

UNIVERSITY OF KENT
CREDIT FRAMEWORK FOR TAUGHT COURSES OF STUDY

Information for Students, Teachers and Examiners
Credit Framework

N.B.1 Where the text states 'School' this should be understood to refer to 'School' or 'Department' at the sub-divisional level, as appropriate.

N.B.2 The term 'Course of Study' may be denoted by the shorthand term 'Course' throughout the text.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Credit Framework for Taught Courses of Study, as described in this document, applies to all taught courses of study leading to awards of the University of Kent, with the exception of courses leading to joint awards where a separate set of academic regulations have been agreed with the partner provider and approved by Senate. It does not normally apply to courses leading to the award of a research degree except where (i) such courses consist at least in part of modules approved and credit-rated by the University; (ii) the Course Approval Sub-committee has approved the research course in question as credit-bearing and (iii) as explicitly subject to the requirements of this document.
- 1.2 All University modules, even if not taken as part of a course of study leading to an award of the University, are regarded as credit-bearing and are subject to the requirements of the Credit Framework.
- 1.3 The Credit Framework will be reviewed from time to time by the Education and Student Experience Board and the University reserves the right to modify the Framework in the light of such reviews.
- 1.4 This document is intended to provide information about the Credit Framework to students, teachers and examiners. Any queries should be addressed in the first instance to the Quality Assurance and Compliance Office.
- 1.5 For information on quality assurance of courses of study, see the University Code of Practice for Quality Assurance. For information about Meetings of Boards of Examiners and about the role and responsibilities of External Examiners, see Annexes J and K of the Code of Practice.

2. Outline of Credit Framework

- 2.1 In order to be eligible for an award of the University, a student must take an approved course of study, obtain a specified number of credits, the number required depending on the award in question, and meet such other requirements as may be specified for the course of study in question. Each course of study comprises a number of modules, usually at different levels and each worth a specified number of credits. In order to be awarded the credits for a module, the student must normally demonstrate, via assessment, that they have achieved the learning outcomes specified for the module. Limited credit may also be awarded where assessment has been affected by illness or

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where the student has demonstrated in other modules that all course learning outcomes have been achieved (see sections 6.2: Condonement and 6.3: Compensation).

- 2.2 Most courses of study are divided into stages, usually equivalent to one year of full time study. A student must normally satisfy prescribed requirements for each stage of a course before being permitted to proceed to the next stage.
- 2.3 Many courses lead to 'classified' awards. For example, most undergraduate degrees are awarded with First Class, Upper Second Class, Lower Second Class or Third Class honours, and Certificates and Diplomas may be awarded with Merit or with Distinction.

***Example:** a student taking a three year full-time undergraduate honours degree course is required to obtain a total of 360 credits of which at least 210 credits must be at level 5 or above (including at least 90 credits at level 6 or above at Stage 3) and at most 150 may be at level 4 (Stage 1 modules are normally at level 4). Many three year full-time honours degree courses comprise 120 level 4 credits in Stage 1, 120 level 5 or 6 credits in Stage 2 and 120 level 6 credits in Stage 3. Normally, at least 90 credits must be obtained in Stage 1 before the student is permitted to proceed to Stage 2 and at least 90 credits must be obtained in Stage 2 before the student is permitted to proceed to Stage 3.*

- 2.4 The remainder of this document describes the Credit Framework in detail. A glossary of terms used may be found at Annex 1.

3. Courses of Study

Each course of study comprises an approved set or sets of **modules** and is divided into a number of **stages**. Each module is at a specified **level** and a student is awarded a specified number of **credits at that level** following successful completion of the module. The University defines these terms as follows:

3.1 Credits

One credit corresponds to approximately ten hours of 'learning time' (i.e. including all taught or supervised classes and all private study and research). Thus obtaining 120 credits in an academic year of 30 weeks requires 1200 hours of learning time, equivalent to 40 hours per week.

3.2 Module

- 3.2.1 A module is a self-contained component of a course or courses of study with defined learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods and assessment requirements. The University has agreed that each module should normally correspond to a multiple of 15 credits i.e. to 15, 30, 45...credits but that Divisions should be authorised to approve exceptions where they are satisfied that there is good reason to do so.

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- 3.2.2 Modules shall be described in course and module specifications only as either 'compulsory', 'optional' or elective.¹

Compulsory Modules: A module will be designated as 'compulsory' where due to the relevance of its content and learning outcomes to the course of study, it is stated in the relevant course specification that it is a module that must be taken and for which credit must be awarded in order for a student to remain in good standing on the course.

