

# SECTION 17: AWARDS: BACHELORS

**(excluding Ordinary Degrees. For Ordinary Degrees, see section 23)**

Please see Section 16 for guidance which applies to all awards, including provisions for an Aegrotat award (in cases where a student is prevented by illness or personal circumstances from completing the assessment for an award), and procedures in the case of tuition fee debt. For information about extenuating circumstances procedures, please refer to section 8.

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## 17.1 CLASSIFICATIONS

Bachelor's degrees with Honours may be awarded with the following classifications:

First Class

Second Class Division 1

Second Class Division 2

Third Class

A Pass degree may be awarded for Bachelor's degrees where the student has followed an Honours programme.

Candidates who have failed to fulfil the requirements for a Pass degree shall be stated to have Failed, but may be eligible for an alternative qualification. Ordinary Degrees shall normally not be granted to any candidate who after sitting the Part 3 Examination for an Honours Degree does not meet the requirements for that Honours Degree.

An Aegrotat degree may be awarded to a candidate who is prevented by reason of illness or other incapacity from completing the assessment for a degree, in accordance with Ordinance C4(III). An Aegrotat degree is not classified. See section 16.6 for further information on an Aegrotat.

## 17.2 WEIGHTING

The awarding of three-year Bachelor's degrees will be based on the marks of Part 2 and Part 3 weighted 1:2. The awarding of four-year Bachelor's degrees (except for programmes incorporating a placement year or a year abroad) will normally be based on the marks for Years 2, 3 and 4, weighted 1:1:4.

In the case of four-year Bachelor's degree programmes with an industrial placement year, the placement year may be pass/fail or may contribute to the degree classification. In the latter case, normally, Year 2 will contribute 23% of the overall assessment, the placement year 10% of the overall assessment and Year 4 will contribute 67% of the overall assessment. Exceptions to this arrangement are set out in Annex 1 of this section. The programme specification will set out the manner in which the placement year will contribute.

Certain other four-year Bachelor's degree programmes, notably those with a year abroad, have been approved by Senate under exceptional arrangements. These are given in Annex 1.

For professional accreditation or exceptionally pressing academic reasons, exceptions to this pattern may be approved by the University Board for Teaching and Learning and the Senate.

## 17.3 DEFINITIONS FOR AWARDING OF BACHELOR'S (EXCLUDING ORDINARY) DEGREES

The following definitions apply in the awarding method for Bachelor's (excluding Ordinary) degrees:

### **Average Mark of a Part**

In calculating the average mark for a Part, modules are weighted by their number of credits.

The average mark of a Part 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.

Where it has been agreed that a programme includes a module assessable on a PASS/FAIL basis, the calculation of the average shall exclude such modules.

### **Overall Weighted Average**

The overall weighted average for a three-year Bachelor's degree is calculated as follows:

$(1/3 \times \text{average Part 2 mark}) + (2/3 \times \text{average Part 3 mark}) = \text{overall weighted average}$

The overall weighted average for a four-year Bachelor's degree without placement or a year abroad is calculated as follows:

$(1/3 \times (\text{average Year 2 mark} + \text{average Year 3 mark})) + (2/3 \times \text{average Year 4 mark}) = \text{overall weighted average}$

For four-year Bachelor's degree programmes with an industrial placement year, the placement year may be pass/fail or may contribute to the degree classification. In the latter case, normally, Year 2 will contribute 23% of the overall assessment, the placement year 10% of the overall assessment and Year 4 will contribute 67% of the overall assessment. Exceptions to this arrangement are set out in Annex 1. The programme specification will set out the manner in which the placement year will contribute.

Programmes which Senate has agreed be assessed in ways different from this are listed in Annex 1.

The overall weighted average 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.

### **Final Year Honours Credit Requirement (Bachelor)**

The requirement that candidates for a Bachelor's degree achieve 80 credits in their Final Part with a mark of at least 40, which is a condition for the award of a Bachelor's degree with classified Honours.

Where it has been agreed that a programme includes a module assessable on a PASS/FAIL basis, a module which has a result of Pass shall contribute to the Final Year Honours Credit Requirement.

