

Student Guide to the University's Rules for Progression and Award¹ in Undergraduate Programmes

This guide sets out the University rules relating to assessment, progression and award for undergraduate students. Details of how your work will be assessed and how you will receive feedback are included in your handbook and departmental web pages. If you are ever in any doubt, please speak to your academic supervisor.

Full details of the assessment rules can be found at:

<https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/procedure/examinations/guide/>

SUMMARY

To be eligible for an award from the University of York, you must:

- undertake an approved programme of study (course),
- obtain a specified number of credits at specified levels, and
- meet any other requirements of the award as set out in the Award and programme specifications and other University regulations (such as payment of fees).

Your programme of study (course) is made up of stages. Each stage is made up of modules covering different topics. Modules differ in size and shape. In each stage (year) you will be registered on 120 credits worth of modules. Every module is assessed and if you pass each module you will progress to the next stage of your programme.

If you badly fail a module (below 30) you will have to be reassessed. If you marginally fail a module (39 – 30) you may not need to be reassessed if your overall performance is good enough to compensate. Please be aware, there is a limit to the amount of reassessment and compensation which is allowed. (Note: higher pass marks apply to modules at Masters level.)

If you are on a Bachelor's or Integrated Masters programme, your degree classification (1st; 2:1; 2:2; 3rd) will be calculated by the overall mark for the modules in Stages 2 and later. The overall mark will be calculated from your first attempt (or sit-as-if-for-the-first-time) marks – resit marks are not used in calculating degree classifications. It will take into account the size of the modules (through credit weighting) and the stage (through stage weighting). Note that later stages are weighted more heavily.

This summary is explained further through the following questions and answers. These should be read thoroughly and in the order they are presented to fully understand the progression and award system.

¹ By award, we mean Masters, pre-Masters, Bachelors or Foundation degrees, Diplomas and Certificates.

PROGRESSING THROUGH YOUR PROGRAMME

1. What are stages?

An undergraduate programme of study is divided into stages, each of which is equivalent to one year of full-time study.

Bachelors (e.g. BA / BSc)
Stage 1
Stage 2
Stage 3

Integrated Masters (e.g. MEng / MChem)
Stage 1
Stage 2
Stage 3
Stage 4

You must satisfy the requirements for each stage of your programme before being able to progress to the next stage. For a Bachelor degree, you need to get a credit-weighted average mark of 40 for each stage.

In an Integrated Masters, you need to get a credit-weighted average mark of 40 in Stage 1, 55 in Stage 2, 40 in Stage 3 (and a credit-weighted average mark of 50 for all modules taken in stages 2 & 3) and 50 in Stage 4.

If, after your marks have been calculated and any necessary compensation and reassessment procedures have been applied, you still do not reach the mark necessary for progression to the next stage, you cannot continue your studies. You may not retake modules.

2. How do modules and module credits relate to stages?

Each stage is made up of modules. Each of the modules you undertake will have a credit value² (e.g. 10 credits, 20 credits and so on) and a credit level.³

You will achieve the credit for a module by passing the module assessments. Modules are assessed by a range of methods which will result in a numerical mark out of 100.

² One credit involves a notional workload of 10 hours. So a 10 credit module involves a notional workload of 100 hours, a 20 credit module a total of 200 hours etc. By workload, we mean all work associated with the module taken, including teaching (contact time), private study, work required during vacations, the preparation for assessment and assessment tasks.

³ The credit level indicates the module's relative intellectual demand, complexity and depth of learning and of learner autonomy. See Appendix VI of the Undergraduate Modular Scheme: Framework for Programme Design:
<https://www.york.ac.uk/media/staffhome/learningandteaching/documents/policies/Framework%20for%20Pr ogramme%20Design%20-%20UG.pdf>

To satisfy the requirements for each stage (year), you must achieve a total of 120 credits.