Optional Modules: A module will be designated as 'optional' where it is indicated in a list provided by the course-owning School as one of a number of modules it provides for students to take on an opt-in basis as part of their course of study.

Elective Modules: A module will be designated as 'elective' where it is provided on an optional basis and falls outside the subject area of the student's course of study.

3.3 Level

Each module must be at one, and only one, of the following levels:

level 3	Foundation
level 4	Certificate
level 5	Intermediate
level 6	Honours
level 7	Master's
level 8	Doctoral

The level descriptors adopted by the University for these levels can be found in Annex 2. Where there are two modules at different levels which have the same or similar curriculum, they may share some or all of their teaching but will normally have different learning outcomes and assessment as appropriate to the level of the credit awarded for each module.

Where module specifications relate to an undergraduate placement year, year abroad or term abroad the module specification shall be set at level 5 or 6.

3.4 Stage

Most courses of study are divided into a number of stages and students must achieve specified requirements in each stage except the final stage before being permitted to progress to the next stage. For undergraduate honours degree courses, a stage will normally consist of modules amounting to 120 credits. UG courses of study comprising 120 credits or less will normally consist of a single stage.

¹ Except where the specification was last approved prior to December 2012, as other terms may have been used.

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3.5 Awards

In order to be eligible for the award of a certificate, diploma or degree by the University, a student must obtain at least the minimum number of credits specified for that award at the specified levels. These requirements are set out in Annex 4. Individual courses or groups of courses will normally specify additional requirements which must be met for the award of the qualification in the subject concerned, for example by requiring the student to take and obtain credits for specified modules.

4. Award Titles

4.1 Single Subject Awards

- 4.1.1 Qualifications other than Honours degrees may be awarded in a single subject (e.g. Certificate in French) provided that at least 75% of the credits required for the award are in the subject concerned.
- 4.1.2 Honours degrees may be awarded in a single subject provided that at least 75% of the credits used for determining the class of Honours are in the subject concerned.

4.2 Awards in Two Subjects

- 4.2.1 Qualifications other than Honours degrees may be awarded in two subjects (e.g. Certificate in French and German) provided that credits in each of the subjects contribute at least 37.5% of the credits required for the award.
- 4.2.2 Honours degrees may be awarded in two subjects provided that credits in each of the subjects contribute at least 37.5% of the credits used for determining the class of Honours.

4.3 Major/Minor Awards

- 4.3.1 Qualifications other than Honours degrees may be awarded in a major subject with a minor subject (e.g. Certificate in French with German) provided that credits in the major subject contribute at least 65% of the credits required for the award and credits in the minor subject contribute at least 25% of the credits required for the award.
- 4.3.2 Honours degrees may be awarded in a major subject with a minor subject provided that credits in the major subject contribute at least 65% of the credits used for determining the class of Honours and credits in the minor subject contribute at least 25% of the credits used for determining the class of Honours.

4.4 Major/Major/Minor Awards

- 4.4.1 Qualifications other than Honours degrees may be awarded in two major subjects with a minor subject (e.g. Certificate in French and Spanish with German) provided that credits in each of the major subjects contribute 37.5% of the credits required for the award and credits in the minor subject contribute 25% of the credits required for the award.

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4.4.2 Honours degrees may be awarded in two major subjects with a minor subject provided that credits in each of the major subjects contribute at least 90 of the credits used for determining the class of Honours and credits in the minor subject contribute at least 60 of the credits used for determining the class of Honours.

4.5 Award of Course of Study including a Pathway

4.5.1 A course of study may include one or more pathways. Where a course is designed to include a pathway, the pathway will be defined in the course specification(s) by the articulation of course-level learning outcomes that are exclusive to the pathway concerned. The course specification will state which modules must be taken in order to satisfy the requirements of the pathway (see the note below). The pathway will be reflected in the title of the course of study by the addition of a subject-related defining term in parentheses, indicating the distinctive nature of the pathway's content and learning.

4.5.2 It is suggested, though not required, that all the pathways of a course are set out in a single specification, in order to make explicit the pathway variants. Course learning outcomes that apply to specific pathways should be clearly indicated as such (e.g. by the subheading 'Additional learning outcomes for the pathway in X').

4.5.3 A course with pathways is distinct from an award in two subjects or with major/minor subjects (see section 4.2 – 4.4 above), as a course pathway is designed to allow a specialism within a single subject, rather than the study of two separate subjects,

4.5.4 **Note:** the distinctive course-level learning outcomes of the pathway may be provided by compulsory modules that are also optional in other pathways or an associated generalist course specification.

