

Guide to the Code of Assessment – 2

Grading student performance

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2.1 Intended learning outcomes, assessment, grades, and bands

§16.22 The standard achieved by a candidate in all summative assessments required by a course shall be judged by the relevant Board of Examiners in terms of the candidate's attainment of the stated intended learning outcomes for that course.

§16.23 Judgement shall be expressed in terms of the primary grades and secondary bands set out in Schedule A, or in terms of the grades set out in Schedule B.

§16.24 Judgement shall be made through direct reference to the primary verbal descriptors for intended learning outcomes and the primary verbal descriptors for professional, practical or clinical competence set out in Schedules A and B. Reference shall also be made to such subsidiary information as Schools may prepare to amplify the primary verbal descriptors in terms specific to a particular field of study. Where the outcome of the chosen mode of assessment is a proper percentage score it shall, before being reported to students, be converted into a primary grade and secondary band by reference to a conversion scheme determined by the Board of Examiners as appropriate for the assessment in question and subordinate to the relevant grade descriptors.

Chapter 1 stressed the importance of a course's intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and assessment scheme. The assessment scheme defines the assessment methods (such as examinations, essays, and practicals), which are used to measure each student's attainment of the ILOs. The assessment scheme also specifies the weighting of each assessment.

Although the same assessment methods will be used every year a course is delivered, the actual tasks set for students may vary from year to year. In particular, examination questions should vary from year to year; coursework tasks like essays and practicals should also be varied where feasible. The course coordinator should ensure that each year's tasks taken together cover the course's ILOs fairly. There are two cases to consider:

- If the course has a sufficiently small number of ILOs, each year's tasks should cover all ILOs.
- If the course has a larger number of ILOs, each year's tasks should cover a representative sample.

Assessment of a student's work in a particular task is a judgement of the extent to which the student has attained the ILOs covered by that task. This judgement is expressed in terms of a **primary grade** – A, B, C, D, E, F, G or H.

The meanings of the grades are defined by verbal **grade descriptors**, which are set out in [Schedules A and B](#) of the Code of Assessment. For instance, in Schedule A work that demonstrates "exemplary range and depth of attainment of ILOs ..." should be awarded grade A, whilst work that demonstrates "conclusive attainment of virtually all ILOs ..." should be awarded grade B. At the other end of the scale, work that demonstrates "no convincing evidence of attainment of ILOs ..." should be awarded grade H.

Note that the ILOs for a higher-level course will be more demanding than the ILOs for a lower-level course. Thus the award of grade A (for instance) in a higher-level course signifies higher attainment than the award of grade A in a lower-level course.

In Schedule A the eight grades alone support only coarse judgements, so each grade (except H) is subdivided into **secondary bands**. The available bands are A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, B2, B3, C1, C2, C3, D1, D2, D3, E1, E2, E3, F1, F2, F3, G1, G2, and H. In each grade above G the examiner should select the middle band by default, but may adjust the mark to an upper or lower band according to how securely the student's performance is thought to belong within the selected grade as opposed to the one above or below. Thus, grade B ("conclusive attainment of virtually all ILOs ...") is subdivided into three bands: B1 denotes slightly more conclusive attainment than B2, and B3 slightly less conclusive attainment.

Grade A is subdivided into five bands – this on the advice of internal and external examiners who found that in practice three bands provided insufficient encouragement, either to use the middle band as default for work deserving an A grade, or to give appropriate recognition to work justifying something higher than the default band. The mechanisms for aggregating grades require scope for

discrimination at both ends of the scale, and the five bands in grade A complement the provision made for distinguishing levels of performance below the pass-fail line.

There is, in any event, a tradition in some marking schemes for a relatively wide range of possible scores to be mapped to the highest grade or class. The five bands acknowledge the difficulty of defining upper limits to the performance that an exceptionally able student might deliver. It should, however, be remembered that grade A is intended to recognise excellence. It should not be reserved for cases of absolute perfection, rather the question is whether the answer can be appropriately covered by the description in Schedule A to the Code of Assessment:

Exemplary range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes, secured by discriminating command of a comprehensive range of relevant materials and analyses, and by deployment of considered judgement relating to key issues, concepts and procedures.

Although band A1 is likely to be awarded infrequently, it should be achievable and awarded without hesitation if justified.

Schedule A summarises the grades, bands, and grade descriptors. These grade descriptors are inevitably generic, i.e., expressed in abstract terms applicable to any subject and to any course at any level. Each School is encouraged to develop more specific grade descriptors for its own courses, taking care to ensure that its specific grade descriptors are consistent with the generic ones. For example, a suitable grade A descriptor for an engineering design-and-build project might be “excellent design and construction, expertly deploying suitable technologies, together with a literate scientific report and a convincing demonstration”.

The Student Guide to the Code of Assessment [Understanding our Marking System](#) includes a listing of the characteristics that tend to distinguish work at different grades used under Schedule A.

Assessment of practical **competencies** is a prominent feature of some programmes (particularly Dentistry, Education, Medicine, Nursing, and Veterinary Medicine). Assessment here is a judgement of the extent to which each student has demonstrated the required competencies, using a simplified system of grades. This judgement is expressed in terms of a **grade**, which is A0, B0, C0, D0, E0, F0, G0 or H. The meanings of the grades are defined by verbal **grade descriptors**, which are set out in Schedule B. For instance, “exemplary and polished demonstration of the required skill(s) ...” should be awarded grade A0, while “efficient and confident display of the required skill(s) ...” should be awarded grade B0. Further down the scale, “presently inadequate independent performance of the required skill(s) ...” should be awarded grade F0.

Students are typically required to obtain at least grade D0 in each and every competency assessment.

2.2 Penalties for late submission of coursework

§16.25 Deadlines for the submission of coursework which is to be formally assessed will be published in course documentation, and work which is submitted later than the deadline will be subject to penalty as set out below.

§16.26 Where the work in question is a piece of independent work for which, in order to qualify for the honours degree, a minimum grade is prescribed, any late penalty will be discounted for the purpose of determining whether that prescription has been met.

§16.27 Except as modified by §16.28, the primary grade and secondary band awarded for coursework which is submitted after the published deadline will be calculated as follows:

a) In respect of work submitted not more than five working days after the deadline:

- i) the work will be assessed in the usual way, and the primary grade and secondary band so determined will then be reduced by two secondary bands for each working day (or part of a working day) the work was submitted late;
- ii) where work is submitted after feedback on that work (which may include grades) has already been provided to the student class, grade H will be awarded. Feedback may be provided to the student class less than five working days after the submission deadline in relation to no more than 25% by weight of a course’s summative assessment.

b) Grade H will be awarded where work is submitted more than five working days after the deadline.

These provisions apply to all taught students and ensure that students following different courses are treated equally.

Error in on-line submissions: Where an on-line submission is found to be incorrect, e.g. a blank document or a file that cannot be opened, it will be considered as not submitted. Any corrected submission received after the coursework deadline will be subject to a late penalty in line with §16.27. Staff are under no obligation to check submissions before marking but should take steps to alert students to any difficulties as soon as they are identified.

§27(a) refers to 'working days' so that in the calculation of penalties for late submission, Saturdays and Sundays are disregarded. For the purposes of the calculation, however, a 'part day' is rounded up to a whole day. Where work is submitted not more than five 'working days' after the relevant submission deadline, the penalty is calculated as two secondary bands for every day by which the submission is late.

Example 2.A

Dominic's essay is due in by 10 am on Monday but he does not submit it until 11 am the following day.

The essay is, therefore, one day plus one part day late, incurring a penalty of four secondary bands.

The essay is marked and, had it been on time, a grade of C1 would have been awarded.

The penalty reduces the grade to D2.

If Dominic had submitted the essay at 9.30 am on Tuesday, it would have been one part-day (i.e. less than 24 hours) late and would therefore have incurred a penalty of only two secondary bands, resulting in a grade of C3.

Example 2.B

Danielle has to submit a lab book for assessment by 4 pm on Friday but fails to deliver it until 10 am on the following Monday.

The assignment is, therefore, one part working day late (Saturday and Sunday are disregarded, as non-working days) incurring a penalty of two secondary bands.

The work is graded as B3 but the penalty reduces this to C2

If work is submitted more than five days late it is graded as H.

Schools may prefer to avoid setting a submission deadline on a Friday so that students do not have the option of handing in work on the following Monday (three calendar days late) and being subject only to a one day penalty.

Sub-components of coursework are subject to penalties for late submission in the same manner as full coursework components – essentially a two secondary band deduction per day with a cut-off at five days after which the submission will receive a grade H. In cases where sub-components are marked in percentages, an equivalent reduction of 10% per day should be applied, with a cut-off at five days following which the grade awarded will be zero.