### **Final Year BHS Credit Requirement**

The requirement that candidates for a Bachelor's degree achieve 80 credits in their Final Part with a mark of at least 35 which is a condition for the result of Pass.

Where it has been agreed that a programme includes a module assessable on a PASS/FAIL basis, a module which has a result of Pass shall contribute to the Final Year BHS Credit Requirement.

### **Dominant Quality**

The class which best represents the profile; that is, the highest class in or above which at least half of the marks fall weighted according to the number of credits and to the Part in the same proportion as in the weighted average mark.

Where it has been agreed that a programme includes a module assessable on a PASS/FAIL basis, the calculation of dominant quality shall exclude such modules.

### Exit Velocity

The comparison of the marks in the final Part in relation to earlier marks to determine whether the candidate's performance is improving or declining in the final Part of the programme. The Exit Velocity of a candidate is the class in which the candidate's average performance in the final Part of the programme lies.

Where it has been agreed that a programme includes a module assessable on a PASS/FAIL basis, the calculation of exit velocity shall exclude such modules.

### Absolute Significant Weakness

Failure to achieve a specified minimum mark in a designated module (a 'hurdle') which leads automatically to failure of the degree or to restriction to no more than a Pass degree, where available. (Provisions relating to such 'hurdles' must be stated fully in the Programme Specification and the Programme Handbook; the information provided must specify whether failure in a 'hurdle' entails failure in the degree or restriction to a Pass degree. It is intended that the number of such 'hurdles' should be kept to a minimum.)

### Borderlines

In respect of the overall weighted average, all programmes use the same ranges for determining candidates within a borderline, as follows:

Bachelor	Boundary	Borderline BELOW
	1st/2i	68.0 – 69.9
	2i/2ii	58.0 – 59.9
	2ii/3rd	48.0 – 49.9
	3rd/BHS	38.0 – 39.9
	BHS/Fail	33.0 – 34.9

## 17.4 AWARDING METHOD FOR BACHELOR'S DEGREES (EXCLUDING ORDINARY): SUMMARY

The Senate has approved the following awarding method for Bachelor's degrees, which requires that the same criteria be applied in the same order for all such programmes.

### Bachelor's degree with Honours

The Final Year Honours Credit Requirement (Bachelor) should be applied. If the Final Year Honours Credit Requirement (Bachelor) has been fulfilled (i.e. the candidate has achieved 80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 40), consideration can be given to the classification of the degree.

The Overall Weighted Average should then be used to place the candidate in a class.

For those in the borderline below a class:

If the Dominant Quality or the Exit Velocity is in (or higher than) the class above the borderline, the candidate should normally be raised to the class above the borderline.

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If the Dominant Quality and Exit Velocity are in (or lower than) the class of the overall weighted average, the candidate should normally be left in that class.

Supplementary conventions relating to specified programmes under the provisions of Section 17.5(d) are applied (including any provisions relating to Absolute Significant Weakness).

### **Bachelor's degrees (excluding Ordinary): Pass**

If the candidate for a Bachelor's degree has not fulfilled the criteria for an Honours classification, consideration should be given to whether the candidate has fulfilled the criteria for a Pass.

The Final Year BHS Credit Requirement should be applied. If that requirement has been fulfilled (i.e. the candidate has achieved 80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 35), the further criteria for a Pass should be applied:

If the overall weighted average is 35 or more, the candidate qualifies for a Pass.

For those in the borderline below the Pass band:

If the Dominant Quality or the Exit Velocity is in (or higher than) the Pass band, the candidate should normally be raised to Pass.

If the Dominant Quality and the Exit Velocity are in the Fail band, the candidate should normally be left in the Fail category.

Supplementary conventions relating to specified programmes under the provisions of Section 17.5(d) are applied (including any provisions relating to Absolute Significant Weakness).

## **17.5 AWARDING METHOD FOR BACHELOR'S (EXCLUDING ORDINARY): DETAILED PROCEDURE**

- a) In order to be eligible for a three-year Bachelor's degree, a candidate must have completed 360 credits (of which not less than 100 shall normally be at level 6 or above) and to have fulfilled the conditions given below.

