that between fail and 3rd class where there is no borderline; with promotion occurring if either of two criteria is met:

Two thirds or more of the final stage credits are in the higher class;

Two thirds or more of the final and penultimate stage credits are in the higher class.

The degree outcomes from the degree classification profile as implemented for September 2020 entry will be known in summer 2022 and work will then be undertaken to assess the impact of this change.

Assessment and marking practices

Assessment is regulated by the Assessment Regulations. Policies stipulate that the volume, timing and nature of assessment should enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes. The Marking and Grading policy covers areas including internal and external examination; marking criteria; moderation of marks, marks calculations and the process for feeding back to students; including marking turnaround times. Policies have been developed with reference to QAA Subject Benchmarks and to Professional Sector Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) requirements. Reasonable adjustments for students with academic or disability support requirements are made in assessments.

Academic governance

The University aims to maintain the highest standards of excellence in teaching and assessment across all programmes. Education and Student Experience Committee (ESEC) has primary responsibility for maintaining academic standards on behalf of Senate, with direction from the University strategy, supported by policies and procedures in the Quality Manual. Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) assists ESEC in overseeing the application of all university regulations, policies and procedures in respect of quality and standards. External assistance is sought at several points in the assurance process; in the development of new programmes, through the role of external examiners and their reports, and through other external reference points including reports from PSRBs and via the inclusion of an external panel member in our periodic review process.

Classification algorithms

Our classification algorithm for UG and PGT can be found via this link:

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/academicservices/qualitymanual/academic-regulations/academic-regulation.aspx>

Enhancement of teaching and curriculum

The University is committed to continually enhancing the quality of our teaching and of the curriculum. The university's Education and Student Experience Strategic Delivery Plan, published in spring 2021, has curriculum as one of its key priorities and funding has been awarded to a multiple-year Curriculum Transformation programme. Through a series of pilot studies in a selection of schools, we have developed and refined a framework for programme-level curriculum design which we shared with colleagues from other Higher Education Institutions at a conference in January 2022. The initial phase of the framework involves the assembly of an evidence base obtained from various stakeholders (employers, alumni, students, market research).

This evidence base is used to inform the design of a programme of study that focuses on the student journey, leading to the skills and values that we expect UoN graduates to be able to demonstrate. The design process is undertaken by both staff and students, with the outcome a negotiated co-creation.

The process ensures that assessment is purposeful and sustainable, and that students are clear on why, how, and when, they acquire and demonstrate programme-level learning outcomes.

The impact of this work will be evaluated as students progress through programmes redeveloped using the framework.

Separately, work has taken place to explain marking rubrics to students so that they can understand how and why they are being assessed and thereby better identify their development needs.

Identifying good practice, and actions

The University strives to identify and share good practice via a number of mechanisms. The Educational Enhancement and Assurance Reviews are our periodic mechanism for reviewing teaching and learning in Schools. Annual School Enhancement Plans seek to draw out good practice and 'community of practice' mechanisms such as the annual Teaching and Learning Conference, the Summer Breakfast Clubs and the Educational Excellence Group enable sharing across a larger constituency. Information and toolkits are available all year round via the Educational Excellence webpages and dedicated web links for the Curriculum Transformation Project.

Risks and challenges

The last two years have presented many challenges to the sector and institutionally. One area of both risk and challenge is in academic misconduct where we have signed up to the QAA Academic Integrity Charter and both within and outside the Curriculum Transformation Project are working hard to design robust authentic assessment to mitigate these issues.