

Progression and degree classification consultation feedback

Thank you to everyone who submitted a response to the progression and degree classification consultation. We are pleased to tell you that we received 54 responses from colleagues.

The online consultation was set up as a Google Form to serve as a complementary tool to add to the extensive work and consultation already performed by the ADSEs over a period of months. This was to provide a short period of time for colleagues to add to the feedback they had already provided.

Broadly speaking, you agreed with the proposals being put forward.

Questions and responses are detailed in the table below:

Progression			
Questions	Agree	Disagree	Number of responses
Do you agree with the two main routes of progression (honours degrees or exit with an interim award) outlined in this proposal?	83.3%	16.7%	54
Do you consider compensating pass to be a fair alternative to trailing?	59.3%	40.7%	54
Would you agree that this is the right way to apply compensation to part-time students?	74.1%	25.9%	54

Do you recognise this as a fair way of upholding PSRB requirements for certain programmes?	98.1%	1.9%	54
Would you agree that this is a fair option for this type of programme (Non-Accredited)	85.2%	14.8%	54

Degree Classification			
Questions	Agree	Disagree	Number of responses
Do you agree that this is a fair way to classify our Undergraduate degrees?	68.5%	31.5%	54
Do you agree that this method is appropriate to calculate the degree classification of our Integrated Masters? **If the Integrated Masters award is not included on your programme, please leave this question blank.**	70.8%	29.2%	24
Would you agree that this will be a positive development for under-represented groups of students?	72.2%	27.8%	54

[A copy of the original consultation form can be seen here.](#)

In addition, there were two open questions which were not compulsory. The first of these questions asked what colleagues thought the biggest priority should be for the new models of progression and degree classification.

Thirty-two academic colleagues responded to this question.

From the responses given, it was highlighted that:

- The proposals seem to allow students with a genuine chance of graduating to progress, whilst identifying early on those who are not likely to succeed, offering them other more suitable alternatives;
- They offer a range of outcomes that would be beneficial for students and also may help to avoid grade inflation;
- Some respondents felt keeping Level 4 outside of degree classification calculation is the right thing to do as students may start slowly but then build to brilliance. The new model provides a space that allows for this to occur. However, other respondents expressed concern about Level 4 being excluded from the degree classification. It seems that an incorrect perception of our current calculation exists among some colleagues, with those who responded negatively expressing concern about Level 4 being excluded from the calculation, even though Level 4 does not count in our current degree calculation;
- The proposals address the BME attainment gap and ensure that BME students are not disadvantaged by any of the changes;
- The new model represents greater clarity regarding the rules/process for both staff and students and also provide fairness and equity of access;
- Some colleagues expressed their concern about the impact of compensation in the maintenance of academic standards and degree reputation;
- Colleagues who expressed concern regarding degree classification specifically highlighted the weight distribution across level 5 and level 6. Some colleagues suggested lower levels of weight for the final year as the proposed model might increase the pressure on final year students. The most popular suggestion amongst these respondents was a weighting of 40% at Level 5 and 60% at Level 6. The Degree classification data modelling considered 5 proposals (each one of them exploring different weightings for each level of study), one of which was 40% at Level 5 and 60% at Level 6. This particular weighting showed a negative impact on all students and a remarkable difference to the results of our current calculation, reducing the probability of a student receiving a first class degree by 10%, increasing the probability of students being awarded lower second and third class degrees by 8% and 3% respectively;
- A large proportion of those disagreeing with a/some proposal(s), stated that they would prefer to maintain the current practices and/or did not agree with the change in general, as it may cause disruption. Also, in their view the timing for these changes is unsuitable.

The second open question asked whether respondents thought there were other issues which should be given consideration. Twenty-four colleagues responded to this question, some points highlighted for consideration were:

- Information should be available upfront for students. Details and implications should be clear from the start of their courses;
- There is a need for a review with evidence that enables a deeper understanding of how to improve the attainment of under-represented groups, looking beyond systems

for degree calculation and more into the effects of admissions policies, curriculum, unconscious bias etc;

- Mean module average could be considered in addition to the minimum module mark for compensation.

Several respondents used this question to reiterate their response to the previous question. The most popular responses were either that the considerations including in the consultation were sufficient, or that the current system was satisfactory.

After the feedback was reviewed, a proposal was taken to Academic Board in April and was subsequently approved for implementation in September 2020.

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