

Award Classification Calculations

Information and Guidance 2025/26

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1. Minimum credits needed to gain a university award – overview

| Award | Credits | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| | Level 4 | Level 5 | Level 6 | Level 7 | Total |
| Master's degree | | | 30 | 150 | 180 |
| Postgraduate diploma (PgDip) | | | 30 | 90 | 120 |
| Postgraduate certificate (PgCert) | | | | 60 | 60 |
| Integrated master's degree with sandwich placement | 120 | 150 | 120 | 120 | 510 |
| Integrated master's degree | 120 | 120 | 120 | 120 | 480 |
| Honours degree with 30 credit sandwich placement | 120 | 150 | 120 | | 390 |
| Honours degree | 120 | 120 | 120 | | 360 |
| Graduate diploma (GradDip) | | | 120 | | 120 |
| Non-honours degree | 120 | 120* | 60* | | 300 |
| Graduate certificate (GradCert) | | | 60 | | 60 |
| Foundation degree (Fd) | 120 | 120 | | | 240 |
| Diploma of higher education (DipHE) | 120 | 120 | | | 240 |
| Higher National Diploma (HND) | 120 | 120 | | | 240 |
| Higher National Certificate (HNC) | 120 | | | | 120 |
| Certificate of higher education (CertHE) | 120 | | | | 120 |
| University Certificate of Professional Development (UCPD) | 60 credits at levels 4, 5 or 6 | | | | 60 |

* The total number of credits at level 5 and level 6 may vary for a non-honour's degree as long as a minimum of 60 credits are achieved at level 6; for example, students may achieve 60 credits at level 5 and 120 credits at level 6.

Note: level 3 module marks are excluded from classification calculations for integrated level 3 provision.

2. Classification of awards – overview

| Classification band | Postgraduate awards | Integrated master's, Honours degree | Foundation degree, HNC/HND, UCPD |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 70% and above | Distinction | First class honours | Distinction |
| 60-69% | Merit | Upper second (2:1) | Merit |
| 50-59% | Pass | Lower second (2:2) | Pass |
| 40-49% | Fail | Third class honours | Pass |
| Below 40% | Fail | Fail | Fail |

3. Consideration band – overview

| Classification | Classification band | Consideration band |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| First class honours | 70% and above | 68-69% |
| Upper second (2:1) | 60-69% | 58-59% |
| Lower second (2:2) | 50-59% | 48-49% |

4. Example calculations

All calculations are based on units of 15 credits

Master's degree

| Credits Level 7 | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 30 | X2 | 60% | Merit |
| 30 | X2 | 61% | Merit |
| 30 | X2 | 60% | Merit |
| 30 | X2 | 63% | Merit |
| 60 | X4 | 50% | Pass *capped after reassessment |
| 180 | 12 | 688 | <u>Overall average mark for classification calculation:</u> $60 + 60 + 61 + 61 + 60 + 60 + 63 + 63 + 50 + 50 + 50 + 50 = 688 \div 12 = 57.3$, rounded down to 57 (pass) |

How the classification is calculated:

| Which classification banding does... | Pass | Merit | Distinction |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|-------------|
| 1) At least 120 credits sit in? or | | X | |
| 2) The overall average mark for classification sit in? | X | | |

Outcome:

Although the overall average mark for classification is at pass level, the student is awarded a **master's degree with merit** as the student has the requisite 120 credits in the merit band or above.

Postgraduate diploma (PgDip)

| Credits Level 7 | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 30 | X2 | 68% | Merit |
| 30 | X2 | 80% | Distinction |
| 30 | X2 | 87% | Distinction |
| 30 | X2 | 84% | Distinction |
| 120 | 8 | 638 | <u>Overall average mark for classification calculation:</u> $68 + 68 + 80 + 80 + 87 + 87 + 84 + 84 = 638 \div 8 = 79.75$ rounded up to 80% (distinction) |

How the classification is calculated:

| Which classification banding does... | Pass | Merit | Distinction |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|-------------|
| 1) At least 90 credits sit in? or | | | X |
| 2) The overall average mark for classification sit in? | | | X |

Outcome:

The student has 90 credits in the distinction band and an overall average in the distinction band, so they are awarded a **postgraduate diploma with distinction**. Note that only one distinction criterion was required for distinction to be awarded.