For four-year Bachelor's degrees candidates must have completed 480 credits (of which not less than 100 shall normally be at level 6 or above) and such additional requirements as Senate shall have approved in the programme specification.

- b) The classification of a three-year Bachelor's degree shall be based on the marks for Part 2 and Part 3, weighted in a ratio of 1:2. The classification of four-year Bachelor's degrees without placement or a year abroad shall be based on marks weighted in accordance with the conventions specified in Section 17.2 above.

### **c) Bachelor's degrees (excluding Ordinary)**

#### **(i) Awards**

The following conditions should be satisfied for the award of a Bachelor's degree (excluding Ordinary):

Where the conditions for a higher class have been met, the higher class should be awarded.

### **First Class**

80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 40

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and

[An overall weighted average of at least 70

or

An overall weighted average of at least 68, provided that half or more of the weighted credits have a mark in the range 70-100

or

An overall weighted average of at least 68, provided that the average for modules taken in Part 3 is 70 or more]

**Second Class Division 1**

80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 40

and

[An overall weighted average within the range 60.0-69.9

or

An overall weighted average of at least 58, provided that half or more of the weighted credits have a mark of 60 or more

or

An overall weighted average of at least 58, provided that the average for modules taken in Part 3 is 60 or more]

**Second Class Division 2**

80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 40

and

[An overall weighted average within the range 50.0-59.9

or

An overall weighted average of at least 48, provided that half or more of the weighted credits have a mark of 50 or more

or

An overall weighted average of at least 48, provided that the average for modules taken in Part 3 is 50 or more]

**Third Class**

80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 40

and

[An overall weighted average within the range 40.0-49.9

or

An overall weighted average of at least 38, provided that half or more of the weighted credits have a mark of 40 or more

or

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An overall weighted average of at least 38, provided that the average for modules taken in Part 3 is 40 or more]

**Pass**

80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 35

and

[An overall weighted average within the range 35.0-39.9

or

An overall weighted average of at least 33, provided that half or more of the weighted credits have a mark of 35 or more

or

An overall weighted average of at least 33, provided that the average for modules taken in Part 3 is 35 or more]

**(ii) Fail**

Candidates who do not fulfil these criteria and any supplementary conventions shall be stated to have Failed. Candidates who have failed may be eligible for a lesser award.

**d) Supplementary conventions relating to specified programmes**

School Boards of Teaching and Learning may recommend to the University Programmes Board in respect of specified programmes further provisions relating to designated modules, including provisions in respect of Absolute Significant Weakness and other requirements relating to the achievement of minimum marks. Such provisions must be stated in the Programme Specification and in the Programme Handbook. While it is intended that such supplementary conventions be kept to a minimum, it is recognized that programmes which bear professional accreditation (or the equivalent) may be subject to a number of supplementary conventions.

**e) Examiners' Discretion**

Examiners may recommend a higher classification than the guidelines imply, where they deem this to be appropriate. The grounds for such a recommendation must be recorded in the Programme Examiners' Meeting Minutes. In order to ensure transparency and support consistency, all such recommendations must be approved by the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean before being reported to the relevant University Awarding Board.

A statement clarifying the conditions under which Examiners might properly exercise discretion to agree a classification at variance with the algorithm contained in the Assessment Handbook is included in Section 16.4.

## 17.6 PROVISIONS IN THE EVENT THAT ASSESSMENT MARKS ARE NOT AVAILABLE AS A CONSEQUENCE OF MAJOR DISRUPTION

17.6.1 In circumstances in which the University's academic provision has been significantly disrupted by matters outwith the University's control, the Senate [or body acting on behalf of the Senate] may activate the provisions specified in this sub-section of the Assessment Handbook. Matters outwith the University's control include but are not limited to strikes and industrial action, staff illness, severe weather, natural disaster, epidemic or pandemic, fire, war, civil disorder or unrest, riot, terrorist attack or the threat of it, and restrictions imposed by the government or public authorities.