Example 2.C

Weekly exercises, which in total are worth 20% of the course assessment, are set in Moodle. The deadline each week for completion of the exercise is 5 pm on Monday and feedback is released at 12 pm on Wednesday. This quick return of feedback helps students to prepare for the following week's exercise. In week 3 Stewart does not submit his completed exercise by 12 pm on Wednesday. Whereas the normal position is that a reduced grade would be awarded for work submitted up to five days after the deadline, Stewart's grade for the week 3 exercise will be H.

Section 2.2 (a)(ii) of the Code allows up to 25% of a course's assessment to set a date for the return of feedback to students within five working days of the submission deadline.

Students are required to attain at least Grade D3 in the dissertation or similar independent work if they are to be awarded an Honours degree. If the dissertation is submitted late, and a penalty is imposed, that penalty will be ignored when determining whether the student has submitted a dissertation meeting the standard required for the award of an Honours degree. Thus, if the penalty has the effect of reducing the grade awarded for the dissertation below Grade D3, this will not in itself prevent the student from receiving an Honours degree. However, the penalty will apply to the student's grade point average, and as a result, possibly affect the class of degree awarded.

Example 2.D

Duke submits his Honours dissertation two days late.

It is graded as C3 but the penalty of four secondary bands reduces this to E1.

Although this is below the minimum requirement for the award of an Honours degree, the requirement is deemed to have been met by virtue of the dissertation being awarded C3 before the penalty was applied.

In calculating Duke's grade point average, however, (see examples below) the dissertation will contribute 8 grade points rather than 12.

Note that this waiver only applies to Honours dissertations. On postgraduate taught programmes, in order to qualify for award of the degree students must achieve at least a grade D3 in a 60 credit dissertation or project. Any penalty applied for late submission will NOT be disregarded in relation to this requirement. The grade after application of any such penalty must be D3 or above.

Schedule B On a small number of programmes submissions may be assessed under Schedule B (e.g. professional portfolios). In such cases, the way in which late penalties will be applied must be set out to students in advance in programme documentation.

Academic Standards Committee has considered the question of when an overdue submission becomes a **non-submission**. This is an important issue as non-submission of assessments affects the fulfilment of the requirements for course credit. Academic Standards Committee has agreed that the default position should be that assessments will be counted as non-submissions if they have not been handed in by the time assessment feedback is presented to the rest of the cohort. However, course teams may make alternative arrangements and set non-submission deadlines differently. In such cases the alternative position should be stated in the course documentation to ensure that students are fully aware of the consequences of delaying submission.

Deferral of deadlines

§16.28 A candidate who is unable to submit coursework by the published deadline, or who anticipates being unable to so submit, may apply for a deferral of the deadline, or exemption from the penalties set out in §16.27 (a). Any such application will be considered in accordance with the following:

- a) Where the actual or anticipated delay in submission is five working days or less:
 - i) The application will be submitted to, and considered by, the person (normally the course convener) identified in course documentation as responsible for coursework assessment.¹
 - ii) The outcome of the application will be determined at the discretion of the person responsible for coursework assessment who will require to be satisfied that the candidate submitting the application has been prevented by circumstances beyond their control from submitting the relevant work on time.
 - iii) Deferral of the submission deadline, or exemption from a late penalty, will be commensurate with the duration of the circumstances causing the late submission.²

¹ In cases where candidates present sensitive personal information which they are reluctant to discuss with more than one or two members of staff, a member of staff should be given responsibility by the Head of School or Research Institute for ensuring that relevant information is passed to appropriate colleagues in order for extensions to be considered. [Footnote in the Code.]

² Where in accordance with §16.27(a)(ii) feedback on assessed work is returned less than five working days after the submission deadline, the limit to deferral of a candidate's submission deadline or exemption from late penalty will be the time at which feedback on the work is provided to the class. [Footnote in the Code.]

iv) Where the application is not submitted until after the deadline for submission of the work itself, relief from a late penalty will normally be granted only where the circumstances preventing the candidate from submitting work on time have also prevented application for a deferral of the deadline for submission.

b) Where the actual or anticipated delay in submission is more than five working days the candidate shall apply for deferral of the submission deadline or exemption from penalties by making a claim in accordance with the procedures set out in §16.45 - §16.53 Incomplete Assessment resulting from Good Cause:

i) The application must be made by submission of a claim to MyCampus and must show that the delay in submission is the consequence of good cause as defined in §16.45(a) and must be supported by evidence as defined in §16.45(b).³

ii) The Head of School or Research Institute or nominee⁴ shall determine the outcome of such an application in consultation with the relevant Assessment Officer. The outcome shall be notified to the candidate as soon as reasonably practicable.

iii) In considering such applications:

- the evidence provided by the candidate claiming good cause shall be scrutinised;
- fairness to the individual candidate claiming good cause must be balanced with fairness to other candidates and the integrity of the assessment as a whole;
- it shall be determined whether the requested deferral of submission deadline is justified by good cause.

iv) Where it is determined that the evidence presented supports the candidate's claim that they will be unable to submit coursework in accordance with the published date, deferral of the submission deadline will be granted⁵ commensurate with the nature of the relevant circumstances.

v) Where it is determined that the evidence presented does not support the candidate's claim that they will be unable to submit the coursework in accordance with the published deadline, the candidate will be informed⁵ that the published deadline will apply and if the candidate fails to submit by the deadline late penalties will be imposed in accordance with §16.27.

A late submission penalty of up to 10 secondary bands may be waived – or a student may be permitted to submit work up to five working days after the published deadline – if the course convener (or other authorised person) is satisfied that the student has been prevented by circumstances beyond their control from submitting the work on time. When work is submitted after the due date without the student having previously requested an extension, the penalty will normally be waived only where the course convener is satisfied that the circumstances which prevented submission on time have also prevented the student applying for a later submission date.

The regulations require that deferral of a submission deadline should be commensurate with the duration of the relevant circumstances. Requests must therefore be considered on a case by case basis, and a five day deferral should not be regarded as a 'default' position.

Requests to submit work more than five working days after the published deadline must be handled in accordance with the good cause procedure set out at §16.46 – §16.48 (see [Chapter 5](#) of this Guide). Students should request such an extension by submitting a good cause claim as soon as they become aware that an extension will be required, and should bring the claim to the attention of a member of staff such as Adviser of Studies or Assessment Officer to ensure that it is dealt with

³ In the event that this facility is not available, the candidate should contact the Head of School/Research Institute or their nominee directly. In cases where candidates present sensitive personal information which they are reluctant to discuss with more than one or two members of staff, a member of staff should be given responsibility by the Head of School/Research Institute for ensuring that relevant information is passed to appropriate colleagues in order for extensions to be considered.

In addition to submitting a claim to MyCampus the candidate is also advised to alert a member of staff such as their Adviser of Studies/Advising Team or Assessment Officer to the claim in order that it may be considered promptly. [Footnote in the Code.]

⁴ The nominee of the Head of School or Research Institute with responsibility for considering such claims shall be indicated in the programme handbook. Such a nominee will typically be an Honours Convener, Head of Year, Programme Convener, or the holder of another similar senior role. [Footnote in the Code.]

⁵ A candidate wishing to apply for deferral of a submission deadline should submit a claim as soon as they become aware of the relevant circumstances. Where a claim is submitted shortly before the submission deadline it may not be possible for the candidate to be advised of the outcome of the claim before that deadline. [Footnote in the Code.]

promptly. These claims should be determined by the Head of School/RI or nominee and the Assessment Officer.

Extensions for undergraduate dissertations: extensions claimed through good cause might only be slightly longer than five working days but they could also cover the situation where a significantly longer extension is necessary. One such situation is where a critical period in the student's preparation of their undergraduate dissertation is impacted by adverse personal circumstances or illness. While such disruption might in time only result in the need for an extension of a couple of weeks, it is also possible that the disruption is so significant that staff consider the most appropriate response to be an extension that allows the student to put on hold their work on the dissertation and return to it after completing the April/May diet of exams. While such a lengthy extension may be necessary, there are a number of factors that make it less than ideal: the fact that the student's graduation will be delayed from July to November/December; the possibility that availability of appropriate supervisory staff after the examination period is limited; the fact that a student might lose momentum with the dissertation, needing to return to it after the rest of their cohort have completed their studies. In light of these factors, there may be a period when adverse circumstances have come to light and staff wish to reserve judgment on the extension that will work in the student's best interests. Supportive discussions with the student at this time will be important. However, it is appropriate that a long extension should be confirmed as soon as the need for it has been agreed.