Postgraduate certificate (PgCert)

| Credits Level 7 | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 30 | X2 | 57% | Pass |

| Credits Level 7 | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 30 | X2 | 68% | Merit |
| 120 | 8 | 250 | <u>Overall average mark for classification calculation:</u> $57 + 57 + 68 + 68 = 250 \div 4 = 62.5$, rounded up to 63 (merit) |

How the classification is calculated:

| Which classification banding does... | Pass | Merit | Distinction |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|-------------|
| 1) At least 45 credits sit in? or | X | | |
| 2) The overall average mark for classification sit in? | | X | |

Outcome:

The student is awarded a **postgraduate certificate with merit** as the overall average mark for classification is at merit level.

Integrated master's degree with 30-credit sandwich placement

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits required at level 4 to gain an award. Module marks excluded from classification calculation. |
| Level 5 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 55% | Lower second (2:2) |
| 30 | X2 | 67% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 43% | Third class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 71% | First class honours |
| Level 6 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 63% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | Discounted | 40% | Third class honours <i>*capped after reassessment</i> |
| 30 | X2 | 73% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 79% | First class honours |
| Level 6 – placement | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 62% | Upper second (2:1) |

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| 270 | 16 | 1026 | |
| Level 7 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 73% | First class honours |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 66% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 88% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 70% | First class honours |
| 120 | 7 | 528 | |
| 510 | | | |

How the classification is calculated:

| Criteria | Average mark for classification calculation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Best 240 credits of the 270 studied at levels 5 and 6, single-weighted, and the: | <u>Levels 5 and 6:</u> $55 + 55 + 67 + 67 + 43 + 43 + 71 + 71 + 63 + 63 + 73 + 73 + 79 + 79 + 62 + 62 = 1026 \div 16 = 64.1$, rounded down to 64 (upper second (2:1)) |
| 2) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at Level 7, triple-weighted | <u>Level 7:</u> $73 + 73 + 66 + 88 + 88 + 70 + 70 = 528 \div 7 = 75.4$, rounded down to 75 (first class honours) |
| Level 5 and 6 single-weighted plus level 7 triple-weighted | <u>Overall:</u> $64 + 75 + 75 + 75 = 289 \div 4 = 72.2$ rounded down to 72 (first class honours) |

Outcome:

The student is awarded a **first class integrated master's degree** (with placement) as the overall average mark for classification is 72%.

Integrated master's degree

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits required at level 4 to gain an award. Module marks excluded from classification calculation. |
| Level 5 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 55% | Lower second (2:2) |
| 30 | X2 | 67% | Upper second (2:1) |

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 30 | X2 | 63% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 74% | First class honours |
| Level 6 | | | |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 40% | Third class honours <i>*capped after reassessment</i> |
| 30 | X2 | 73% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 64% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 55% | Lower second (2:2) |
| 240 | 15 | 942 | |
| Level 7 | | | |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 66% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 88% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 68% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 81% | First class honours |
| 120 | 7 | 540 | |
| 480 | | | |

How the classification is calculated:

| Criteria | Average mark for classification calculation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Best 225 credits of the 240 studied at levels 5 and 6, single-weighted, and the: | <u>Levels 5 and 6:</u> $55 + 55 + 67 + 67 + 63 + 63 + 74 + 74 + 40 + 73 + 73 + 64 + 64 + 55 + 55 = 942 \div 15 = 62.8$, rounded up to 63 (upper second (2:1)) |
| 2) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at Level 7, triple-weighted | Level 7: $66 + 88 + 88 + 68 + 68 + 81 + 81 = 540 \div 7 = 77.1$, rounded down to 77 (first class honours) |
| Level 5 and 6 single-weighted plus level 7 triple-weighted | <u>Overall:</u> $63 + 77 + 77 + 77 = 294 \div 4 = 73.5$ rounded up to 74 (first class honours) |

Outcome:

The student is awarded a **first class integrated master's degree** as the overall average mark for classification is 74%.