4.6 Other Awards

4.6.1 Where none of the above requirements are met or a course of study covers more than three substantive subjects, awards should be in a generic subject area which includes the subjects in question, for example Physical Sciences or Social Sciences or Humanities, or in Combined Studies.

4.6.2 **Note:** Where an award includes a Year Abroad or Year in Industry, the credits relating to that year are excluded when calculating the balance of contributing credits in order to determine the final award title.

5. Time Limits

5.1 Courses of Study

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In order to remain eligible for an award, students must normally complete their course of study within the time limits set out below². These time limits include any periods of intermission and any period of time in which a student is repeating part of the course of study and apply to both full-time and part-time students. Course specifications specify the normal period of time over which the course will be completed.

Undergraduate Certificate or Diploma	6 years
Foundation Degree	6 years
Non-Honours Bachelor's Degree	8 years
Bachelor's Degree with Honours	8 years
Graduate Certificate or Diploma ³	4 years
Extended Master's Degree	8 years
Postgraduate Certificate	4 years
Postgraduate Diploma	6 years
Master's Degrees (graduate entry)	6 years
Master of Clinical Science	8 years

- 5.1.1 The maximum period of study will exclude interruptions that derive from periods during which students have been unable to engage with their studies due to reasons linked to protected characteristics.
- 5.1.2 Periods where the University suffers serious disruption to its capacity to deliver a course or courses due to *Force Majeure* events will not be regarded as contributing to the maximum period of study permitted for the completion of any award.

5.2 Modules

Credits awarded for successful completion of a module will remain eligible to contribute towards an award for a prescribed period and up to a maximum of eight years from the date on which the credits are awarded. Module specifications, particularly in rapidly developing subjects, may specify that credit obtained will remain eligible to contribute towards an award for less than eight years. Where the module specification does not specify any period of eligibility, this will be taken to be eight years.

6. Award of Credits

6.1 Successful Completion of Module

² See also the Academic Regulations at <https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/taught/documents/regs-taught-sept2020.pdf>

³ For the purposes of this Code, Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas are regarded as undergraduate courses.

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- 6.1.1 A student who successfully demonstrates via assessment that they have achieved the specified learning outcomes for a module will be awarded the number and level of credits prescribed for the module. Assessment methods vary between modules and assessment is designed so that achievement of the pass mark or above will demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. Normally individual assessments hold the same pass mark as the pass mark of the module. Module specifications will state if the pass mark has to be achieved overall and/or in prescribed elements of assessment.
- 6.1.2 Where a module learning outcome is tested only in one component of assessment, the assessment in question will become pass-compulsory for the module. Where a student has an overall mark for a module which is above the pass mark but has failed a pass-compulsory component of the assessment, the overall mark for the module will be recorded as one mark below the pass mark e.g. if the pass mark is 40, an overall mark of 39 will be recorded. In certain modules, assessment may be on a Pass/Fail or a Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction basis and numerical marks will not be awarded. For all modules at levels 3 to 6 the pass mark will be 40%. For all level 7 modules the pass mark will be 50%.
- 6.1.3 A component of assessment that is marked on a pass/fail basis should only be treated as pass-compulsory where the assessment in question tests a unique module learning outcome for that module.
- 6.1.4 Except where denoted as non-compensatable or non-condonable in the relevant course specification, modules for which a pass-compulsory component of assessment has not been demonstrated may be compensated or condoned only where the module learning outcome in question has been demonstrated by the student in the same or an earlier stage of the course.
- 6.1.5 Where modules are marked on a Pass/Fail or a Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction basis (other than for BTEC Higher Nationals), the following shall apply:
- i) Courses graded in this way need not result in a classified award.
 - ii) Where classification is permitted:
 - with Merit':**
a mark of merit or above for more than 50% of the credits obtained in the modules contributing to classification
 - 'with Distinction':**
no module marks of 'pass' and a mark of distinction for more than 50% of the credits obtained in the modules contributing to classification
 - iii) Failed modules passed on a second or third attempt will be awarded a mark of 'pass' except where the resit/repeat attempt was taken on an unpenalised basis on grounds of mitigation.
 - iv) Honours degrees may not be classified by this algorithm.