There is an overlap between the power to grant an extension for up to five working days and the good cause regulations. The basis for an application to defer the submission date for up to five days might be something which would be recognised as good cause, for example an illness preventing submission on the due date. However there will also be cases that might be considered to merit a shorter extension but would not constitute good cause. (A specialist IT lab having been out of action for some days leading up to a submission deadline might be accepted to merit, say, a two-day extension but would not be accepted as good cause.) In such cases there must be a sound basis for granting an extension, and appropriate evidence will be required. Cases not involving good cause will, as the example cited indicates, involve some event or sequence of events which is outwith the control of the individual student.

2.3 Aggregation of assessment across a course

§16.29 Where the assessment scheme of a specific course or programme requires aggregation across two or more components to obtain an overall outcome, the grade points set out in Schedule A and Schedule B shall be employed.

§16.30 Aggregation to establish a result for a course shall require the computation of the mean of the relevant grade points achieved in the component assessments. In computing the mean, 0 [zero] grade points shall be applied to non-submissions. All assessment components which are summative must be included and where appropriate the computation shall employ weights as specified in the course documentation.

§16.31 In order to determine the overall grade to be reported for a course the following shall apply:

- a) For a course where Schedule A is employed in relation to 50% or more by weight of the course's assessment, the mean of the relevant grade points calculated in accordance with §16.30 shall be rounded to an integer value.⁶ The result for the course shall be reported as the primary grade and secondary band equivalent to that integer shown in Schedule A.
- b) For a course where Schedule B is employed in relation to more than 50% by weight of the course's assessment, the mean of the relevant grade points calculated in accordance with §16.30 shall not be rounded and the result for the course shall be reported as the grade shown in Schedule B that has the range in which the mean of grade points lies.

§16.32 The grade points associated with the reported course grade shall be carried forward to subsequent aggregation required to determine the programme award (See §16.34 - §16.39.)

⁶ A grade point mean should be rounded in accordance with the following example: 15.5 and all higher values less than 16.5 should become 16. [Footnote in the Code.]

Most courses include two or more assessments. Section 16.30 of the Code of Assessment requires each assessment component to produce a grade point number that is an integer derived from the grade awarded for that component. Results for components of assessment must be **aggregated** to determine a student's result for the course as a whole. The course's assessment scheme specifies the weightings of the components of assessment.

For the purposes of aggregation, each grade has an equivalent **number of grade points** in the range 0 – 22, as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Grades and equivalent grade points (taken from Schedules A and B)

Schedule A	Grade points	Schedule B	Grade points	Schedule A	Grade points	Schedule B	Grade points
A1	22	A0	22	D1	11	D0	11
A2	21			D2	10		
A3	20			D3	9		
A4	19			E1	8	E0	8
A5	18			E2	7		
B1	17	B0	17	E3	6		
B2	16			F1	5	F0	5
B3	15			F2	4		
C1	14	C0	14	F3	3		
C2	13			G1	2	G0	2
C3	12			G2	1		
				H	0	H	0

As shown in the examples below, the method of calculating the final result for the course depends on whether grades under Schedule A or Schedule B or a combination of both are used.

2.3.1 Courses assessed only under Schedule A

Example 2.E

Consider a course in which there are two in-course assessments each weighted 12.5% and an end-of-course examination weighted 75%. Suppose that Ayesha's results in these assessments are D1 and C3, and B1, respectively. Her course result will be calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{course result} &= (0.125 \times D1) + (0.125 \times C3) + (0.75 \times B1) \\
 &= (0.125 \times 11) + (0.125 \times 12) + (0.75 \times 17) && \text{(from Schedule A)} \\
 &= 1.375 + 1.5 + 12.75 \\
 &= 15.625 \\
 &\approx 16 && \text{(rounded to an integer)} \\
 &= B2 && \text{(from Schedule A)}
 \end{aligned}$$

Suppose also that Bert's results in the same assessments are D3 and C2, and D2, respectively. His course result will be calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{course result} &= (0.125 \times D3) + (0.125 \times C2) + (0.75 \times D2) \\
 &= (0.125 \times 9) + (0.125 \times 13) + (0.75 \times 10) && \text{(from Schedule A)} \\
 &= 1.125 + 1.625 + 7.5 \\
 &= 10.25
 \end{aligned}$$

≈ 10
= D2

(rounded to an integer)
(from Schedule A)

Percentage marking is permissible in some courses (particularly in the Sciences and Engineering) but only where it is feasible to set assessment tasks that can be marked objectively and consistently for all students. In this case, a **conversion scheme** must be employed to translate percentage marks to bands. The conversion scheme should be constructed with reference to the design of these assessment tasks and their relation to ILOs. The scheme need not necessarily be linear (with ranges of equal length mapped to each band), but should be driven by the verbal descriptors associated with the grades in Schedule A.

Example 2.F

Consider a course in which there is a single in-course assessment weighted 30% and an end-of-course examination weighted 70%, both marked in percentages. Suppose that the illustrative conversion scheme shown in Table 2.2 is used for both assessments.

Carron’s results in this course are 65% and 42%, respectively.

As required by §16.24 of the Code, the result for each assessment must be converted to an alphanumeric grade before aggregating to establish the overall course result. Referring to Table 2.2, the in-course assessment result of 65% will be recorded as a B2 and the examination result of 42% as a D3.

However, these are only provisional results. The Code of Assessment requires that the conversion scheme is “determined by the Board of Examiners as appropriate for the assessment in question and subordinate to the relevant grade descriptors”. After reviewing the assessment and the students’ marks profiles for the exam the Board of Examiners could decide, for example, that exam marks in the range 49–58% (rather than 50–59%) actually demonstrate “clear attainment of most of the ILOs”, as required for grade C. Consequently, the Board of Examiners would promote any students who had achieved 49% in the exam from D1 to C3 for that exam.

Assuming that the Board ratifies Carron’s marks of B2 and D3, her course result will be calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{course result} &= (0.3 \times \text{B2}) + (0.7 \times \text{D3}) && \text{(from Table 2.2)} \\
 &= (0.3 \times 16) + (0.7 \times 9) \\
 &= 4.8 + 6.3 \\
 &= 11.1 \\
 &\approx 11 && \text{(rounded to an integer)} \\
 &= \text{D1} && \text{(from Schedule A)}
 \end{aligned}$$

D1 is Carron’s overall result for the course.

Table 2.2 An illustrative conversion scheme for percentage marking.

Percentage	0–9%	10–14%	15–19%	20–23%	24–26%	27–29%
Band	H	G2	G1	F3	F2	F1
Percentage	30–33%	34–36%	37–39%	40–43%	44–46%	47–49%
Band	E3	E2	E1	D3	D2	D1
Percentage	50–53%	54–56%	57–59%	60–63%	64–66%	67–69%
Band	C3	C2	C1	B3	B2	B1
Percentage	70–73%	74–78%	79–84%	85–91%	92–100%	
Band	A5	A4	A3	A2	A1	

2.3.2 Courses assessed only under Schedule B

§16.31 b) For a course where Schedule B is employed in relation to more than 50% by weight of the course's assessment, the mean of the relevant grade points calculated in accordance with §16.30 shall not be rounded and the result for the course shall be reported as the grade shown in Schedule B that has the range in which the mean of grade points lies.

Example 2.G

Fatima takes a course with two assessed components, a portfolio submission (weighted at 65%) and a practical presentation (weighted 35%), both assessed under Schedule B.

She achieves a grade of B0 for the portfolio and a grade of D0 for the presentation. Her course result will be calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Course result} &= (0.65 \times B0) + (0.35 \times D0) \\ &= (0.65 \times 17) + (0.35 \times 11) \\ &= 11.05 + 3.85 \\ &= 14.9 \\ &= C0 \qquad \qquad \qquad (\text{from Schedule B})\end{aligned}$$

No rounding is applied to the aggregated value. It falls within the range 12–<15 which equates to grade C0 on Schedule B, so Fatima's overall course result is C0.

2.3.3 Courses using component grades from Schedule A and Schedule B

§16.31 In order to determine the overall grade to be reported for a course the following shall apply:

- For a course where Schedule A is employed in relation to 50% or more by weight of the course's assessment, the mean of the relevant grade points calculated in accordance with §16.30 shall be rounded to an integer value.⁷ The result for the course shall be reported as the primary grade and secondary band equivalent to that integer shown in Schedule A.
- For a course where Schedule B is employed in relation to more than 50% by weight of the course's assessment, the mean of the relevant grade points calculated in accordance with §16.30 shall not be rounded and the result for the course shall be reported as the grade shown in Schedule B that has the range in which the mean of grade points lies.

