

**University College Birmingham Classification Scheme**  
**(2020/2021 cohort onwards)**

Approved by Academic Regulations Committee

3 December 2020

Reviewed by Academic regulations Committee February 2025

## **1. Introduction**

This classification scheme is applicable to Bachelors' cohorts with a first registration from September 2020/2021. Bachelors' cohorts with a first registration before September 2019 should refer to the relevant University Classification Scheme.

## **2. Degree Classifications and Calculations**

(a) The University Classification Scheme operates under the following conditions:

- (i) The starting point of the system is the credit-weighted arithmetic mean mark, for each relevant stage of study, averaged with the same mark for other relevant stages of study in a prescribed proportion;
- (ii) When the final average falls within a prescribed band below the minimum for achieving a given classification on average alone (the 'borderline'), attention is given to the profile of the relevant marks. (This principle ensures that consideration can only be given to the median when the less successful module outcomes do not fall below an acceptable level.)
- (iii) Where there are marks available for all modules required to be attempted under the programme requirements.
- (iv) Where there is a greater proportion, after credit-weighting, of marks in the class above the relevant borderline. (The purpose of this scheme is to recognise the prevailing character of a candidate's performance on the basis of judgements of the class to which each module outcome belongs. In this way, recognition is given to the fact that a student may have more weighted module marks, which lie above the degree classification indicated by the arithmetic mean.)

### **b) Calculation of the Stage Mark**

- (i) The stage mark is the weighted mean mark, weighted for credits, for a stage of a degree programme. For UG programmes this applies to the stage 2 (level 5) and stage 3 (Level 6) weighted mean marks.

### **(c) Calculation of the Overall Mark**

- (i) The overall mark is the mark calculated from the stage marks that contribute to the student's degree result using the appropriate stage weightings.
- (ii) The overall mark is calculated with the maximum available precision and then rounded to an integer. An (overall) mark of less than n.5 (unrounded) is rounded down.

## **2.1 Step One: The Arithmetic Mean**

In accordance with Academic Regulations Part 2 (1.3.1 d). where candidates are eligible for the award of a classified first degree, the class will be determined initially on the basis of the weighted arithmetic mean (to take account of the credit rating of a module) using the weighting between stages:

70+ = 1st;

60-69 = 2i;

50-59 = 2ii;

40-49 = 3rd.

## **2.2 Step Two: Identifying Borderline Cases**

(a) Those candidates with a weighted arithmetic mean, as shown below, will be 'borderline cases' and eligible for a classification as set out below.

68,69 = eligible for consideration as a borderline 1st;

58,59 = eligible for consideration as a borderline 2i;

48,49 = eligible for consideration as a borderline 2ii;

38,39 = eligible for consideration as a borderline 3rd.

### **2.2.1 First Class**

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain either:

- a) An Overall mark of at least 70%, or
- b) Have attempted all credits on which the classification is based and have an Overall mark of at least 68% and a mark of at least 70% in modules with a combined value of at least 80 credits (from level 6) or
- c) An Overall mark of at least 68% and a mark of at least 70% in modules with a combined value of at least 60 credits (from all final year modules), and 60 credits from level 5.

### **2.2.2 Second Class, Upper Division**

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain either:

- a) An Overall mark of at least 60%, or
- b) Have attempted all credits on which the classification is based and have an Overall mark of at least 58% and a mark of at least 60% in modules with a combined value of at least 80 credits (from all final year modules) or
- c) An Overall mark of at least 58% and a mark of at least 60% in modules with a combined value of at least 60 credits (from level 6), and 60 credits from level 5.

### **2.2.3 Second Class, Lower Division**

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain either:

- a) An Overall mark of at least 50%, or
- b) Have attempted all credits on which the classification is based and have an Overall mark of at least 48% and a mark of at least 50% in modules with a combined value of at least 80 credits (from level 6) or
- c) An Overall mark of at least 48% and a mark of at least 50% in modules with a combined value of at least 60 credits (from level 6), and 60 credits from level 5.

### **2.2.4 Third Class**

The candidate shall normally be required to obtain

- a) An Overall mark of at least 40% and have attempted all credits on which the classification is based.

### **Direct Entries/Top-Up Students**

For students who start at level 5 or above, only those credits studied at UCB will be considered when calculating degree classifications or eligibility for fallback awards. Students who have not studied all credits from level 4 to 6 must achieve full 120 credits at level 6 in order to be awarded. If a student has studied 120 credits at both Level 5 and Level 6 at UCB, their Level 5 grades can be used for calculating their classification. Please see the grid below.

## Direct Entrants Progression/Classification, OMM calculation and Fallback awards

Direct Entrant Context	Exam Board Decisions
Direct Entrants to a UCB programme - progression	<p>DE students studying <b>less than 120 credits</b> on any level of a UCB programme <b>must pass all credits</b> to progress.</p> <p>DE students studying <b>120 credits at Level 5</b> can progress on <b>100/120</b> (HNC/HND 105/120) <b>credits</b> as long as they are not 'must pass' modules and have achieved at least 15% in all assessments.</p>
Direct Entrants to a UCB programme – credits for Level 6 awards	<p><b>Reminder</b> - RPL credits are used to determine the <b>entry point</b> of a DE onto a UCB programme and, therefore, are <b>not</b> factored into the awards at UCB.</p> <p>All DE students (regardless of the stage of the programme they join UCB) must <b>achieve all 120 credits</b> at Level 6 to be awarded.</p>
Direct Entrants to a UCB programme - Level 6 OMM calculation	<p>The OMM for DE students will be based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a DE has studied all 120 credits at Level 5, the OMM will be calculated as normal (3:1 - Level 6:Level 5)</li> <li>• If a DE has studied <b>less than 120 credits</b> at Level 5, the OMM will only be based on Level 6 marks.</li> </ul>
Direct Entrants to a UCB programme – borderline classifications	<p>If a DE has achieved <b>at least 60 credits</b> on a Level 5 UCB programme, these credits can be considered within borderline classifications. Otherwise, only the credits at Level 6 will be considered.</p>
Direct Entrants to a UCB programme – fallback awards	<p>All awards must be based on the credits the DEs have achieved at UCB (no RPL credits will be considered).</p> <p><b>The only potential fallback awards for DEs (at undergraduate level) are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Certificate of Higher Education</b> – if they achieve at least 100 credits at Level 4+ (105 credits for HNC/HND students) and have at least 15% in all assessments contributing to the credits for the fallback award.</li> <li>• <b>Diploma of Higher Education</b> - if they achieve at least 200 credits at Level + (210 credits for HNC/HND students) and have at least 15% in all assessments contributing to the credits for the fallback award.</li> <li>• <b>Note:</b> Such students do <b>not</b> need to achieve at least 15% in assessments of failed modules, as these modules will <b>not</b> contribute to the fallback award.</li> </ul>