Honours degree with 30-credit sandwich placement

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits required at level 4 to gain an award. Module marks excluded from classification calculation. |
| Level 5 | | | |
| 30 | Discount | 43% | Third class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 67% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 71% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 58% | Lower second (2:2) |
| Level 5 – placement | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 62% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 150 | 8 | 516 | |
| Level 6 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 63% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 40% | Third class honours <i>*capped after reassessment</i> |
| 30 | X2 | 73% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 79% | First class honours |
| 120 | 7 | 470 | |
| 390 | | | |

How the classification is calculated:

| Criteria | Average mark for classification calculation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Best 120 credits of the 150 studied at level 5, single-weighted, and the: | <u>Level 5:</u> $67 + 67 + 71 + 71 + 58 + 58 + 62 + 62 = 516 \div 8 = 64.5$, rounded up to 65 (upper second (2:1)) |
| 2) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at Level 6, triple-weighted | <u>Level 6:</u> $63 + 63 + 40 + 73 + 73 + 79 + 68 = 470 \div 7 = 67.1$, rounded down to 67 (upper second (2:1)) |
| Level 5 single-weighted plus level 6 triple-weighted | <u>Overall:</u> $65 + 67 + 67 + 67 = 266 \div 4 = 66.5$, rounded up to 67 (upper second (2:1)) |

Outcome:

The student is awarded an **upper second (2:1) honours degree** (with placement) as the overall average mark for classification is 67%.

Honours degree

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits required at level 4 to gain an award. Module marks excluded from classification calculation. |
| Level 5 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 75% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 69% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 84% | First class honours |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 40% | Third class honours <i>*capped after reassessment</i> |
| 120 | 7 | 496 | |
| Level 6 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 73% | First class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 68% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 55% | Lower second (2:2) |
| 30 | X2 | 70% | First class honours |
| 120 | 7 | 477 | |
| 360 | | | |

How the classification is calculated:

| Criteria | Average mark for classification calculation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at level 5, single-weighted, and the: | <u>Level 5:</u> $75 + 75 + 69 + 69 + 84 + 84 + 40 = 496 \div 7 = 70.8$, rounded up to 71 (first class honours) |
| 2) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at Level 6, triple-weighted | <u>Level 6:</u> $73 + 73 + 68 + 68 + 55 + 70 + 70 = 477 \div 7 = 68.1$ rounded down to 68 (upper second (2:1)) |
| Level 5 single-weighted plus level 6 triple- | <u>Overall:</u> $71 + 68 + 68 + 68 = 275 \div 4 = 68.7$, |

| | |
|----------|---------------------------------------|
| weighted | rounded up to 69 (upper second (2:1)) |
|----------|---------------------------------------|

| Consideration band | 2:2 | 2:1 | First |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Is the overall average mark for classification within two per cent of the next classification band? If so, which classification band does ... | | | |
| 1) The level 6 average mark across the 120 credits sit in? (Level average calculation across all 120 credits studied: $73 + 73 + 68 + 68 + 55 + 55 + 70 + 70 = 532 \div 8 = 66.5$ rounded up to 67 (upper second (2:1)); or | | X | |
| 2) At least 50 per cent of the 120 level 6 credits sit in? | | | X |

Outcome:

Although the overall average mark for classification is 69% (upper second (2:1)), the student is awarded a **first class honours degree**. This is because they fall into the consideration band and have more than 50 per cent of the 120 level 6 credits in a higher band.

Honours degree – with compensation

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits required at level 4 to gain an award. Module marks excluded from classification calculation. |
| Level 5 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 62% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 52% | Lower second (2:2) |
| 30 | X2 | 55% | Lower second (2:2) |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 34%* | Fail * <i>compensated</i> |
| 120 | 7 | 372 | |
| Level 6 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 61% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 68% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 | 55% | Lower second (2:2) |

| | | | |
|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|
| | credits) | | |
| 30 | X2 | 67% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 120 | 7 | 447 | |
| 360 | | | |