Example 2.H

Gary takes a course with three assessed components, an exam (weighted 40%), an essay (40%) and a presentation (20%). The exam and essay are assessed using Schedule A and the presentation using Schedule B. Gary achieves D2 in the exam, B2 in the essay and C0 in the presentation. His course result is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Course result} &= (0.4 \times D2) + (0.4 \times B2) + (0.2 \times C0) \\ &= (0.4 \times 10) + (0.4 \times 16) + (0.2 \times 14) \\ &= 4 + 6.8 + 2.8 \\ &= 13.2 \\ &\approx 13 \qquad \qquad \qquad (\text{rounded to an integer}) \\ &= C2 \qquad \qquad \qquad (\text{from Schedule A})\end{aligned}$$

As 50% or more of the course assessment is conducted under Schedule A, the grade point value of 13.2 is rounded to the nearest integer, which is 13, giving an overall course result of C2.

⁷ A grade point mean should be rounded in accordance with the following example: 15.5 and all higher values less than 16.5 should become 16.

Example 2.I

Johanna takes a course with two components, an in-course test (weighted 35%) and a group project (weighted 65%). The test is assessed under Schedule A and she achieves E2, and the project is assessed under Schedule B and she achieves C0.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Course result} &= (0.35 \times \text{E2}) + (0.65 \times \text{C0}) \\ &= (0.35 \times 7) + (0.65 \times 14) \\ &= 2.45 + 9.1 \\ &= 11.55\end{aligned}$$

As more than 50% of the course assessment is conducted under Schedule B, the final course grade is awarded under Schedule B, and 11.55 falls within the range 9–<12 which equates to grade D0 on Schedule B, so Johanna's overall course result is D0.

2.4 Aggregation across an undergraduate non-Honours programme

§16.33 Where there is provision for assessment to be split between examination diets, a Board of Examiners shall determine and report the results for the individual components of the programme after each intermediate diet and the overall award after the final diet.

§16.34 A candidate's grade point average over a set of courses is the weighted sum of the grade points achieved by the candidate in these courses. The grade point average shall be calculated by taking the product of each course's weight and the candidate's grade points, and dividing the sum of these products by the sum of the courses' weights. The weights shall correspond to the courses' credit ratings unless specified otherwise in the relevant programme documentation. The grade point average shall be expressed to one decimal place.

An **ordinary** or **designated** degree programme consists of courses totalling at least 360 credits, including at least 60 credits at level 3. To be eligible for the award of an ordinary or designated degree, a student must meet both generic (University-wide) requirements and additional degree-specific requirements.

The first generic requirement⁸ is a grade-point average (GPA) of at least 9.0. For each course completed by the student, their grade is converted to the number as shown in [Schedules A and B](#) of the Code of Assessment, and that number is multiplied by the course's credit value to determine the number of grade points the student has earned in that course. The student's GPA is determined by adding up their total grade points and dividing by their total number of credits.

Another generic requirement is that at least 280 of the credits must be at grade A–D, and these must include at least 60 credits at level 3.

Example 2.J

Darren has completed:

seven level 1 / 2 courses, each worth 40 credits (with results A3, B2, A5, C1, B1, B3, E2),

one level 3 course worth 20 credits (with result E3)

a level 3 project worth 60 credits (with result D3) (All courses assessed under Schedule A)

His GPA is calculated as

$$(40 \times \text{A3} + 40 \times \text{B2} + 40 \times \text{A5} + 40 \times \text{C1} + 40 \times \text{B1} + 40 \times \text{B3} + 40 \times \text{E2} + 20 \times \text{E3} + 60 \times \text{D3}) / 360$$

Substitute grade point values from Schedule A

$$= (40 \times 20 + 40 \times 16 + 40 \times 18 + 40 \times 14 + 40 \times 17 + 40 \times 15 + 40 \times 7 + 20 \times 6 + 60 \times 9) / 360$$

⁸ This is expressed in the [generic undergraduate degree regulations](#).

$$= 4940 / 360$$

$$= 13.72222$$

The result is rounded to one decimal place (§16.34 CoA), thus Darren's GPA is:

$$= 13.7$$

Darren has comfortably exceeded the minimum GPA of 9.0. Moreover, he has 300 credits at grade A–D, and these include 60 credits at level 3. Therefore he qualifies for an ordinary degree (provided that he has also satisfied any degree-specific requirements).

2.5 Aggregation across an Honours or integrated masters programme

§16.33 Where there is provision for assessment to be split between examination diets, a Board of Examiners shall determine and report the results for the individual components of the programme after each intermediate diet and the overall award after the final diet.

§16.36 a) There shall be four classes of honours: first, upper second, lower second and third. A candidate who is not placed in one of the four classes shall have failed the honours programme. (This shall not prevent the award of an unclassified honours degree within the terms of regulation §16.52(d)(i)).

b) The honours class awarded shall be that shown in Schedules A and B as having the range in which the grade point average lies, except that a Board of Examiners shall have discretion as defined in the [Notes on the Schedules](#).

§16.37 a) The weighting of courses for the calculation of an Honours classification for an undergraduate Honours degree should normally follow the credit weighting of those courses in the third and fourth years of the Honours programme. These weightings must be set out in the programme specification.

b) The weighting of assessments for the calculation of an Honours classification for an integrated Masters degree should normally give weight to the third, fourth, and fifth years of the programme, with the assessment in the fifth year counting for at least 50% of the calculation. These weightings must be set out in the programme specification, and should normally fall within the range of 10:20:70 to 20:30:50.

An **Honours** programme is four years long, but only courses taken in the 3rd year (Junior Honours) and 4th year (Senior Honours) count towards the final award. The programme's assessment scheme must specify the weighting of each Junior and Senior Honours course. Each student's course results are aggregated, using these weightings, and the resulting score – the grade point average – is used to determine the final award, according to Table 2.3.

Usually the course weightings within each year correspond to their credit values and the Junior Honours and Senior Honours years are equally weighted. On some programmes, where a case has been made, the Senior Honours year as a whole may be weighted more than the Junior Honours year as a whole. The final GPA is calculated to one decimal place.

Table 2.3 Classification of Honours degrees (taken from Notes on Schedules).

Honours GPA	Honours classification
18.0 – 22.0	first class
17.1 – 17.9	<i>either first or upper second class (discretion)</i>
15.0 – 17.0	upper second class
14.1 – 14.9	<i>either upper second or lower second class (discretion)</i>
12.0 – 14.0	lower second class
11.1 – 11.9	<i>either lower second or third class (discretion)</i>
9.0 – 11.0	third class
8.1 – 8.9	<i>either third class or fail (discretion)</i>
0.0 – 8.0	Fail

See Section 2.8 below for guidelines for Boards of Examiners on the operation of discretion.

In a **Single Honours** programme, courses are usually in a single subject. Aggregation is straightforward.

Example 2.K

Consider a Single Honours programme in which the Junior and Senior Honours years are weighted 40:60. Within each year, the courses are weighted according to their credit values.

Eliza has completed four 30-credit Junior Honours courses (with results B2, B3, C0 [course assessed under Schedule B], C2), followed by two 30-credit Senior Honours courses (with results C2, E3) and a 60-credit Senior Honours dissertation (with result D1). Her Honours GPA is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Junior Honours} &= \left(\frac{30}{120} \times B2\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times B3\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times C0\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times C2\right) \\ &= \left(\frac{30}{120} \times 16\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times 15\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times 14\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times 13\right) \quad (\text{from Schedules of Assessment}) \\ &= 14.5 \quad (\text{unrounded})\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Senior Honours} &= \left(\frac{30}{120} \times C2\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times E3\right) + \left(\frac{60}{120} \times D1\right) \\ &= \left(\frac{30}{120} \times 13\right) + \left(\frac{30}{120} \times 6\right) + \left(\frac{60}{120} \times 11\right) \\ &= 10.25 \quad (\text{unrounded})\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Honours GPA} &= (0.4 \times 14.5) + (0.6 \times 10.25) \\ &= 11.95 \\ &\approx 12.0 \quad (\text{rounded to 1 decimal place})\end{aligned}$$

Eliza's Honours GPA lies within the range 12.0 – 14.0, so the Board of Examiners will award her a lower second class Honours degree.

In the same Single Honours programme, Felipe has a Junior Honours GPA of 16.5 and a Senior Honours GPA of 17.75. His overall Honours GPA is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Honours GPA} &= (0.4 \times 16.5) + (0.6 \times 17.75) \\ &= 17.25 \\ &\approx 17.3 \quad (\text{rounded to 1 decimal place})\end{aligned}$$

Felipe's Honours GPA lies within the range 17.1 – 17.9, so the Board of Examiners will have discretion to award him either a first class or an upper second class Honours degree. (See section 2.8 below for guidelines on the operation of discretion.)