6.2 Condonement

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- 6.2.1 Where a student fails a module or modules but it is accepted that this was due to illness or other mitigating circumstances, the Board of Examiners may condone such failure and award credits for the module(s), up to a limit of 25% of each stage of a course of study (Annex J section 5.2) and with the possible application of additional measures (Annex J section 5.3), provided that there is evidence to show that the student has achieved the course learning outcomes and provided that the student has submitted written medical or other evidence to substantiate any claim of illness or other mitigating circumstances. The marks achieved for such modules will not be adjusted to take account of the mitigating circumstances but transcripts issued to the student will indicate modules for which credits have been awarded via condonement. In order to ensure that the application of condonement does not disadvantage a student when an award is classified, where credit for a module is awarded by condonement, the mark awarded for that module should be excluded from the calculation of the classification of the award. Course specifications specify modules in which failure cannot be condoned.
- 6.2.2 **Note:** The above does not preclude a Board of Examiners from adjusting a module mark where a student has failed to complete assessment requirements for good reason as described in Annex 6, section 24.

6.3 Compensation

- 6.3.1 Where a student fails a module or modules, but has marks for such modules that are within 10 percentage points of the pass mark for the module in question (see note 1 below), the Board of Examiners may nevertheless award the student the credits for the module(s), up to a limit of 25% of each stage of a course of study, provided that there is evidence to show that course learning outcomes have been achieved. The marks achieved for such modules will not be adjusted but transcripts issued to the student will indicate modules for which credits have been awarded via compensation. In order to ensure that the application of compensation does not disadvantage a student, where credit for a module is awarded by compensation the mark used for determining progression and classification should be the pass mark for the module. The mark on the transcript will not be adjusted. Course specifications specify modules in which failure cannot be compensated.
- 6.3.2 **Note 1:** i.e. the achievement of a mark in the range 30%-39% for modules at levels 3 to 6; the achievement of a mark in the range 40-49% for modules at level 7.
- 6.3.3 **Note 2:** The above does not preclude a Board of Examiners from adjusting a module mark where a student has failed to complete assessment requirements for good reason as described in Annex 6, paragraph 23.

6.4 Concurrent Application of the Condonement, Compensation and Trailing Provisions

The application of condonement, compensation or trailing provisions is limited to a maximum cumulative total of 25% of the credit available for any stage. See section 7.5 for information on the Trailing of credit.

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6.5 Application of the Condonement, Compensation and Trailing Provisions

The provision allowed for the condonement or compensation of failure or for the trailing and retrieving of credit should only be applied with respect to students who fail modules amounting to 25% or less of the credit available for the stage.

7. Progression

7.1 When a student has completed a stage of a course of study other than the final stage, the appropriate Board of Examiners will decide whether the student may progress to the next stage of the of study, or to another course of study.

7.2 The normal requirement for progression from one stage of a course of study to the next is that the student should have obtained 100% of the credits for the stage. Where a student has failed to obtain 100% of the credits for the stage, but has obtained at least 75% of the credits and has obtained credits for those modules which the course specification indicates must be obtained before progression is permitted, the appropriate Board of Examiners might require the student to repeat or resit the failed modules or it might give permission for the failed modules to be compensated, condoned or trailed into the next stage.

7.2.1 Boards of Examiners may apply additional requirements for progression (i.e. additional to the achievement of the credit required to proceed to the next stage) provided that:

- this involves progression into a stage composed predominantly of modules of a higher level;
- the additional requirements are outlined in an approved course specification for the cohort under consideration; and
- any students who do not meet the additional progression criteria either have (i) an alternative progression route onto another course of study or (ii) receive an appropriate exit award (as outlined in the approved course specification for the cohort under consideration).

7.2.2 Where a Board of Examiners is satisfied that a candidate has attained the minimum learning outcomes for Stage 1 of an undergraduate degree course, it shall have discretion to award the necessary credits for progression notwithstanding the marks obtained on particular modules.

Note: This discretion will be used only in exceptional circumstances where a candidate has failed to obtain marks necessary to proceed on modules whose learning content is not central to the learning outcomes of the course, where the marks on the failed modules are inconsistent with the overall performance of the candidate and where they have been able to demonstrate achievement of the minimum course learning outcomes in other modules. The object of this discretion is to encourage interdisciplinary and experimental study and the take-up of modules outside a candidate's core course, such as languages or elective modules, and so

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as not unreasonably to penalise students who have chosen to take such modules but through experience have found them particularly difficult and burdensome.

- 7.3 When a student has completed a year of study but has not completed a stage of a course of study, the Board of Examiners will recommend whether the student may continue with their studies.

