

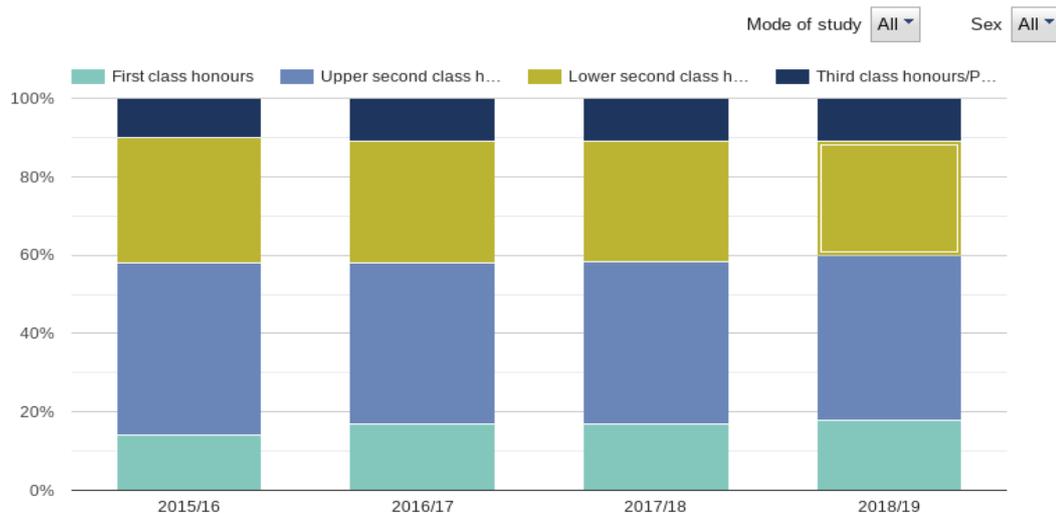
What to do if you graduate with a 2:2, 3rd or Pass degree

To obtain a degree from the University of York is a fantastic achievement. You may however feel somewhat disappointed if you did not get the grade you were hoping for. This information sheet will help you put this in perspective and think about your next steps moving forwards in terms of looking for work and launching your career.

How Many Students Gain a 2.2, Third or Pass Degree?

For the past four years (2015-2019), HESA, who collect assure and publish information about Higher Education, have found the number of students gaining a 2.2 or a third or pass degree to be very consistent. Between 10 and 11 % of students gain a third or a pass degree and between 29 and 32% of students gain a 2.2. Combined, these results stand at 42% for the three years from 2015/16-2017/18, dropping slightly to 40% in the 2018/19 cohort. You can see therefore, that far from being a small number, students in with this degree classification form a significant proportion of recent graduates.

Percentage of first degree qualifications obtained on designated courses obtaining each classification Academic years 2015/16 to 2018/19



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UK domiciled first degree qualifiers by classification of first degree, sex, age group, disability marker and ethnicity marker

Academic years 2014/15 to 2018/19

Stay Positive

Ashley Hever, Director in Enterprise Rent-a-Car states that, 'Graduate recruiters look at so much more than just your degree result. Companies such as Enterprise want a diverse pool of talent applying to them, so they will visit more universities than ever before and will accept applications from any degree discipline, in order to attract the best possible talent. Not just from those that fit a particular stereotype.'

While it is true that some graduate training schemes demand a 2:1 degree or higher, there are many who do not. Larger employers often simply need a way to limit the numbers of applications they receive, which is why they impose a grade restriction. However, increasingly employers are removing this specification. This is because they are recognising that this opens them up to a wider pool of candidates, who often offer desirable skills and valuable experiences.

Think about what your key selling points are. These could be excellent A-Level results, work experience, volunteering, involvement in student societies or part-time work. Remember employers will take all of these things into account when assessing an application.

Take Time to Reflect

It may be helpful to try to understand any particular reason behind your final grade, for example if there were extenuating circumstances, or if other activities (e.g. running your own business) prevented 100% focus on your studies.

Did something go wrong at the time of your final exams? If you have extenuating circumstances, you may be able to present these as a reason for not achieving a 2:1, and still be able to apply for positions requiring a 2:1. Speak to your Supervisor about your situation if you can, so that they can support you with their reference. It might be useful to have some form of proof, e.g. medical notes. You may need to bypass the automatic on-line application forms, which might reject your application, if your qualifications do not match the specified criteria. Contact the employer's Human Resources department or Graduate Recruitment Team for advice about how to proceed.

Were you busy with other activities, and therefore not dedicating enough time to your study? Many organisations value the transferable skills that you develop through extra-curricular activities, and can be flexible with entry requirements for people who have achieved highly in other areas.