In a **Joint Honours** programme, each year is divided between two subjects. Aggregation is carried out as above for each subject separately. The two subject GPAs are then aggregated and usually weighted 50:50.

Example 2.L

Consider a Joint Honours programme in subjects X and Y. In subject X the Junior and Senior Honours years are weighted 40:60. In subject Y the Junior and Senior Honours years are weighted 50:50. The two subjects are weighted 50:50.

Gert has Junior and Senior Honours GPAs of 16.0 and 16.75 in subject X, and GPAs of 14.1 and 13.275 in subject Y. His Joint Honours GPA is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{X Honours} &= (0.4 \times 16.0) + (0.6 \times 16.75) \\ &= 16.45 \quad (\text{unrounded})\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Y Honours} &= (0.5 \times 14.1) + (0.5 \times 13.275) \\ &= 13.6875 \quad (\text{unrounded})\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Joint Honours GPA} &= (0.5 \times 16.45) + (0.5 \times 13.6875) \\ &= 15.06875 \\ &\approx 15.1 \quad (\text{rounded to 1 decimal place})\end{aligned}$$

Gert's Joint Honours GPA lies within the range 15.0 – 17.0, so the Board of Examiners will award him an upper second class Honours degree. Note that his individual subject GPAs correspond to upper and lower second class, respectively, but only the joint GPA matters.

An **integrated masters** programme is five years long, where the 3rd, 4th, and 5th years count towards the final award. Aggregation is straightforward.

Example 2.M

Consider an integrated masters programme in which the 3rd, 4th, and 5th years are weighted 20:30:50. Within each year, the courses are weighted according to their credit values.

Hilda has a 3rd year GPA of 18.25, a 4th year GPA of 15.7, and a 5th year GPA of 16.15. Her overall masters GPA is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Integrated masters GPA} &= (0.2 \times 18.25) + (0.3 \times 15.7) + (0.5 \times 16.15) \\ &= 3.65 + 4.71 + 8.075 \\ &= 16.435 \\ &\approx 16.4 \quad \text{(rounded to 1 decimal place)}\end{aligned}$$

Hilda's final GPA lies within the range 15.0 – 17.0, so the Board of Examiners will award her an upper second class integrated masters degree.

2.6 Aggregation across a taught postgraduate programme

§16.39 The regulations of each award shall state:

- the minimum grade point average required for the award;
- the minimum grade required in any component or components of the programme, and such limitations on the permitted extent of compensation of performance below such minimum;
- the minimum grade point average and any other criteria, required for identified categories of the award such as with Merit or Distinction.

A **taught postgraduate** programme consists of taught courses and a dissertation or project, totalling 180 credits. Typically the taught courses are worth 120 credits and the dissertation or project 60 credits. Each student's results in the taught courses are aggregated to determine whether they are eligible to progress to the dissertation or project, or eligible to be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip).

Most taught postgraduate programmes are covered by generic (University-wide) regulations. To be eligible for a PgDip, the student must achieve a grade point average of at least 9.0 in the taught courses, with at least 80 of the credits at grade A–D. To be eligible to progress to the dissertation, the student must achieve a grade point average of at least 12.0 in the taught courses, with at least 75% of credits at grade D3 or above and none of the credits at grade G–H. To be eligible for the masters degree, the student must go on to achieve at least grade D3 in the dissertation or project.

Examiners have an element of discretion in the award of Merit and Distinction, and this is discussed at section 2.8 below.

Example 2.N

Consider a taught postgraduate programme consisting of taught courses totalling 120 credits followed by a dissertation worth 60 credits. The courses are weighted according to their credit values.

Jana has completed four 20-credit courses (with results B2, A3, D2, C3) and a 40-credit course (with result D1) (all course results taken from Schedule A). Her grade point average for the taught courses is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{taught GPA} &= \left(\frac{20}{120} \times B2\right) + \left(\frac{20}{120} \times A3\right) + \left(\frac{20}{120} \times D2\right) + \left(\frac{20}{120} \times C3\right) + \left(\frac{40}{120} \times D1\right) \\ &= \left(\frac{20}{120} \times 16\right) + \left(\frac{20}{120} \times 20\right) + \left(\frac{20}{120} \times 10\right) + \left(\frac{20}{120} \times 12\right) + \left(\frac{40}{120} \times 11\right) \text{ (from Schedule A)} \\ &= 13.33333\end{aligned}$$

≈ 13.3

(rounded to one decimal place)

Jana is eligible to progress, or to be awarded the PgDip if she prefers. If she chooses to progress, and subsequently achieves at least grade D3 in the dissertation, she will be awarded the masters degree.

In the same programme, Kurt has completed four 20-credit courses (with results D2, B3, E3, E1) and a 40-credit course (with result D3). His taught score is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{taught score} &= ({}^{20}/_{120}\times\text{D2}) + ({}^{20}/_{120}\times\text{B3}) + ({}^{20}/_{120}\times\text{E3}) + ({}^{20}/_{120}\times\text{E1}) + ({}^{40}/_{120}\times\text{D3}) \\ &= ({}^{20}/_{120}\times 10) + ({}^{20}/_{120}\times 15) + ({}^{20}/_{120}\times 6) + ({}^{20}/_{120}\times 8) + ({}^{40}/_{120}\times 9) \text{ (from Schedule A)} \\ &= 9.49999 \\ &\approx 9.5\end{aligned}$$

(rounded to one decimal place)

Ignoring for the present the possibility that he improves his performance at resit (see Chapter 3 of this Guide) Kurt is not eligible to progress. However, he is eligible to be awarded the PgDip, since his GPA for the taught courses exceeds 9.0 and he has 80 credits at grade A–D.

2.7 Aggregation across a professional programme (BDS, BVMS, MBChB)

§16.38 a) There shall be three categories of award: honours, commendation and pass. A candidate who is not placed in one of the three categories shall have failed the programme.

b) The regulations of each award shall state the requirements for the award and for the individual categories of award.

These **professional** programmes are five years long, typically highly integrated, and invariably require students to demonstrate a number of practical competencies in order to show fitness to practise.

The regulations for a particular professional programme may require aggregation of a student's results over the whole programme, or over the last few years of the programme, in order to classify the degree award, and details will be set out in the programme documentation. Students should be reminded, however, that the award of the degree does not depend only on any such aggregation but also on satisfying all the relevant component requirements at each stage. This will include achieving satisfactory performance for clinical competencies as well as in written examinations.

2.8 Guidelines on the application of Discretion when determining final Honours degree classifications, and the awards of Merit and Distinction on taught Masters degrees

The University has harmonised the ways in which Boards of Examiners are permitted to exercise discretion in determining the final awards for Honours degrees and taught Masters degrees. It should be noted that while factors which can be taken into account by Boards in the exercise of discretion have been specified (and a number of factors excluded), Boards have latitude within the set parameters as detailed in the guidance below. These guidelines must be applied by all Boards of Examiners.

The zones of discretion for Honours degree classifications are defined in the Code of Assessment, and Boards are only permitted to consider alternative classifications when a candidate's overall GPA for the award falls within these zones (see [Table 2.3 above](#)). Similarly, generic regulations for taught Masters degrees,⁹ set out the zones of discretion from which Boards are permitted to consider promotion to Merit or Distinction:

§9.2 A candidate will be eligible for the award of Merit on achieving at the first attempt:

- a grade point average of at least 15.0 in the 180 or more credits completed on the programme, and
- a grade point average of at least 14.0 in the taught courses, and
- a grade of at least C1 in the substantial independent work.

⁹ See *University Regulations 2020-21* [College of Arts](#); [College of MVLS](#); [College of Science & Engineering](#); [College of Social Sciences](#).

§9.3 Where a candidate has satisfied the requirements set out at §9.2 (b) and (c), and their grade point average for the 180 or more credits completed on the programme at the first attempt falls within the range 14.1 to 14.9 the Board of Examiners shall have discretion to make the award with Merit.

§9.4 A candidate will be eligible for the award of Distinction on achieving at the first attempt:

- a) a grade point average of at least 18.0 in the 180 or more credits completed on the programme, and
- b) a grade point average of at least 17.0 in the taught courses, and
- c) a grade of at least B1 in the substantial independent work.

§9.5 Where a candidate has satisfied the requirements set out at §9.4 (b) and (c), and their grade point average for the 180 or more credits completed on the programme at the first attempt falls within the range 17.1 to 17.9 the Board of Examiners shall have discretion to make the award with Distinction.

Guidelines

2.8.1 Criteria which cannot be used

The following **must not** be used to determine whether a candidate may be awarded a higher classification:

- GPA alone (i.e. automatic promotion for all students whose GPA is above a specified threshold);
- Rank order (i.e. the position of the candidate relative to other candidates (as ranked by GPA));
- Elimination of outlying grades (i.e. disregarding the highest and the lowest grades irrespective of how far they lie from the relevant borderline);
- Applying additional weight to the performance in any one or more component(s) of the assessment scheme, such as the dissertation/independent project.