7.4 Referral

- 7.4.1 Where a student is not permitted to progress to the next stage of a course, or at the end of a year of study other than the end of a stage of a course has failed a module or modules, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to undertake further assessment in failed modules. The method of reassessment for any module may take one of two forms:

- (a) 'Like-for-Like' Reassessment: in this method the referred student must undertake a form of reassessment that allows for a mark to be recorded against each element of assessment that has been failed. This may take the form of individual reassessments (literally like-for-like), or it may be a composite form of reassessment that allows for the mark achieved to be entered against each of the failed elements; marks already obtained for elements of assessment that the student is not required to undertake again will be carried forward; or
- (b) Single Instrument of Reassessment: where this method is used, the reassessment takes the form of a single piece of work, the mark for which will replace the marks for all elements of assessment obtained at a previous attempt and will stand as the mark achieved for the module as a whole.

Under referral, the maximum mark that can be awarded for the module will be the pass mark for the module.

- 7.4.1.1 The method of reassessment will be specified in advance and set out in the module specification. This specified method will normally be taken by all students so referred on the module concerned. The Board of Examiners may permit exemptions from the requirement to undertake the reassessment in the format specified on grounds in order to meet the conditions of an Individual Learning Plan. Except in cases where students have been informed in advance that alternative assessment will not be permitted, elements of assessment that are unrepeatable, e.g. seminar contributions, should be substituted by other assignments testing the same learning outcomes. In cases where alternative assessment is not permitted, students failing unrepeatable elements may only retrieve credit by repeating the entire module. Where a module cannot be reassessed or repeated, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to take another module for a capped mark in its place, or to transfer into a cognate course of study.

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- 7.4.1.2 Two referral opportunities per module will be normally permitted⁴ except where there is clear evidence of non-engagement by the student with their studies (see 7.4.1.3 below). The first such referral opportunity will normally take place in the August re-sit period following the initial failure. Where a Board of Examiners permits a referred student to take a substitute module on the grounds that the original module cannot be reassessed or repeated, this will count as a referral opportunity and not as a first attempt.
- 7.4.1.3 Where there is clear evidence of non-engagement with their studies by a student, such as extensive failure to attend timetabled teaching sessions (on campus or online), no attempt to submit assessed work for any module and a failure to engage with interventions made by the University to correct this situation, the Board of Examiners may recommend that the student be withdrawn from the University. The student will notified of this recommendation in writing with a deadline set of 28 calendar days for an appropriate response. Where no such response is received in this time period, the recommendation for withdrawal will be confirmed.
- 7.4.1.4 Where the Board of Examiners makes the recommendation set out in 7.4.1.3 above it should be satisfied that the due process for a student in attendance with very low engagement has been followed, as set out in the Academic Diligence procedures⁵.
- 7.4.2 It should be noted that Boards retain the option to compensate failure in a module under the conditions and limits set out at 6 above. Compensation and referral constitute different options available to examiners when considering failure on modules. A student who is compensated (i.e. awarded credit for a close fail) is not referred (i.e. required to repeat elements of assessment).
- 7.4.3 A student who is so referred in a module may be required to, or may elect to, **repeat** the module, before progressing to the next stage of the course, provided that it is being taught in the year in question, or may choose to take a different module provided that the requirements of the course of study are still met, but must do so before progressing to the next stage of the course.
- 7.4.4 In cases where a student has failed to obtain half or more of the credit required to progress to the next stage of study, it is advisable for the Board of Examiners to recommend that the student be required to repeat these modules in attendance during the following academic year rather than undertake further assessment during the August re-sit period. In these cases the student's first opportunity to undertake further assessment would take place in April/May the following year with their final referral opportunity being offered to them in August of that year. In cases where students have been recommended to repeat the modules by the Board of Examiners, but are unable to do so, they may be permitted by the Boards of Examiners to

⁴ Except for the dissertation element of taught postgraduate courses of study, see 7.4.4

⁵ <https://www.kent.ac.uk/fso/procedures/academic-diligence.html>

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re-sit examinations only in April/May of the following year. This recommendation would be based on academic judgement and there is, therefore, no grounds for appealing against the recommendation.

7.4.5 Referral - Taught Postgraduate Dissertation

A student who is referred in the dissertation element of a taught postgraduate course may resubmit the dissertation **on one occasion only** in a revised form not later (except in cases of illness or other good cause) than twelve months after the decision to allow resubmission has been made by the Board of Examiners. Such resubmissions will be capped at the pass mark. Where the Board of Examiners require only minor corrections to the dissertation, it will not be regarded as a referral and the original mark allocated will stand.