How the classification is calculated:

| Criteria | Average mark for classification calculation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at level 5, single-weighted, and the: | <u>Level 5:</u> $62 + 62 + 52 + 52 + 55 + 55 + 34$ (exclude 34) = $372 \div 7 = 53.1$, rounded down to 53 |
| 2) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at Level 6, triple-weighted | <u>Level 6:</u> $61 + 61 + 68 + 68 + 55$ (exclude 55) + $67 + 67 = 447 \div 7 = 63.8$, rounded up to 64 |
| Level 5 single-weighted plus level 6 triple-weighted | <u>Overall:</u> $53 + 64 + 64 + 64 = 245 \div 4 = 61.2$, rounded down to 61 (upper second (2:1)) |

Outcome:

The student is awarded an upper second (2:1) honours degree award as the overall average mark for classification is 61% (upper second (2:1)).

Honours degree – direct entrant into level 6

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits granted under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) |
| Level 5 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits granted under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) |
| Level 6 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 68% | Upper second (2:1) |
| 30 | X2 | 49% | Third class honours |
| 30 | X1 (discount 15 credits) | 47% | Third class honours |
| 30 | X2 | 63% | Upper second (2:1) |

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 120 | 7 | 407 |
| 360 | | |

How the classification is calculated:

| Criteria | Average mark for classification calculation |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Best 105 credits of the 120 studied at level 6 | <u>Level 6/overall:</u> $68 + 68 + 49 + 49 + 47 + 63 + 63 = 407 \div 7 = 58.1$, rounded down to 58 (lower second (2:2)) |

| Consideration band | 2:2 | 2:1 | First |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Is the overall average mark for classification within two per cent of the next classification band? If so, which classification band does ... | | | |
| 1) The level 6 average mark across the 120 credits sit in? (Level average calculation across all 120 credits studied: $68 + 68 + 49 + 49 + 47 + 47 + 63 + 63 = 454 \div 8 = 56.7$, rounded down to 57 (lower second (2:2)); or | X | | |
| 2) At least 50 per cent of the 120 level 6 credits sit in? | | X | |

Outcome:

Although the overall average mark for classification is 58% (lower second (2:2)), the student is awarded an upper second (2:1) honours degree. This is because they fall into the consideration band and have at least 50 per cent of the 120 level 6 credits in a higher classification band.

Foundation degree (Fd) / Higher National Diploma (HND)

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 120 | 0 | N/A | 120 credits required at level 4 to gain an award. Module marks excluded from classification calculation. |
| Level 5 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 63% | Merit |
| 30 | X2 | 67% | Merit |
| 30 | X2 | 55% | Pass |
| 30 | X2 | 70% | Distinction |

| | | |
|------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 120 | 8 | 510 |
| 240 | | <u>Overall average mark for classification calculation:</u> $63 + 63 + 67 + 67 + 55 + 55 + 70 + 70 = 510 \div 8 = 63.7$, rounded up to 64 (merit) |

Outcome:

The student is awarded a foundation degree (Fd)/Higher National Diploma (HND) with merit as the overall average mark for classification is at merit level.

Higher National Certificate (HNC)

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 4 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 55% | Pass |
| 30 | X2 | 61% | Merit |
| 30 | X2 | 48% | Pass |
| 15 | X1 | 53% | Pass |
| 15 | X1 | 45% | Pass |
| 120 | 8 | 426 | <u>Overall average mark for classification calculation:</u> $55 + 55 + 61 + 61 + 48 + 48 + 53 + 45 = 426 \div 8 = 53.2$, rounded down to 53 (pass) |

Outcome:

The student is awarded a Higher National Certificate (HNC) pass as the overall average mark for classification is at pass level.

University Certificate of Professional Development (UCPD)

| Credits | Counts towards classification | Module mark | Classification banding |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 5 | | | |
| 30 | X2 | 71% | Distinction |
| 30 | X2 | 65% | Merit |
| 60 | 4 | 272 | <u>Overall average mark for classification calculation:</u> $71 + 71 + 65 + 65 = 272 \div 4 = 68$ (merit) |

Outcome:

The student is awarded a University Certificate of Professional Development (UCPD) with merit as the overall average mark for classification is at merit level.