Consider your strengths and weaknesses

You will be employed for the skills you have, so consider what your strengths are, and play to these. The York Strengths Online programme on the VLE is a great way to explore your strengths further.

Even if your course did not play to your strengths, it is not the end of the world - in fact you have shown great perseverance by completing it. Think about what you have enjoyed doing outside your academic studies and make sure you can sell the skills developed through these activities on applications.

Presenting your academic results on job applications

The best way to present your academic results will depend on what you are applying for and how you can market the entire package of your work, leisure and academic experiences. A skills-based CV can be very effective.

Use the first page to showcase all your evidence for the key skills for the job, and put your academic results on page two. If you have some high module results, or project results, you can state these as bullet points in your Education section. Remember you don't have to list all your module results, so be selective to show your achievements in the best light possible. This can be especially effective if the modules are relevant to the position for which you are applying.

If you do not include your degree result, a recruiter will wonder why and will have concerns. It is better to include the result and provide plenty of good, detailed evidence that you are capable of doing the job.

If you have extenuating circumstances, state them briefly and factually within the section on your academic achievements. Ask your referee to back this up.

Whatever happens, do not lie about your results! You are likely to be asked to show your degree certificate at some stage in the recruitment process.

Think long-term

Consider what role you would like to hold in five years' time, and work out a route toward this. Your degree result will have less significance once you have gained a few years' work experience.

You could start work within an organisation in a lower level role, e.g. technician or assistant level. By proving yourself competent and motivated within the workplace, you will be in a good position for internal promotions.

Be open to all options, and look beyond the job title to see what the job involves and what skills you could develop within it. Build up relevant experience in your area of work, through temporary work, volunteering, work shadowing or internships. See the '[Getting Work Experience In...](#)' series of information sheets. The website www.do-it.org is good for finding volunteering opportunities close to where you live. You could also seek graduate internship opportunities through the [Student Internship Bureau](#), or www.inspiringinterns.com which focuses on graduate internships.

Further study

Some Masters courses are open to people with a 2:2 and some graduate employers will accept a 2:2 plus Masters as an alternative to a 2:1. However, research this route carefully because there are no guarantees of success and the trend is away from recruiters doing this. Vocational postgraduate courses will equip you with work experience and new skills so this may be a good option. However again think carefully- postgraduate study just as, if not more demanding than undergraduate study, so make sure you are confident about taking this on.

Grad schemes with 2:2 entry levels or lower

Here is a selection of organisations who have some graduate training programmes which are open to people with 2:2 degrees or lower. (Check the websites before applying).

- [Arcadia Group](#)
- [Amey](#)
- [Barclays](#)
- [Boots](#)
- [British Army](#)
- [Civil Service Fast Stream](#)
- [Deloitte](#) (will consider candidates with a 2.2)
- [Enterprise Rent-a-Car](#)
- [EY](#)
- [FDM Group](#)
- [Ford](#)
- [GIST](#) (supply chain / logistics)
- [Jaguar Land Rover](#)
- [KPMG](#)
- [National Grid](#) (some programmes)
- [Nestlé](#) (some programmes)
- [Network Rail](#)
- [Next](#)
- [NHS Management](#)
- [P&G](#)
- [Royal Air Force](#)
- [Royal Navy](#)
- [Siemens](#)
- [Sky](#)
- [Stagecoach Group](#) (UK Bus)
- [Yorkshire Water](#)

The SME sector

Small and medium-sized enterprises (employing up to 250 people) are sometimes more flexible about entry requirements than larger organisations. You may not be familiar with these smaller firms, but they can provide some exciting opportunities at graduate level. As numbers of applicants are smaller for these firms, a personal approach can be very effective. Build up your network and use social media e.g. LinkedIn to make contacts in your chosen industry. Attending a virtual or in person careers fair can be a good way to meet employers before applying. You can showcase your skills, qualities and motivation in person, and they may offer you an interview based more on your personality and achievements than on your degree result. Many job opportunities are not advertised. If you are interested in a particular SME, contact them directly with a polite, well written cover letter and CV and they may consider you for future opportunities.

Get over setbacks – don't give in to them

Remember the further you go in your career the less important your degree result will seem. Build up your experience as suggested above. Seek support and advice. You are welcome to keep in touch with us at Careers and Placements after you have graduated. See our pages for [alumni](#) to find out more.

Be confident- you will get there and we are here to support you on the way.

Please note: *The websites listed here are not intended to represent a comprehensive list. Careers and Placements cannot be held responsible for the content of external websites.*

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york.ac.uk/careers

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