7.5 Trailing and Retrieving Credit

Where a student is permitted to progress to the next stage of a course but has not been awarded full credit for the previous stage, the student will still need to obtain credits for modules for which they have so far not been awarded credit in order to meet requirements for the award of the certificate, diploma or degree for which they are registered. The student may be permitted to 'retrieve' such credits, up to a maximum of 25% of the credits for the stage, in one of two ways as follows:

- 7.5.1 By undertaking further assessment, for example a re-sit examination, before the start of the next academic year. A student who is permitted to retrieve credit in this way may elect to **repeat** the module, provided that it is being taught in the year in question, or may choose to take a different module, provided that the requirements of the course of study are still met.
- 7.5.2 By progressing to the next stage of the course and simultaneously undertaking such further requirements as the Board of Examiners specifies in relation to the failed modules. This is known as trailing credit. Where credit is trailed, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to repeat the failed module(s) provided it/they are available and the timetable permits; or to take an alternative module as permitted by the course specification; or may allow reassessment to be undertaken according to the method specified by the module specification in keeping with section 7.4.1 above. Where a student trails credit in this way and again fails to obtain the credits, the credit may not be trailed to the next stage of the course e.g. a student will not be permitted to progress to Stage 3 of a course unless they have obtained all Stage 1 credits and met the minimum progression requirements in Stage 2.
- 7.5.3 At most two retrieval opportunities per module will be permitted as described in section 7.4.1.

7.6 Deferral

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Deferral: the decision on grounds of mitigation to allow a student to undertake reassessment for a module or modules as if for the first time (i.e. an uncapped retrieval attempt), or as appropriate, as if for the second time⁶.

- 7.6.1 A student may be deferred on a module or modules for reasons of extenuation under the following scenarios:
- (i) where the module(s) have been failed; or
 - (ii) where the module(s) have been passed, but the final mark(s) achieved for the affected module(s) are significantly out of line with the final marks achieved for the student's unaffected modules.
- 7.6.2 Under scenario ii, **the final module mark** should be judged as 'significantly out of line' where it falls in a range that is at least two classification bands below the student's mean average level of achievement as derived from those modules that were unaffected by the mitigating circumstances reported;
- 7.6.3 Where a module has been passed it would be inappropriate to defer the student on that module as if for the second time (as the final module mark could not be improved upon under this scenario).
- i. Students so affected are to be given the choice whether they will re-sit the assessments concerned or will accept the pass mark already achieved.
 - ii. Such reassessment opportunities will normally take place in the summer before the next academic year.
 - iii. Where student performance has been significantly affected in line with the specified conditions specified at section 7.6.1.ii (while resulting in passes for the affected modules) for 50% or more of the credit required for the stage, students should be allowed the option to repeat these modules in attendance as if for the first time in the following academic year.
 - iv. Where a student elects to take up the opportunity to re-sit or repeat in attendance a module that they have already passed, the mark achieved at the earlier attempt will be struck from the record. Students will not be given the opportunity to choose between the better of the marks achieved. The mark achieved at the AFT attempt will stand, even where this results in the failure of the module(s) concerned.
- 7.6.4 Where the student has met requirements for progression to the next stage of the course, they may be permitted to 'trail' the deferred assessment, i.e. to proceed to the next stage and simultaneously undertake the deferred assessment as for the first time or, where appropriate, the second time (see 7.5.2 above).

⁶ (i) **as if for the first time**, i.e. without incurring the penalty of a capped mark or a reduction in the number of permitted attempts; **or** (ii) **as if for the second time**, i.e. with a capped mark, but without incurring a further reduction in the number of permitted attempts

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7.6.5 Where a student is offered a deferred reassessment opportunity for a module, the method of reassessment will take one of two forms:

- (a) 'Like-for-Like' Reassessment: in this method the deferred student must undertake a form of reassessment that allows for a mark to be recorded against each element of assessment that has been failed. This may take the form of individual reassessments (literally like-for-like), or it may be a composite form of reassessment that allows for the mark achieved to be entered against each of the failed elements; marks already obtained for elements of assessment that the student is not required to undertake again will be carried forward; or
- (b) Single Instrument of Reassessment: where this method is used, the reassessment takes the form of a single piece of work, the mark for which will replace the marks for all elements of assessment obtained at a previous attempt and will stand as the mark achieved for the module as a whole.

Under deferral, the final mark that can be awarded for the module will not be the pass mark for the module, but the actual mark achieved under the method of reassessment selected by the School⁷: Where a deferred student repeats a module or modules in attendance, all marks achieved during previous attempts at those modules will be discounted and overwritten by the marks achieved during the repeat attempt.