2.8.2 A note on Good Cause

Personal circumstances/good cause claims have never been a permitted criterion in the exercise of discretion for final awards, and this position remains. The University's procedures which allow adverse circumstances to be considered and taken into account in the assessment process are detailed in §16.45 – §16.53 of the Code of Assessment (see [Chapter 5](#) of this Guide). These circumstances can only have the effect of setting aside affected elements of assessment or allowing fresh assessment attempts. If an element (or elements) of assessment have been set aside then this will be reflected in the student's GPA. So, at the stage when discretion is applied, the impact of the adverse circumstances will already have been taken into account. University procedures do not allow speculation over a candidate's achievement of ILOs in the absence of sound assessment. Using the Code of Assessment, Boards have to determine whether the candidate has undertaken a sufficient proportion of the assessment, which has not been affected by adverse circumstances, to be able to judge their standard of achievement. Where not enough assessment has been completed, candidates cannot be considered for a final Honours or PGT award at this stage.

2.8.3 Applying Discretion

In the interests of transparency, the criteria to be applied by each Exam Board in the exercise of discretion should be publicised in advance, e.g. in the programme handbook.

In addition, Boards must always record in their minutes which criteria have been applied.

Note that for subject areas that have Joint Boards with other subject areas, the criteria used by the Joint Boards may be different from those applied for Single Honours awards, and it is important to have clarity on which criteria will be applied in which context.

2.8.3 (a) Permitted criteria for the application of Discretion by Boards

Where a candidate's overall GPA falls within one of the zones of discretion determined in Note 3 of the Code of Assessment (see Table 2.3), or in regulations 9.2 to 9.5 of the generic Masters regulations, Boards should consider the following:

First:

Course grade profile.

The course grade profile of the candidate should be reviewed – taking account of course credit weighting - and if 50% or more of credit falls in the higher classification, the candidate's degree classification may be promoted.¹⁰ Weighting of grades: some degree regulations provide that in calculating a student's GPA, course grades from different years should carry different weightings. (E.g. the Code of Assessment states that for five year integrated masters programmes, the weighting applied to the final three years should be set within the range 10:20:70 to 20:30:50.) In determining whether 50% or more of course grades lie in the higher degree classification, Boards may elect to apply the same weighting to the course grades as adopted in the calculation of GPA. On the other hand, Boards may elect to disregard any such weighting and consider all course grades equally. Whichever approach is taken, each Board must be consistent for all candidates.

Having established whether 50% or more of the grades are at the higher classification, Boards may choose to promote all such candidates. Alternatively, Boards may make the judgment that such a profile does not justify promotion of any candidates.

Another permitted course of action is to consider further aspects of the grade profile, and establish specific rules which determine which candidates to promote:

Example 1. Irrespective of the number of grades in the higher classification, any grade more than one classification below those under consideration will determine that the candidate is not promoted.

E.g. A candidate in the discretionary zone for possible promotion from 2.1 to 1st class (assuming equally weighted course grades):

A3 A5 B2 A4 B2 A3 D1 A5: at least 50% of the grades are above the borderline so the student could be promoted to a first. However, the D grade determines that the candidate is not promoted.

Example 2. If grade profile is divided equally below and above the relevant borderline, a course grade in the classification either above or below the classifications under consideration will determine the outcome:

E.g. A candidate in the discretionary zone for possible promotion from 2.2. to 2.1 (assuming equally weighted course grades):

B2 B1 C2 B2 C3 D1 C3 B1: There are an equal number of grades above and below the relevant borderline but the D grade determines that the candidate is not promoted. The Board might have the rule that an A grade in the profile would balance the D grade and would therefore allow for promotion.

Note: These are only examples. Each Board may adopt its own rules in relation to grade profile, but these rules must be applied consistently to all candidates being considered by the Board.

Where the candidate is not promoted using grade profile the Board may choose to consider the following:

Review of mean scores.

Whilst the mean score (GPA) itself cannot be used to determine the outcome where a candidate is in the discretionary zone, it can be considered in the context of the grade profile in deciding whether or not to promote a candidate. Within a discretionary zone there might be different rules depending on the mean, for example:

¹⁰ On PGT programmes the credits associated with the independent work (dissertation/project) should be included when considering grade profile.

For all students in the cohort whose GPA places them in the discretionary zone for possible promotion to 1st class:

Where GPA ≥ 17.5 , grade profile of $\geq 50\%$, promote to 1st class.

Where GPA < 17.5 , grade profile of $\geq 50\%$, promote to 1st class where no grades below C.

In this example, the important point is that the GPA is not being used on its own to take the discretionary decision.

Unrounded mean

The aggregation process for calculating an overall course grade may involve rounding in the process of calculating the grade point scores and weightings of individual components of assessment. Worked examples of these calculation processes are provided in [section 2.3](#) above (see Examples 2.E and 2.F).

For courses assessed primarily under Schedule A, aggregated grade scores falling below .5 are rounded down to give the final course grade (e.g. in Example 2.E the aggregation of Bert's results for his assessment components gives 10.25 which is rounded to 10 to provide a D2 course result). Boards may decide to calculate a GPA using the unrounded grade point scores for each course¹¹ to see what effect this calculation would have on the overall GPA.

Example 2.0

Angus is a final year Honours student who achieved the following results in his Honours assessments:

Honours Course	Unrounded Course Score	Grade	Credits	Grade Points (grade score x credits)	Unrounded aggregation score (unrounded course score x credits)
A	14.2	C1	30	14x30 = 420	426
B	14.48	C1	30	14x30 = 420	434.4
C	14.49	C1	20	14x20 = 280	289.8
D	14.41	C1	20	14x20 = 280	288.2
E	15.45	B3	20	15x20 = 300	309
F	14.49	C1	20	14x20 = 280	289.8
G	15.4	B3	20	15x20 = 300	308
H	15.3	B3	20	15x20 = 300	306
I	16	B2	20	16x20 = 320	320
J	15.48	B3	10	15x10 = 150	154.8
K	14.49	C1	10	14x10 = 140	144.9
L	16.49	B2	20	16x20 = 320	329.8
Totals			240	3510	3600.7

His GPA is **14.6** and therefore falls in the discretionary zone for consideration of either upper or lower second class honours. Total Grade Points/Total Credit [3510/240 = 14.63]

Fewer than 50% of the credits are in the higher classification (130 credits at C1 and 110 at B2/B3).

If the Board chooses to refer to the unrounded course scores, the GPA is recalculated (see unrounded aggregation score in final column above) – 3600.7/240 = **15.0**

There is a marked difference between rounded and unrounded grades which the Board should take into account in exercising its discretion. In this case the candidate would be promoted as, despite the grade profile, the unrounded mean lies above the discretionary zone.

¹¹ Unrounded course grade point scores will not be available on central University records systems. Boards that elect to consider this criterion will therefore be reliant on local records of the aggregation of results.

In such cases where Boards decide to promote candidates to the higher classification after consideration of the unrounded scores, **the formally calculated GPA using the rounded course results must remain as the final GPA score on the candidate's record** and the minutes of the Board meeting should explain how discretion was applied by reviewing the unrounded course results.

In a case where there is a marked difference between GPA and unrounded mean but the unrounded mean remains below the upper threshold of the discretionary zone (e.g. GPA 14.4; unrounded mean 14.8), the Board may not promote the candidate on this basis alone, but may wish to refer to the unrounded value in combination with one or more of the other permitted criteria.

Example 2.P

Example 2.O above illustrates an extreme case where the rounding of the course aggregation scores has consistently deflated the grade point scores and therefore the GPA. A more usual grade profile is provided in this example. Alexandra is a final year student on the same Honours programme as Angus, her results are as follows:

Honours Course	Unrounded Course Score	Grade	Credits	Grade Points (grade score x credits)	Unrounded aggregation score (unrounded course score x credits)
A	14.2	C1	30	14x30 = 420	426
B	13.60	C1	30	14x30 = 420	408
C	14.49	C1	20	14x20 = 280	289.8
D	14.10	C1	20	14x20 = 280	282
E	15.10	B3	20	15x20 = 300	302
F	13.89	C1	20	14x20 = 280	277.8
G	15.4	B3	20	15x20 = 300	308
H	15.82	B2	20	16x20 = 320	316.4
I	14.89	B3	20	15x20 = 300	297.8
J	16.20	B2	10	16x10 = 160	162
K	13.70	C1	10	14x10 = 140	137
L	16.55	B1	20	17x20 = 340	331
Totals			240	3540	3537.8

Alexandra's GPA of **14.8** is in the discretionary zone for consideration of either upper or lower second class honours. Total Grade Points/Total Credit [3540/240 = 14.75]

Fewer than 50% of the credits are in the higher classification (130 credits at C1 and 110 at B1/B2/B3).

