

About Your Grade Point Average

Your Grade Point Average or GPA
What it is and how it affects you
A brief guide for students

What is a Grade Point Average?

A Grade Point Average or GPA is a way of showing your overall level of achievement on your degree course. The GPA is simply your average attainment over all the modules you take. The average is calculated by attaching a number to the grade you achieve for each module, and using that number to work out a mean average; hence the title GPA:

- The grade is the measure of achievement on your module.
- The grade point is the number attached to each grade.
- The grade point average is the mean average of your grade points.

Percentage	Grade	Grade Point	Pass / Fail
75 – 100	A+	4.5	Pass
70 – 74	A	4.0	Pass
65 – 69	B+	3.5	Pass
60 – 64	B	3.0	Pass
55 – 59	C+	2.5	Pass
50 – 54	C	2.0	Pass
45 – 49	D+	1.5	Pass
40 – 44	D	1.0	Pass
0 – 39	Various	0.0	Resit / Fail

Why is Brookes introducing a GPA?

The standard way in which British universities show the level of achievement on your degree course is through the degree classification system. This is an old system: it originated at Cambridge in the late eighteenth century and has been developed and amended ever since. Under the system of degree classifications your overall achievement will be placed into one of four broad classes:

- First Class, or 1st
- Upper Second Class, or 2:1
- Lower Second Class, or 2:2
- Third, or 3rd

For many years this system has been under criticism. Students and academics have, amongst other things, pointed out that there is insufficient differentiation between students within each class, that there is too much pressure to achieve a 1st or a 2:1, that there is a sharp “cliff edge” between a 2:1 and 2:2, and that not all of a student’s study is taken into account when the classification is worked out. In addition, the system is not widely used outside of the United Kingdom and so sometimes students can find it difficult to explain their level of attainment in their degree course if seeking work or further study in other countries.

The GPA system helps to address these issues, because:

- The overall judgement is much more precise, i.e. a figure calculated to two decimal places rather than one of four classes. This allows for a simple and much more detailed sign of overall attainment.
- As the final judgment is much more precise and uses a finer scale, there is less pressure to achieve within a narrow range.
- The finer scale helps avoid pressure on any specific “cliff edge” between classes.
- The GPA system is very widely used internationally. So the GPA will be easily recognised by international employers and overseas universities.

So is the GPA system better than the degree classification system?

No. The GPA system is not *better*, it is *different*. Like the degree classification system it has its own strengths and weaknesses. The degree classification system is, for example, very well understood by employers in the UK and the GPA is not.

Will I still receive a degree classification in addition to a GPA?

Yes. Because the two systems are different they have complementary strengths and so work well together. To make sure you benefit from the best of both systems, therefore, you will receive both a degree classification and a GPA. The different strengths include:

- The GPA system takes account of all the modules you study, while the classification system takes into account only certain modules that you will study towards the end of your course.
- The GPA system is widely understood around the world, while the classification system is widely understood in the UK.
- The GPA system provides a very precise overall judgement of your achievement, while the classification system offers a broad statement in one of four classes.

Will all students at Brookes get a GPA from now on?

The GPA rules and grading scheme are being introduced for all undergraduate students (whether full- or part-time) who enter:

- Stage 1 of their programmes on or after 1 September 2013; or
- Stage 2 (year 2) of their programmes on or after 1 September 2014;
- Stage 2 (year 3) of their programmes on or after 1 September 2015.

The GPA rules and grading scheme will not apply to continuing students, i.e. students who entered before dates above.

Will my first year (Stage 1) modules count towards the GPA?

Yes. The modules you take in your first year will count towards your GPA.

Are some modules given more weight in the GPA?

No. Each module counts equally according to its credit value. Modules in later stages of your programme are given no additional weight over modules from earlier in your programme.

Will failed modules count towards my GPA?

Yes. All modules will count equally towards your GPA, with a failed module having the grade point value of 0.

Will any attempts to take a module be excluded from the GPA calculation?

Yes, but only in some very limited circumstances. For example, if you re-take a module due to having been affected by mitigating circumstances then the attempt with the lower mark will be disregarded from your programme and not included in your GPA. The full list of circumstances which are excluded can be found in the University Regulations. (The link is given below.)

Where can I see my GPA?

Your current GPA, based on the modules you've studied up to any given point, will be available on your PIP page. Your final GPA will be included on your degree certificate.

Will my GPA affect my degree classification?

No. The calculation of the degree classification is entirely independent of the calculation of the GPA.

Can you tell me more about how the GPA is calculated?

The GPA is a mean average with each module counting equally according to its credit value, i.e. 1 credit carries equal

weighting irrespective of level, subject, when taken etc. This means that, for example, at level 4, 5, or 6 a single module (15 credits) counts once in the calculation of the GPA, a double module (30 credits) counts twice and so on.

The GPA is calculated to two decimal places and although a simple mean average, the maximum GPA is capped at 4.00.

Why is the GPA capped at 4.00 when the maximum Grade Point is 4.5?

This is a compromise between expected international standards for the GPA and marking practices within the UK. The most common maximum GPA internationally is 4.00, but marking practices in the UK tend to have a greater scale at the very top end than is common. Hence, to ensure that your GPA is broadly comparable with other international GPAs, the maximum grade point you can achieve is 4.5 even though the final GPA is capped at 4.00.

Do I need to achieve a certain GPA in order to progress within my programme or to graduate?

No. Eligibility to receive an award is not dependent in any way upon your GPA; you may therefore graduate with any GPA up to and including 4.00. Likewise, the rules concerning progression are not linked to your GPA.

Where can I get more information?

The full regulations for the way in which your GPA will be calculated are available from the University Regulations:

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/uniregulations/>

Example Student

Module	Level	Mark	Grade	Grade Point
1	4	40%	D	1.0
2	4	40%	D	1.0
3	4	40%	D	1.0
4	4	40%	D	1.0
5	4	40%	D	1.0
6	4	51%	C	2.0
7	4	51%	C	2.0
8	4	54%	C	2.0
9	5	40%	D	1.0
10	5	45%	D+	1.5
11	5	46%	D+	1.5
12	5	63%	B	3.0
13	5	64%	B	3.0
14	5	67%	B+	3.5
15	5	62%	B	3.0
16	5	59%	C+	2.5
17	6	70%	A	4.0
18	6	69%	B+	3.5
19	6	66%	B+	3.5
20	6	72%	A	4.0
21	6	72%	A	4.0
22	6	75%	A+	4.5
23	6	69%	B+	3.5
24	6	78%	A+	4.5

Percentage over best 14 modules: 66.57%
 Degree classification: Upper Second (2:1)
 Grade Point Average: 2.56