Please note that it would be appropriate and necessary to offer a deferral **as if for the second time** only in the circumstances where a student had been referred in a previous attempt at the module(s) in question. Under such circumstances it would be inappropriate to offer a student the possibility of an uncapped module mark. Any deferred attempt, however, would not further reduce the number of resit opportunities.

7.7 Students may be permitted to take a Stage 2 module before completing Stage 1 or a Stage 3 module before completing Stage 2 provided:

- i) that the Director of Division (or nominee) has approved the arrangement in advance;
- ii) that such higher stage credit should not be used for the purposes of progression or be permitted to contribute to an award until the progression requirements for the current stage have been confirmed by the Board of Examiners and;
- iii) that any relevant prerequisite module for the current stage has been successfully completed by the student concerned.

⁷ N.B. Schools are required when reassessing deferred students via the single instrument method to check that the result achieved via this method does not result in a worse outcome than would have been achieved under the 2017-18 deferral conventions, which allowed for marks awarded for assessments passed to contribute to the calculation of the overall mark for the module. Students should be awarded the better of the results achieved through these two means. This additional step only applies to those students who commenced their courses of study before 2018-19.

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Or

- iv) that the student is studying on a course governed by the conventions for managing progression on Distance Learning Courses (see section 13).

8. Interim Awards

The University does not award interim qualifications. Thus, for example, a student who is taking a course of study leading to an Honours degree will not automatically be awarded a Certificate when the credits required for a Certificate have been obtained. However, in some courses, students register initially on a Certificate course, may then proceed to a Diploma course and may then proceed to a degree course. In these circumstances, successful students are awarded all three qualifications. See also section 9: Alternative Exit Awards.

9. Alternative Exit Awards

A student who successfully completes an appropriate volume of credit as part of a course of study, but who does not successfully complete the whole course will be entitled to receive an alternative exit award from the relevant Board of Examiners, for example, the award of a Certificate, Diploma or non-Honours degree, where they have achieved sufficient credit at the appropriate level required for the award concerned and has satisfied any further requirements for the particular course of study where such have been specified in the relevant approved course specification.

For full details refer to Annex 5: *Alternative Exit Awards* of the Credit Framework.

10. Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer

- 10.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a generic term for the process by which Higher Education Providers recognise and, where appropriate, award credit for learning that has taken place before entry onto a course of study. The University's policy covers the following types of prior learning:

RPEL - Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning - a process through which learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes, usually through the award of credit.

RPCL- Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning - a process, through which prior certificated learning which has **not** previously resulted in the award of UK university credits or qualifications positioned on the relevant HE qualifications framework is assessed and recognised by the University for academic purposes, usually through the award of credit. Prior Certificated Learning may include credit or awards made by non-UK HEIs, professional development or employment-related awards.

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Credit Transfer of credits or qualifications from a UK higher education awarding body for use towards a University of Kent qualification. As the credits or qualification have been awarded in accordance with the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, the process of recognition requires academic staff to assess the relevance of the prior credit/award as they relate to the University course in question. The procedure for assessing such applications is set out below:

- 10.1.1 A student who can provide evidence of previous relevant successful learning, either at this University or elsewhere, may, within specified limits, have this prior learning recognised and be exempted from part of a course of study. Annex 3 sets out, for each award, the minimum number and levels of credits which must be obtained by taking part of the course of study leading to the award concerned. Where the prior learning has taken place at a UK HEI it will be regarded as **Credit Transfer** and may be processed as below:
- 10.2 Admissions Officers, in consultation with appropriate Directors of Studies, are authorised to approve requests for credit transfer within the limits specified in Annex 3 which are supported by official transcripts or equivalent provided that they are satisfied that the applicant has achieved learning outcomes equivalent to those of the stage(s) or module(s) from which exemption is to be granted. The level and volume of credits from which the applicant is granted exemption may be less than those on which the application is based. A record of all such decisions and a copy of the evidence on which they were based will be kept by the Admissions Officer concerned. These records will be reported annually in the Autumn Term by the Admissions Officer to the relevant Divisional Committee for sampling and monitoring purposes.
- 10.3 Where a student is granted exemption from part of a course of study on the basis of credit transfer, the marks obtained by the student for such prior learning will not be used for classification purposes i.e. for determining an Honours classification or in deciding whether an award should be made with Merit or with Distinction except where it is agreed as part of an inter-institutional agreement that they should be so used.
- 10.4 The arrangements for the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning and the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning are set out in Annex R: *Recognition of Prior Learning* of the Code of Practice for Taught Courses.
- 10.5 **'Spent' Credit**
 - 10.5.1 The University will permit a limited volume of credit "spent" on the achievement of an award to be "re-spent" on a second award of an equal or lower level subject to the following conditions:
 - i) That, with the exception noted below at 10.5.1.ii, the maximum volume of spent credit that might be permitted to contribute to an award should be governed by the limits established in Annex 3 of the Credit Framework;