3. What do module marks mean?

The University applies the following mark scale to **undergraduate** work:

First-class Honours:	70-100
Upper second-class Honours:	60-69
Lower second-class Honours:	50-59
Third-class Honours:	40-49
Fail:	0-39

A different mark scale is used for **masters-level** modules, including any taken as part of an undergraduate programme. The pass mark for masters-level modules is 50. If you are doing an Integrated Masters, you will have to undertake some masters-level modules in the later stages of your programme. Some modules at this level may also be available as Bachelor options. You should be aware of the higher level and pass mark for such modules when deciding whether to take them as options.

Please note that a Third Class Honours is not available as a classification in Integrated Masters degrees.

4. What does weighting mean?

Module marks will be weighted in two different ways: credit weighting and stage weighting.

Credit-weighting

Each module mark is given more or less weighting according to the volume of credit (i.e. workload) that is associated with it. This can be done in two different ways.

The first method is to multiply each of your module marks by the credits associated with the module. Then total the result and divide by 120 as seen in Column 1 below.

The second method is to take 20 credits as the base number for weighting and multiply higher or lower credit modules in relation to that base. The total is then divided by the number of 20 credit modules in 120 which is 6. This calculation can be seen in Column 2 below.

STUDENT X					
Column 1 – first method of calculation			Column 2 – second method of calculation		
Module A (20 credits)	Mark 55 x 20	= 1100	Module A (20 credits)	Mark 55	= 55
Module B (20 credits)	Mark 62 x 20	= 1240	Module B (20 credits)	Mark 62	= 62
Module C (30 credits)	Mark 60 x 30	= 1800	Module C (30 credits)	Mark 60 x 1.5	= 90
Module D (30 credits)	Mark 42 x 30	= 1260	Module D (30 credits)	Mark 42 x 1.5	= 63
Module E (10 credits)	Mark 70 x 10	= 700	Module E (10 credits)	Mark 70 x 0.5	= 35
Module F (10 credits)	Mark 75 x 10	= 750	Module F (10 credits)	Mark 75 x 0.5	= 38

Total 6850 ÷ 120 = 57	Total 343 ÷ 6 = 57
57 is the credit-weighted mean mark for the stage	57 is the credit-weighted mean mark for the stage

Stage-weighting

Later stages of your programme are given more importance in terms of the final classification than earlier stages. This is because the later stages represent higher levels of work and are the culmination of your achievements and abilities. See Question 6 below for an explanation of stage weighting.

5. How many credits do I need for a degree? AWARD REQUIREMENTS

A degree is awarded on the basis of credit acquired during your programme of study. If you do not achieve the full requirements, you may be eligible for an early exit award. The type of award you receive will be dependent on the number of credits you have achieved and at what level.

Award	Number of	Including
Integrated Masters degree	480	At least 120 Masters-level credits over stages 3 and 4
Bachelors Honours degree	360	At least 100 Honours-level credits
Ordinary degree	300	At least 60 Honours-level credits over stages 2 and 3
Foundation degree *	240	At least 90 credits at Intermediate-level (Stage 2)
Diploma of Higher Education	240	At least 90 credits at Intermediate-level (Stage 2)
Certificate of Higher Education	120	At least 90 credits at Certificate-level (Stage 1)
University Certificate *	60	60 credits at Certificate-level or higher (Stage 1)
Foundation Certificate *	80 or 120	At least 70 credits at level 3 (pre-University level)

*Not available as an early exit award.

In some programmes you may have to achieve more than the number of credits above, for example, where there is an additional year abroad or placement. Students who take a foundation year before starting their Bachelors will have achieved an additional 120 credits.

6. How is my degree class calculated? DEGREE CLASSIFICATION

The Bachelor Honours and Integrated Masters awards are classified degrees (see Question 3 for the different classes). Your degree classification is calculated using the stage mark from each of stages 2 and above.

The stage mark is the average of your first attempt module marks, with each module weighted according to the number of credits. If you are allowed a 'sit-as-if-for-the-first-time',

this mark will replace your first attempt mark. However resit marks are only used to allow you to progress (see Questions 1 and 2) – they are not used to calculate your degree classification. Pass/fail modules do not contribute to your degree classification (although you must pass them) and stage marks are not rounded up or down.