17.6.2 The provisions apply only to those candidates for whom assessment marks are not available as a consequence of matters outwith the University's control, as specified in 17.6.1 above. The Programme Examiners are responsible for satisfying themselves that marks are not available wholly or partly as a result of matters outwith the University's control, and, on this basis, determine in respect of each candidate whether these provisions or the standard provisions for classification should apply.

### 17.6.3 Calculation of marks

In the event that marks are available for some, but not all, components of the assessment for a module, the School responsible for the module shall, where it is reasonably possible, derive a mark for the module from those components for which a mark is available.

### 17.6.4 Classification

17.6.4.1 Provided that the candidate has at least 80 credits with marks in each Part or, where a Part extends over two years, sub-Part which contributes to classification, the candidate shall be classified in accordance with the stipulations specified in this section (17.6).

The following amendments to the standard definitions apply:

The **Final Year Honours Requirement (Bachelor)** (i.e. 80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 40) shall remain a condition of achieving a Bachelor's degree with Honours.

The **Final Year BHS Requirement** (i.e. 80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 35) shall remain a condition of achieving a Pass degree.

The **Overall Weighted Average** shall be calculated on the basis of those credits for which marks are available, with the average for each Part contributing to the Overall Weighted Average in accordance with the specified proportions, notwithstanding any variation in the number of credits with marks in each Part.

**Exit Velocity** (i.e. weighted average for the Final Part) shall be calculated on the basis of those credits for which marks are available.

**Dominant Quality** shall be calculated on the basis of those credits for which marks are available, with the number of credits scaled up to 120 for each Part (or sub-Part) and then weighted in accordance with the specified proportions for each Part or sub-Part.

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For avoidance of doubt, the **Absolute Significant Weakness** rule (whereby failure to achieve a specified minimum mark in a designated module (a 'hurdle') leads automatically to failure of the degree or to restriction to no more than a Pass degree, where available) shall apply where the mark for the designated module is available, and shall not apply where the mark for the designated module is not available.

Programmes accredited by a PSRB are also subject to the stipulation in 17.6.4.3.

17.6.4.2 In the case of candidates who have less than 80 credits with marks, the University Awarding Board, in close consultation with Programme Examiners and with reference to External Examiners, are required to consider each case on its merits and submit a recommendation to the Senate with a brief indication of the principles which have informed the decision. The University Awarding Board, in considering such cases, shall take due account of a range of evidence, which may include performance during the programme. Programmes accredited by a PSRB are also subject to the stipulation in 17.6.4.3.

17.6.4.3 In the case of programmes accredited by a PSRB, these provisions are subject to confirmation from the PSRB that they are content that the modules for which marks are available are adequate to their requirements for an accredited degree. In the event that they are not, an alternative non-accredited degree may be awarded or, as appropriate, the student may be Deemed Not to have Sat and have a further opportunity to sit the assessment (if the full complement of assessments has not been taken) or wait for completed assessments to be marked.

17.6.4.4 In the event that, following classification under these provisions, further marks contributing to a student's classification become available, the relevant Programme Examiners and University Awarding Board shall reconsider the candidate at their subsequent meetings. The Programme Examiners shall reconsider the candidate's marks to determine whether the candidate should be awarded a higher result or classification. Reconsideration of a Finalist's marks shall not lead to a lower classification than the classification originally agreed.

### Document control

Version	Section	Keeper	Reviewed	Approving authority	Approval date	Start date	Next review
1.0	CQSD	KHSS	3 years	UBTLSE			
1.1	CQSD	KHSS	3 years	UBTLSE	03/11/21	19/04/22	01/09/2024
1.2	CQSD	KHSS	3 years	UBTLSE	06/06/23	25/09/2023	01/09/2024

# PROGRAMMES FOR WHICH EXCEPTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY SENATE

## Programmes in the School of Modern Languages

In order to be eligible for a four-year Bachelor's degree in the School of Modern Languages which incorporate a language year abroad a candidate must have completed 480 credits (of which not less than 180 credits shall normally be at level 6 or above, except in the case where a candidate is deemed to have achieved a Pass).