Using the unrounded course scores, the GPA is recalculated (see unrounded aggregation score in final column above) – 3537.8/240 = 14.74.

In this case there is little difference between rounded and unrounded GPA, and this should be taken into account by the Board in exercising its discretion.

2.8.3 (b) Further options that can be used

Boards may also elect to use the following criteria in their consideration of candidates with an overall GPA which falls within one of the zones of discretion:

Borderline Vivas

A small number of areas of the University have traditionally used borderline vivas. Continuation of this practice is permitted, and vivas may be arranged for all students falling within discretionary zones subject to them:

1. Being clearly structured, with guidance published to students in advance; and

2. Only being used as a possible means of promotion from borderline zones.

Exit Velocity

Exit velocity, which is the principle that students build up competence throughout their studies thus performing to a higher standard in their final assessments, is recognised in some Subject areas and is sometimes considered as a factor when determining borderline cases. In some Subjects the potential impact of exit velocity on the overall result for the final award is taken into account systematically by placing a greater weighting on later results (e.g. final Honours year results) in the calculation of the overall GPA. (Where this weighting applies, it must have been set out clearly in course documentation.) This allows all students to have an improving performance taken into account in their final results, rather than only applying the principle to borderline cases.

Where exit velocity is **not** factored into the assessment procedure through heavier weighting of later assessments, Boards may consider it for candidates who are within a zone of discretion.

2.8.4 The role of the External Examiner

In some areas External Examiners play a key role in determining the final classification of candidates in the discretionary zone by reviewing the full range of the candidate's assessments and making an overall judgement on the standard of the work.

In advance of the Board a small number of candidates might be identified who would not be promoted using the discretionary criteria adopted by the relevant Board of Examiners, but whose overall performance puts them very close to promotion (see the later example). It is essential that clear criteria are articulated which set out the circumstances in which a candidate will be regarded as being close enough to promotion to justify referral to the External Examiner. For each of the candidates identified by application of these criteria, the External Examiner may then be invited to review the assessed work contributing to their Honours classification. This review is undertaken in the context of the role of the External Examiner of safeguarding the consistency of academic standards across the sector and applying their knowledge of the standards applied by the relevant subject area at comparable institutions. The External Examiner should be asked to make an academic judgment on the assessed work. They may reach the view that the overall performance demonstrated across the body of assessed work justifies promoting the student to the higher classification.

For example, a candidate with a GPA of 17.9, and a grade profile of 48% in the higher classification and 52% in the lower classification cannot be promoted to a first class degree under the criteria listed above. (This kind of grade profile may arise on programmes where there are a large number of courses contributing to the final classification.) As the candidate's profile is very close to that required for a first class degree, the External Examiner may be asked to review the overall performance to ensure that the appropriate outcome is achieved. As this is an exercise in academic judgment it does NOT follow that where one candidate is promoted, all candidates with a similar profile must also be promoted. As in all other discretionary decisions, the reasons for the decisions must be clearly recorded in the Exam Board minutes.

Boards must ensure that external examiners are asked to judge the standard of the work without reference to any of the criteria detailed in section 2.8.1 above, or by giving emphasis to any particular assessment (such as the dissertation), and ensuring that any assessments judged to have been affected by adverse circumstances are dealt with in accordance with the procedures laid out in the Code of Assessment.

2.8.5 Consistency of criteria used in different discretionary zones

Academic Standards Committee has confirmed that the criteria adopted for *each* discretionary zone within a cohort must be equivalent. It is not acceptable to have additional criteria applying in one or more zones, as in the following example:

1st/2.1 borderline: promote if 50% or more of grade profile graded A or above, with no individual grades below C.

2.1/2.2 borderline: promote if 50% or more of grade profile graded B or above, with no individual grades below D.

2.2/3rd borderline: promote if 50% or more of grade profile graded C or above.

In this example the 2.2/3rd borderline should also refer to the individual grades permitted. Alternatively, the 1st/2.1 and 2.1/2.2 borderlines should make no reference to individual grades.

SCHEDULE A

Primary Grade	Gloss	Secondary Band*	Grade Point	Primary Verbal Descriptors for Attainment of Intended Learning Outcomes	Honours Class
A	Excellent	A1	22	Exemplary range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes, secured by discriminating command of a comprehensive range of relevant materials and analyses, and by deployment of considered judgement relating to key issues, concepts and procedures	First
		A2	21		
		A3	20		
		A4	19		
		A5	18		
B	Very Good	B1	17	Conclusive attainment of virtually all intended learning outcomes, clearly grounded on a close familiarity with a wide range of supporting evidence, constructively utilised to reveal appreciable depth of understanding	Upper Second
		B2	16		
		B3	15		
C	Good	C1	14	Clear attainment of most of the intended learning outcomes, some more securely grasped than others, resting on a circumscribed range of evidence and displaying a variable depth of understanding	Lower Second
		C2	13		
		C3	12		
D	Satisfactory [†]	D1	11	Acceptable attainment of intended learning outcomes, displaying a qualified familiarity with a minimally sufficient range of relevant materials, and a grasp of the analytical issues and concepts which is generally reasonable, albeit insecure	Third
		D2	10		
		D3	9		
E	Weak	E1	8	Attainment deficient in respect of specific intended learning outcomes, with mixed evidence as to the depth of knowledge and weak deployment of arguments or deficient manipulations	Fail
		E2	7		
		E3	6		
F	Poor	F1	5	Attainment of intended learning outcomes appreciably deficient in critical respects, lacking secure basis in relevant factual and analytical dimensions	Fail
		F2	4		
		F3	3		
G	Very Poor	G1	2	Attainment of intended learning outcomes markedly deficient in respect of nearly all intended learning outcomes, with irrelevant use of materials and incomplete and flawed explanation	Fail
		G2	1		
H			0	No convincing evidence of attainment of intended learning outcomes, such treatment of the subject as is in evidence being directionless and fragmentary	
CR	CREDIT REFUSED			Failure to comply, in the absence of good cause, with the published requirements of the course or programme; and/or a serious breach of regulations	

* The Secondary Band indicates the degree to which the work possesses the quality of the corresponding descriptor.

[†] This gloss is used because it is the lowest grade normally associated with the attainment of an undergraduate award. Undergraduate students should be aware that progress to most honours programmes require a grade above D in certain courses. Postgraduate students should be aware that on most programmes an average above D in taught courses is required for progress to the dissertation at Masters level. Students should consult the appropriate degree regulations and course handbooks for the grades they require to progress to specific awards.

SCHEDULE B

Grade	Gloss	Range of Mean Grade Points	Grade Points for Aggregation	Verbal Descriptors for Attainment of Intended Learning Outcomes Relating to Professional, Practical or Clinical Competence	Honours Class
A0	Excellent	18 – 22	22	Exemplary and polished demonstration of the required skill(s), displaying underpinning knowledge, sound judgement and appropriate professional values, as evidenced by focussed sensitivity to the context, the needs of any subject, and the wider implications of the candidate's actions	First
B0	Very Good	15 – <18	17	Efficient and confident demonstration of the required skill(s), displaying underpinning knowledge, sound judgement and appropriate professional values, as evidenced by an evident appreciation of the possible implications of the candidate's actions, demonstrating initiative and flexibility of approach	Upper Second
C0	Good	12 – < 15	14	Clear demonstration of attainment of the required skill(s), displaying underpinning knowledge, good judgement and appropriate professional values, as evidenced by familiarity with how to proceed in a range of contexts	Lower Second
D0	Satisfactory	9 – < 12	11	Adequate independent performance of required skill, displaying underpinning knowledge, adequate judgement and appropriate professional values, suitable to routine contexts	Third
E0	Weak	6 – < 9	8	Adequate independent performance of some but not all required skills. Some knowledge, judgement and professional values that indicate an awareness of personal limitations	Fail
F0	Poor	3 – < 6	5	Presently inadequate independent performance of the required skill. Knowledge, judgement and professional values are at least sufficient to indicate an awareness of personal limitations	
G0	Very Poor	1 – <3	2	Wholly inadequate performance of the required skill, lacking in secure base of relevant knowledge and poor use of such knowledge, showing fundamental misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Evidence of poor judgement and professional values	
H		0 – <1	0	Not presently capable of independent performance of the required skill, lacking self-awareness of limitations, and prone to errors of judgement and faulty practice	
CR	CREDIT REFUSED		Failure to comply, in the absence of good cause, with the published requirements of the course or programme; and/or a serious breach of regulations		

Notes on Schedules

1 Verbal Descriptors

Documentation relating to courses and programmes shall indicate where Schedule A and Schedule B verbal descriptors shall apply.