Example: Stage 2

	1 st attempt	Resit	Weighted mark
Module A (20 credits)	50		1000
Module B (10 credits)	40		400
Module C (30 credits)	20	45	600
Module D (20 credits)	60		1200
Module E (20 credits)	60		1200
Module F (20 credits)	50		1000
TOTAL	120		5400
Stage mark = Weighted mark total / credit number			45.00

Example: Stage 3

	1 st attempt	Resit	Weighted mark
Module A (20 credits) Pass/fail	Pass		N/A
Module B (10 credits)	60		600
Module C (10 credits)	50		500
Module D (20 credits)	60		1200
Module E (20 credits)	50		1000
Module F (20 credits)	60		2400
TOTAL	100 (excluding A)		5700
Stage mark = Weighted mark total / credit number			57.00

The stage marks are combined to calculate the award mark. When combining the marks for each of the stages, modules from Stage 2 are given a slightly lower weighting than later stages.

Bachelors is a 2:3 ratio (40% of the grade is taken from Stage 2 and 60% from Stage 3). To calculate, multiply the Stage 2 mark by 2 and the Stage 3 mark by 3, then divide the total by 5:

Stage 2 mark of 45: $(45 \times 2 = 90)$
 Stage 3 mark of 57: $(57 \times 3 = 171)$
 $90 + 171 = 261$
 $261 / 5 = 52.2$

Award mark = 52.20 Lower second class (2:2)

Integrated Masters is a 2:3:3 ratio (25% Stage 2 and 37.5% each from Stages 3 and 4). To calculate, multiply the Stage 2 mark by 2, the Stage 3 mark by 3 and the Stage 4 mark by 3. Then divide the total by 8:

This example uses Stage marks of 60, 60 and 70.

Stage 2 mark of 60: $(60 \times 2 = 120)$

Stage 3 mark of 60: $(60 \times 3 = 180)$

Stage 4 mark of 70: $(70 \times 3 = 210)$

$120 + 180 + 210 = 510$

$510 / 8 = 63.75$

Award mark = 63.75 Upper second class (2:1)

This calculation also applies to all combined (joint) degrees.

Stage 1 (and Foundation Year, if applicable) marks are excluded from the classification calculation, although you must still achieve 120 credits in Stage 1 (and also in the Foundation Year) to progress to the second stage of the programme.

Ordinary degrees, Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education are not classified. For these awards, you will be given either a Pass or a Fail. Foundation degrees are also awarded on a Pass / Fail basis with the final result being calculated on marks from Stage 2 modules only. If you have progressed from a Foundation degree to a University of York Bachelors programme, the final degree classification will be based solely on module marks from Stage 3.

7. What happens if my marks are just below the mark needed for a higher classification? BORDERLINE CASES

If your final mark is within 0.5 percentage points of the above class boundary it will be rounded up. For example, a mark of 59.6 will be rounded to 60 and you will be awarded an upper second class degree. A final award mark of 59.49 will not be rounded up.

If your award mark is more than 0.5 percentage points but less than 2 percentage points away from the above class boundary, we look to see if you would have a higher classification if we apply a different ratio to the weighting of the stages.

For Bachelors programmes, these borderline ratios are 1:1 and 1:2.

For integrated Masters programmes, the borderline ratios are 1:1:1 and 1:2:2.

If, after applying these ratios, your programme mark exceeds the grade boundary, a higher degree classification will be awarded, although the programme mark recorded on your transcript will be the one calculated using the 2:3 ratio.

Bachelors example

Stage 2 mark = 59

Stage 3 mark = 41

Programme mark using 2:3 ratio = 48.2

Programme mark using 1:1 ratio = 50

Programme mark using 1:2 ratio = 47

The mark of 48 will appear on the transcript. As the 1:1 ratio mark is 50, you will be awarded a lower second-class degree.

