

SECTION 16: AWARDS: GENERAL

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16.1 INTRODUCTION

Programmes of study for awards are prescribed in the relevant programme specification.

Awards are determined by the Examiners exercising their judgement as to whether the candidate has fulfilled the descriptors for the award based on the criteria specified in the award rules. If the award is classified, the Examiners exercise their judgement to determine the classification which best represents the candidate's achievement based on the criteria specified in the classification rules for each award, which variously include: overall level of performance (the weighted average of the marks across the programme or the relevant Parts), the profile of marks overall, the profile of marks for each Part which contributes to the final examination, and any specific restriction which may apply (for accreditation or other proper purposes), with due account taken of any relevant special circumstances.

16.2 ANONYMITY

The Senate has decided that, in the awarding process, the anonymity of candidates should be preserved until results have been agreed.

16.3 CALCULATING AVERAGES FOR CLASSIFICATION

Modules are weighted for classification purposes in accordance with their number of credits and, for undergraduate programmes, the provisions contained in section 17.3 and 17.5(b) below.

The average mark of a Part and the overall weighted average of the full set of marks used for classification should be calculated to one decimal place, with the second decimal place being rounded

up if it is 5 or greater and rounded down if it is less than 5. The overall weighted average should be calculated from the full set of marks (with the relevant weightings by credit and Part) and not from a combination of the rounded averages of Parts.

16.4 EXAMINERS' DISCRETION WITHIN AWARDING RULES

The University's awarding rules for Foundation Degree, undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes lay down guidelines for the award of the degrees and the various classifications within them. The examiners are asked to use their professional judgement in setting, marking and moderating students' work to ensure that the marks awarded for the various components conform to descriptors specified for the relevant awards. These give verbal descriptions of the sort of performance required for the award of a mark in the various classes.

In awarding Merits and Distinctions for Foundation Degrees, the various degree classes for first degrees and Merits and Distinctions for taught postgraduate degrees there is inevitably a need to balance the components where a student's performance is not completely uniform. The University's classification rules are in place to ensure, as far as possible, that students are treated equally across the University. This does not remove the Examiners' need for judgement but the requirement for equity inevitably reduces their freedom of action.

The Examiners need to be content that the modules have been appropriately marked, and these marks form the basis of subsequent calculations. Even where this is the case, there will occasionally be cases where the proposed overall result of a candidate does not match with the Examiners' judgement. In such cases the Examiners may wish to look at the marks for those components which have the greatest influence on the overall outcome, and satisfy themselves that the individual performances correspond to the marks awarded. Having done this, the Examiners may still judge that a candidate's overall result does not correspond to the qualitative description of the proposed award. Where this is the case, the Examiners have the discretion to raise the class awarded, provided their reasons are clearly stated in the minutes of the Examiners' Meeting and that the criteria justifying this decision are applied to all candidates. The Examiners may not award a class lower than that calculated by the awarding procedures. The reasons for varying an award should be academically justified and may be based on accepted practice in the sector. They may not be based on the Examiners' preference for a different set of awarding procedures.

[Approved by the University Board for Teaching and Learning, Spring Term 2006]

16.5 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

See the University's [Policy on and procedures relating to extenuating circumstances](#).

16.6 AEGROTAT

In accordance with Ordinance C4 (III), a qualification with an Aegrotat Pass may be awarded to a candidate for a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree (other than MPhil by Thesis), Diploma or Certificate who is prevented by reason of illness or other incapacity from completing the assessment for a degree, provided that the Internal and External Examiners for the programme and the relevant University Board are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the candidate merits such an award. The award of an Aegrotat is subject to the approval of Senate. A qualification with an Aegrotat Pass shall not be placed in a class.

Assessment Handbook: Section 16

In the case of candidates in the Final Part of an undergraduate programme and candidates for postgraduate taught programmes, the relevant Programme Examiners' Meeting shall be responsible, on the recommendation of the University Standing Committee on Special Cases, for agreeing to recommend, through the University Awarding Board, to the Senate the award of a qualification with an Aegrotat Pass.

In the case of candidates in Part 1 or Part 2 of an undergraduate programmes, the relevant University Progression Board shall be responsible, on the recommendation of the University Standing Committee on Special Cases, for agreeing to recommend, to the Senate the award of a Certificate of Higher Education with an Aegrotat Pass or Diploma of Higher Education with an Aegrotat Pass.

The award of an Aegrotat will normally have been discussed with the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean, the School Director of Academic Tutoring, and the External Examiners in advance of the University Standing Committee on Special Cases.

16.7 TUITION FEE DEBT AND RESULTS

No recommendation shall be submitted to the Senate in respect of a candidate who is in debt to the University in respect of tuition fees. When the debt has been settled, a recommendation will be considered and the result published. If the candidate is eligible for an award, they will graduate at the degree congregations following the approval of the result. If the candidate has failed at the first attempt, they have the right to be re-examined in relevant modules at the next opportunity, provided that the debt has been settled and the result released within eighteen months of the decision that there be no recommendation.

16.8 OTHER OUTCOMES

In addition to the results available at undergraduate and postgraduate level, as specified in Sections 17 to 24 of the Assessment Handbook, the following outcomes are also available:

Deemed Not To Have Sat: A candidate may at the discretion of the Examiners be deemed not to have sat in the examination if the candidate has been prevented from sitting the examination by illness or other good cause or if the candidate's performance in the examination has been significantly affected by illness or other serious personal circumstance;

Result Not Yet Available: Where a result is not yet available for a candidate, this shall be stated on the results list;

No recommendation submitted to the Senate: As stated above, no recommendation shall be submitted to the Senate in respect of a candidate who has an outstanding tuition debt to the University.