

# SECTION 22: AWARDS: FOUNDATION DEGREES

## For students who started their programme of study in the 2022/23 academic year onwards.

Please see Section 16 for guidance which applies to all awards, 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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## 22.1 CLASSIFICATION

Foundation Degrees may be awarded with the following classifications:

Distinction

Merit

## Passed

Candidates who have failed to fulfil the requirements for Passed shall be stated to have Failed, but may be eligible for an alternative qualification.

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

## 22.2 WEIGHTING

The awarding of Foundation Degrees will be based on the marks of Part 2 only.

## 22.3 DEFINITIONS FOR FOUNDATION DEGREES

The following definitions apply in the awarding method for Foundation Degrees:

### **Part 2 Average**

The Part 2 average for a two-year Foundation Degree is the average of all Part 2 modules, weighted by credit value.

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.

### **Part 2 Foundation Degree Credit Requirement**

The requirement that candidates for a Foundation Degree achieve 80 credits in Part 2 with a mark of at least 40 and 120 credits with a mark of 30 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 Part 2 Foundation Degree 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.

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.

### **Absolute Significant Weakness (Foundation Degrees)**

Failure to achieve a specified minimum mark in a designated module (a 'hurdle') which leads automatically to failure of the degree (Provisions relating to such 'hurdles' must be stated fully in the Programme Specification and the Programme Handbook. It is intended that the number of such 'hurdles' should be kept to a minimum.)

## Borderlines

In respect of the overall average, the ranges for determining candidates within a borderline are as follows:

Foundation Degree	Boundary	Borderline BELOW
	Distinction/Merit	68.0 – 69.9
	Merit/Pass	58.0 – 59.9

## 22.4 AWARDING METHOD FOR FOUNDATION DEGREES: SUMMARY

The Senate has approved the following awarding method for Foundation Degrees, which requires that the same criteria be applied in the same order for all such programmes.

The Part 2 Foundation Degree Credit Requirement should be applied. If the Part 2 Foundation Degree Credit Requirement has been fulfilled (i.e. the candidate has achieved 80 credits with a mark of at least 40 and 120 credits with a mark of 30), consideration can be given to the classification of the degree.

The Part 2 Average should then be used to place the candidate in a class, as follows:

Distinction	70.0 - 100
Merit	60.0 - 67.9
Passed	40.0 – 59.9

For those in the borderline below a class:

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

If the Dominant Quality is 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 22.5(d) are applied (including any provisions relating to Absolute Significant Weakness).

## 22.5 AWARDING METHOD FOR FOUNDATION DEGREES: DETAILED PROCEDURE

- a) In order to be eligible for a two-year Foundation Degree, a candidate must have completed 240 credits (of which not less than 100 shall normally be at Level 5 or above) and to have fulfilled the conditions given below.
- b) The classification of a two-year Foundation degree shall be based on the average of all Part 2 modules.

### (i) Awards

The following conditions should be satisfied for the award of a Foundation Degree:

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

### **Distinction**

80 credits in Part 2 with marks of at least 40

and

120 credits in Part 2 with marks of at least 30

and

[An overall 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]

### **Merit**

80 credits in Part 2 with marks of at least 40

and

120 credits in Part 2 with marks of at least 30

and

[An overall average within 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]

### **Pass**

80 credits in Part 2 with marks of at least 40

and

120 credits in Part 2 with marks of at least 30

and

An overall average within range 40.0-59.9

#### **(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.

#### **c) 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.

#### d) 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.

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

22.6.1 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.

22.6.2 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 22.6.1 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.

#### 22.6.3 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.

#### 22.6.4 Classification

22.6.4.1 Provided that the candidate has at least 80 credits with marks in each Part, the candidate shall be classified in accordance with the stipulations specified in this section (22.6). The following amendments to the standard definitions apply:

The **Part 2 Foundation Degree Credit Requirement** shall continue to require that the student achieve 80 credits with marks of at least 40 at Part 2 and shall require that none of the credits for which marks are available has a mark below 30. 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 Part 2 Foundation Degree Credit Requirement.

The **Overall Weighted Average** shall be calculated on the basis of those credits for which marks are available.

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**Dominant Quality** shall be calculated on the basis of those credits for which marks are available. 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.

For avoidance of doubt, the **Absolute Significant Weakness (Foundation Degrees)** rule (whereby failure to achieve a specified minimum mark in a designated module (a 'hurdle') leads automatically to failure of the degree) 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 22.6.4.3.

22.6.4.2 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 22.6.4.3.

22.6.4.3 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.

22.6.4.4 In the event that, following classification under these provisions, further marks contributing to a student's classification become available, the relevant Programme and University Awarding Board shall reconsider the candidate at a subsequent meeting. 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 candidate's marks shall not lead to a lower classification than the classification originally agreed.

### Document control

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1.0	CQSD	KHSS	3 years	UBTLSE			
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