Integrated Masters Example

Stage 2 mark = 59

Stage 3 mark = 41

Stage 4 mark = 50

Programme mark using 2:3:3 ratio = 48.88

Programme mark using 1:1:1 ratio = 50

Programme mark using 1:2:2 ratio = 48.2

The mark of 49 will appear on your transcript. As the 1:1:1 ratio mark is 50, you will be awarded a Lower-second class degree.

The borderline ratios are the only method by which a borderline mark could result in a higher degree classification. Being close to a grade boundary does not result in the right to take further attempts at assessment and your module marks will never be altered.

8. What happens if I fail one or more modules? COMPENSATION AND REASSESSMENT.

If you fail a module, don't panic! In most cases there will still be an opportunity to achieve the necessary credit either through compensation or reassessment.

Important: in some programmes (for example, where professional / vocational requirements have to be met) compensation and reassessment may not be an option. Check the regulations for your programme but if you are not sure, speak to your academic supervisor.

COMPENSATION

For modules in levels 1, 2 and 3, the pass mark for module assessments is 40. However, if your mark for a module is in the 30 – 39 range (or the 10-39 range in the final year of your programme), you may still be able to get the credits for the module if your performance in other modules is good enough to compensate. In other words, 'marginal' failure in one module may be compensated by achievement in others.⁴ There is, however, a limit to the amount of credit for which you can be compensated.

To be eligible for compensation, you must meet the University's compensation criteria, which

⁴ Some modules in your programme may be designated as Pass / Fail. These modules cannot be compensated for.

are based on the module marks achieved and your credit-weighted mean for the stage. The University's compensation criteria vary depending on your intended award (Bachelors, Integrated Masters etc). The following are provided purely as examples. Please consult the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback and your programme's regulations for the exact rules that will apply to you.

In this example from the 2nd stage of a Bachelors programme, a maximum of 40 credits-worth of modules can be compensated as there are no modules with marks below 30 (after reassessment) and the credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage is at least 40.

A student has the following profile of module marks:

Module A (20 credits): 38 (Fail)	In this example, none of the modules has been designated as non-compensatable, none of the module marks is below 30 and the credit-weighted mean over all modules in the stage is 46. Therefore, the marginal failure in Modules A and B can be compensated by the achievement in Modules C-G.
Module B (20 credits): 38 (Fail)	
Module C (20 credits): 50 (Pass)	
Module D (20 credits): 50 (Pass)	
Module E (20 credits): 50 (Pass)	
Module F (10 credits): 50 (Pass)	
Module G (10 credits): 50 (Pass)	

In **Stage 2 of an Integrated Masters programme**, 40 credits-worth of modules can be compensated provided that no module marks are lower than 30 and the credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage is at least 55. For example, a student has the following profile of module marks:

Module A (20 credits): 39 (Fail)	In this example, none of the modules has been designated as non-compensatable, none of the module marks is below 30 and the credit-weighted mean over all modules in the stage is 56. Therefore, the marginal failure in Modules A and B can be compensated by the achievement in Modules C-G.
Module B (20 credits): 38 (Fail)	
Module C (20 credits): 60 (Pass)	
Module D (20 credits): 65 (Pass)	
Module E (20 credits): 70 (Pass)	
Module F (10 credits): 70 (Pass)	
Module G (10 credits): 60 (Pass)	

REASSESSMENT

- Reassessment marks (resit marks) are not used in your degree classification. They are used only to meet the progression requirements or credit total requirements for your award. See sections 5 and 6.