2 Discretion of Boards of Examiners for Classified Honours Programmes¹²

a) Where the grade point average (as determined in §16.34) falls within one of the following ranges, the Board of Examiners shall recommend the award stated:

18.0 to 22.0	first class Honours
15.0 to 17.0	upper second class Honours
12.0 to 14.0	lower second class Honours
9.0 to 11.0	third class Honours
0.0 to 8.0	fail

b) Where the grade point average falls between two of the ranges defined in 2(a), the Board of Examiners shall have discretion to decide which of the alternative awards to recommend:

17.1 to 17.9	either first or upper second class Honours
14.1 to 14.9	either upper or lower second class Honours
11.1 to 11.9	either lower second or third class Honours
8.1 to 8.9	either third class Honours or fail

2.9 Assessment of study abroad

§16.79 a) A candidate may undertake a period of study at another institution as part of their degree programme provided that this has been approved according to the process established for that programme.

- b) Grades achieved at, and reported by, that other institution must be converted into grades as set out in Schedule A or Schedule B (as appropriate) and taken account of in determining the candidate's final degree.
- c) Before commencing the period of study at another institution candidates must be informed of the process by which their grades from that other institution will be converted as set out in (b) and should normally be provided with a conversion table showing the equivalences between grades awarded at the other institution and the grades set out in Schedule A or Schedule B. The process must normally incorporate the possibility of the candidate making representations to the coordinator or committee which is charged with converting grades.
- d) The processes adopted within each programme and the conversion tables must be notified to the appropriate College Dean(s) of Learning & Teaching.
- e) In carrying out the conversion of grades the conversion table may be departed from in light of additional relevant information available to the coordinator or committee which performs the conversion.
- f) The converted grades must be approved by the appropriate Board of Examiners.
- g) Assessed work completed and assessed at another institution must not be reassessed at the University of Glasgow.

¹² Guidelines for Boards of Examiners on the exercise of discretion are available at: https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_124293_smxx.pdf#page=15&view=fitH,280 [footnote in the Code]

h) Appeals may be made in accordance with the terms of the prevailing Appeals Code.

This regulation sets out a number of principles regarding study abroad and conversion of grades achieved during periods of study abroad.

Some of the requirements are mandatory, but in respect of others Subjects and Schools are left with considerable discretion. The mandatory requirements are:

- Study abroad requires approval from the Subject(s) which the student is taking to ensure that the courses being taken are appropriate and at the appropriate level and that the student's workload is appropriate. It is good practice for a written agreement to be signed by the student and the appropriate member of staff setting out the subjects to be taken.
- Grades achieved while studying abroad must be converted into Glasgow grades and then used in the same way as grades achieved at Glasgow in arriving at a student's final Honours classification.
- Students must be informed of the process by which their grades will be converted before leaving for study abroad.
- Work assessed during a period of study abroad must not be reassessed by Glasgow staff after the student returns. Academic Standards Committee has also confirmed that assessments completed abroad should not form part of the material considered by an External Examiner when making discretionary decisions determining the award of Honours classification (see [section 2.8.4](#) above).
- Final approval of the converted grades is the responsibility of the Board of Examiners.

Subjects have discretion in how the process of conversion is carried out and who is involved in the process of conversion. The regulation permits conversion to be undertaken by a single individual or by a committee. Subjects will need to consider what process will work best for them and, in doing this, will need to consider:

- The need for transparency and fairness to students.
- The requirement to allow a student to make representations about the conversion, for example regarding atypical marking on a particular course.
- The number of students with grades to be converted.
- The desirability/practicability of involving an external examiner in the conversion process.
- The need for consistency of treatment across subjects.

There is no specific approval process for the conversion process, but it should be notified to the appropriate Dean of Learning & Teaching. Deans will be expected to scrutinise these processes and resolve any concerns with the Subject.

Subsection (c) suggests that students should be provided with an indicative conversion table before they set off to study abroad, so that they can get a sense of how grades achieved abroad will be converted on their return. It is recognised, however, that this will not always be possible, for example in the case of an entirely new exchange. Provision of such guidance should, however, normally be possible where there is previous experience with the partner institution. Any conversion tables may, however, be departed from in light of fresh information, either as regards a particular course or more generally, and this should be made clear to students. Conversion tables should also be reviewed periodically. Proposals for changes to the tables should be submitted

to the Translation of Grades from Study Abroad Sub-Committee for approval and publication in the University's Consolidated Conversion Tables.

Semester 2 Study Abroad: In some cases study abroad may be for one semester only. Where students are away from Glasgow for semester 2, assessment from semester 1 courses may remain outstanding (e.g. where an exam is scheduled for the April/May diet) and it will be impracticable for the student to return to Glasgow for this. For non-Honours courses, the assessment may be taken at the August resit diet. For Honours courses, where no assessment is set for the August diet, students may complete the assessment at the next opportunity (e.g. at the April/May diet in the following year) unless an alternative form of assessment, which can be completed at the end of semester 1, has been arranged.

2.10 Assessment of visiting students

§16.80 A visiting candidate is a candidate undertaking a period of study at the University of Glasgow as part of their degree programme at another institution.

A visiting candidate may be permitted to take any course at the University of Glasgow, including those which normally contribute to an honours programme.

The scheme of assessment for a course shall normally be the same for a visiting candidate as for a University of Glasgow candidate, though this scheme may be varied in the event that the visiting candidate is required to return to their home institution before all course assessment has been completed. In considering variation of the scheme of assessment and the components of a varied scheme of assessment for a visiting candidate:

- a) Requirements of the visiting candidate's home institution shall be taken into account
- b) A visiting candidate may be required to complete an alternative component or components of assessment before leaving Glasgow or may be required to complete outstanding components of assessment at their home institution.
- c) Where a course's scheme of assessment includes a component taken under examination conditions, the varied scheme shall normally include a component of assessment under examination conditions.

A visiting candidate who attends the University of Glasgow for less than the full duration of a course shall be awarded credit in proportion to the amount of teaching time attended.

Course results for a visiting candidate must be confirmed by a University of Glasgow Board of Examiners. Where a visiting candidate finishes their studies at Glasgow before the scheduled meeting of the Board of Examiners, provisional results must be provided to the visiting candidate as soon as practicable. Where the candidate's home institution requires a confirmed result prior to the scheduled meeting of the University of Glasgow Board of Examiners, an interim Board must be convened.

This regulation is intended to provide a cross-University framework for the assessment of students who spend part of their time studying in Glasgow, for example as part of an exchange or Junior Year Abroad. In some cases the student will be here for the whole of the course and will be assessed in the normal way, for example a student taking a semester 1 course will normally still be here for the exam period in December. In some cases, however, the student will not be in Glasgow when final assessment for the course takes place. This may be because they were only taking part of a course (for example, the first semester of a whole year course) or where the student has to return to their institution before the exam diet in April/May. In the latter case it may, of course, be possible to arrange for the exam to be undertaken at the home institution, and it would only be where that is difficult or impossible that this regulation would apply.

The general principles set out in the regulation are that:

- Visiting students may undertake any course offered at the University, though Schools/Subjects may impose restrictions on access.
- Normally the visiting student is assessed in the same way as other students, using the normal scheme of assessment for the course. Note that this means reassessments may not always be available to visiting students (e.g. where they are taking Honours courses).
- Where assessment by the normal scheme is not possible then the course convenor has discretion to set a suitable *alternative* form of assessment. (It would not be appropriate to award a course grade solely on the basis of the standard assessment components completed by a student. E.g. for a semester 1 visiting student who takes a course that has a 50% weighted exam at the April/May diet, a grade should not be awarded solely on the basis of the remaining 50% weighted components completed during the semester. It will be a question of academic judgment as to what alternative assessment would be suitable to ensure demonstration by the visiting student of the Intended Learning Outcomes that would have been covered at the April/May exam.) The only restriction on the alternative assessment is that if the normal scheme includes an exam then the amended assessment scheme must include an assessment taken under exam conditions. This need not be an exam, but could, for example, be an essay written under exam conditions where the topic has been given to the student in advance.

Alternative assessment arrangements must be made clear to visiting students, but do not need to appear in the Course Catalogue/Course Specification.

In some cases home institutions will need to be provided with a grade before the relevant Board of Examiners for the subject meets. In such cases, an interim Board of Examiners must be convened, though this could take the form of a virtual Board of Examiners, and the appropriate External Examiner must be involved.