In the case of programmes in the School of Modern Languages incorporating a language year abroad, the overall weighted average is calculated as follows:

$(1/6 \times \text{average Year 2 mark}) + (1/6 \times \text{average Year Abroad mark}) + (4/6 \times \text{average Year 4 mark}) = \text{overall weighted average}$

## Programmes in Art

In order to be eligible for a four-year BA in Art, a candidate must have completed 480 credits (of which 140 must be at level 6). Certain modules in Years 2-4 serve a purely formative function. The overall weighted average for the single Honours four-year Art programme is based upon a weighting of 1:2:7 between the Years 2, 3 and 4; this weighting also informs the overall weighted average for joint programmes involving Art.

## Programme in Speech and Language Therapy

In order to be eligible for a four-year BSc in Speech and Language Therapy, a candidate must have completed 480 credits (of which 150 must be at level 6).

The overall weighted average for the BSc in Speech and Language Therapy is calculated as follows:

$(0.2 \times \text{average Year 2 mark}) + (0.3 \times \text{average Year 3 mark}) + (0.5 \times \text{average Year 4 mark}) = \text{overall weighted average}$

## Programmes in Environmental Sciences with placement year

In order to be eligible for a four-year BSc in an Environmental Sciences programme with a placement year, a candidate must have completed 480 credits (of which 100 must be at level 6).

In respect of cohorts admitted in October 2005 and thereafter, the overall weighted average for four-year BSc programmes in Environmental Sciences is calculated as follows:

$(0.297 \times \text{average Year 2 mark}) + (0.033 \times \text{placement mark}) + (0.67 \times \text{average Year 4 mark}) = \text{overall weighted average}$

## Programme in BA(Ed)

Special arrangements apply to the classification of the BA(Ed) programme due to the complex professional requirements of the programme.

## Programme in Architecture

Given the exceptional stringency of the classification rules for the BSc (Honours) Architecture (which require students to achieve a mark of 40% or more in specified modules amounting to 100 credits in the final year), students who have failed one or more of the specified modules are subject to a variation on the standard regulations relating to the eligibility for, and consequences of, reassessment. This provision means that, in specified circumstances, the student will be permitted to be reassessed and, if successful in the reassessment, will retain eligibility for a classified Honours degree.

In accordance with the classification rules for the BSc (Honours) Architecture, students are required *inter alia* to achieve a mark of 40% in non-elective modules in Part 3, which amount to 100 credits, in order to qualify for the BSc (Honours) Architecture.

In the event that a student fails to achieve 40% in one or more non-elective final year modules, they will be eligible to be reassessed on one occasion provided that they have fulfilled at the first attempt the baseline criteria for a classified Honours degree stipulated in the University's standard Awarding Method for three-year Bachelors' degrees. A student in this position will be stated to have Failed (Eligible for reassessment for Honours). The baseline criteria for a classified Honours degree under the University's standard Awarding Method are:

80 credits in the Final Part with marks of at least 40

and

[An overall weighted average within the range 40.0-49.9

or

An overall weighted average of at least 38, provided that half or more of the weighted credits have a mark of 40 or more

or

An overall weighted average of at least 38, provided that the average for modules taken in Part 3 is 40 or more]

(Assessment Handbook, section 17.5(c)(i)—criteria for Third Class

[http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/17\\_Awards\\_Bachelors\\_degrees\\_with\\_annex.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/17_Awards_Bachelors_degrees_with_annex.pdf))

A student who is reassessed under this provision will not be limited to a Pass degree. A student who, having been reassessed under this provision, achieves a mark of 40% or more in the reassessed module(s) will qualify for the BSc (Honours) Architecture, but the classification will be calculated on the basis of marks at the first attempt.

A student who is eligible to be re-assessed under this provision, but chooses not to be reassessed, will be eligible to transfer to the BSc in [Architectural Studies] and will qualify for classified Honours. The BSc (Honours) [Architectural Studies] is not an accredited degree and does not lead to qualification as an architect.

It should be noted that these exceptional provisions in respect of re-assessment do not apply where a student has not met the criteria for a classified Honours degree stipulated in the University's standard

Awarding Method for three-year Bachelors' degrees. Where a student has not met these criteria, the standard University regulations relating to Pass and Fail apply.