- If you get a module mark below 30 (or 40 for Masters-level modules) this cannot be compensated and you will have to be reassessed. However, there is a limit to the number of credits failed below 30 (or 40 for Masters level) in which you can be reassessed.
- If you get a mark between 30 and 39 (or 40 and 49 for Masters-level modules) and you are not eligible for compensation, you may also need to be reassessed in those modules. The amount of credit in which you can be reassessed is lower in stage 3 (and Stage 4 for Integrated Masters) than in the earlier stages. For details see the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback.
- Not all modules can be reassessed – check with your department
- You can only be reassessed in a module once. If you fail a module and fail reassessment, you will not be able to progress and will fail the programme. You may, however, be eligible to receive a lower award.
- If you fail a module that cannot be reassessed or compensated, you will not be able to progress and will fail the programme. You may, however, be eligible to receive a lower award.
- Students who fail and are reassessed in a module will not be allowed to gain an advantage over those who passed the module first time. Your first attempt mark, not the mark obtained on the second attempt, is used when calculating your final programme mark. (If your award mark based on first attempt marks is too low to pass the degree, but you have obtained enough credits through reassessment, your award mark will be increased to the pass mark but no higher.)

The marks for all modules are included on student’s final transcripts. The following are provided as examples.

In **Stages 1 and 2 of a Bachelors programme**, reassessment opportunities are available in modules up to a total of 90 credits, providing that no more than 50 credits have a module mark of less than 30.

For example, a student has the following profile of module marks:

Module A (20 credits): 29 (F)	This student <i>must</i> be reassessed on Modules A and B (marks below 30) and has the option to be reassessed in modules C and D because there are less than 50 credits with a mark below 30 and the total reassessment required is for 80 credits. In such cases, students should discuss their decision with their academic supervisor. It is possible that, if Modules A & B are passed on reassessment, then Modules C & D could be compensated for.
Module B (20 credits): 28 (F)	
Module C (20 credits): 38 (F)	
Module D (20 credits): 38 (F)	
Module E (20 credits): 65 (P)	
Module F (10 credits): 65 (P)	
Module G (10 credits): 60 (P)	

In **Stage 3 of a Bachelors programme**, reassessment opportunities are available in modules up to a total of 40 credits. For example, a student has the following profile of marks:

Module A (20 credits): 29 (F)	This student must be reassessed in Module A because the mark is below 30 and therefore cannot be compensated.
Module B (20 credits): 46 (P)	
Module C (20 credits): 60 (P)	
Module D (20 credits): 60 (P)	
Module E (20 credits): 65 (P)	

If you have a marginal fail in a module (a mark between 30 – 39 in a non-award year or 10-39 in your award year) and it cannot be compensated, you can choose to be reassessed in that module (as long as it does not take you over the number of reassessment opportunities permitted in the stage). You cannot choose to be reassessed in a marginal fail in a module that can be compensated. Please see your academic supervisor for further guidance.

9. What if something exceptional happens that disrupts my studies and affects my ability to complete my modules? EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If something exceptional happens that hinders your academic progress (such as a serious illness or bereavement) communicate with your academic supervisor as soon as possible. It is important that applications for exceptional circumstances are submitted to the department before assessments or deadlines.

Such circumstances are considered by the appropriate departmental committee. Further general guidance can be found in the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback.

10. What if I have a year away for STUDY ABROAD OR A YEAR IN INDUSTRY?

Some programmes include study abroad and placements or years in an employment setting. This may be an additional year which will lengthen the normal period of study (e.g. resulting in a four year Bachelors programme) or a year which replaces time at York (replacement years). Details of how marks from study abroad and work placements will feed into your degree classification and details of any reassessment opportunities will be set out in the regulations for your programme. Further details are available in the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback.

11. What if I don't meet the progression or award requirements? FAILURE AND EARLY EXIT

If you do not meet the requirements for a stage, you will not be able to progress. And if in the final stage of your programme you do not achieve the required credits you will not be able to graduate with your intended award (Bachelors, Honours, Integrated Masters etc).

However, you may be eligible for an alternative award based on the credits that you have achieved. Similarly, if you choose to leave the University part way through your programme, you may be eligible for an early exit award based on credits achieved.

For example, if you do not meet the progression requirement from Stage 2 to 3 you may be eligible for a Certificate of Higher Education (based on the 120 credits you achieved in Stage 1). In Stage 3 of a Bachelors programme, if you do not achieve all 120 credits for the stage you may still be eligible for an Ordinary degree (300 credits) or a Diploma of Higher Education (240 credits).