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- ii) That with regard to importing credit spent in the award of undergraduate Honours degrees and Integrated Master's degrees⁸ such spent credit may only be used to gain exemption from the requirements of Stage 1 of the relevant course specification;
- iii) That, except where courses share a common title for separate awards (i.e. PGCert/PGDip/Master's in X), credit spent on a University of Kent award may not be re-spent on another Kent award of the same or lower level where the credit derives from modules shared by the courses leading to the awards in question;
- iv) That such credit may not be "re-spent" on more than one occasion.

10.5.2 Applications for the re-use of such credit should be governed by the procedures for RPECL set out in Annex R of the Code of Practice.

11. General Credit

11.1 General Credit may be defined as follows:

"All assessed learning can be awarded credit. The credit gained is a general recognition of assessed learning at specified levels. It is general credit. When the credit is recognised through the admissions procedure of an HEI as directly contributing to a course it becomes specific. The change in designation from general to specific relates directly to the relevance of the learning to the proposed course⁹."

General credit therefore represents the whole of the learning achieved on an accredited course of study. An honours degree would have a General Credit value of 360 credits. Specific Credit is the volume and level of credit which can be used from the General Credit value for Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning into another course.

For example: a student gains a qualification in History, worth 120 credits at level 4 from a UK Higher Education Institution.

The **General Credit** value of this qualification is 120 credits at level 4. If the applicant requests RPCL on the basis of this to a similar Kent degree course in History, it is probable that all of the General Credit value could be recognised. However if the applicant requests RPCL with the same level 4 qualification to a Kent degree course in History and Politics, only a limited amount of the credit might be recognised. This would be determined by the academic staff mapping between the external and Kent course/module learning outcomes to identify how much credit could be used for RPCL. It may be that 60 credits of the History qualification could be used for the History part of the first year of the History and Politics course. These 60 credits would be the **Specific Credit** value.

⁸ For the purposes of this Code, Integrated Master's Degrees are regarded as undergraduate courses.

⁹ See <https://www.seec.org.uk/for-learners/> (last accessed April 2019)

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If the application for RPCL were to a completely unrelated course, e.g. Forensic Science, then it is less likely that any of the General Credit could be recognised as Specific Credit, since it may not be possible to map the learning outcomes from the external History course to the Forensic Science learning outcomes. There may be exceptions to this if a course has modules covering more generic skills, such as research skills.

- 11.2 For RPEL a General Credit value can be awarded to the RPEL Portfolio submitted. As with RPCL, if appropriate, the General Credit value can then be used in its entirety if it can be mapped to the learning outcomes of the module(s) for which credit is being claimed. Again as with RPCL it may be that only a specific amount of the General Credit can be mapped to the learning outcomes of the module(s) for which credit is sought.
- 11.3 For all RPECL claims it should be noted that the Kent Credit Framework and course requirements may limit the amount of credit than can be applied for.
- 11.4 Kent recognises the validity of studies undertaken at other UK Higher Education Institutions, therefore, it will normally recognise the General Credit value of qualifications obtained from these institutions. Note, however, that it cannot be assumed that the General Credit value can automatically be fully recognised as credit into a Kent award. As per the example at section 11.1, a mapping must first be carried out to determine what level and volume of credit can be used for an RPECL claim. In addition the Kent Credit Framework and course rules may limit the amount of credit that can be used for RECL.

The Specific Credit value can never exceed the General Credit value of the qualification being used to apply for RPCL.

12. Conventions for Award and Classification of Qualifications

12.1 Award of Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees

A student may only be recommended for the award by the University of a Certificate, Diploma or Degree in a specified subject provided that:

- 12.1.1 they meet the minimum requirements in terms of the number and levels of credits for the award in question as set out in Annex 4, except where the student has been granted limited exemption from these requirements through credit transfer, recognition of prior learning or recognition of prior experiential learning

and

they meet the requirements of the course of study which has been approved as leading to the award in question, except where the student has been granted limited exemption from these requirements through the processes for Credit Transfer or the Recognition of Prior Learning.

12.2 Non-completion of a course of study

Where a student, on completion of a course of study leading to a named award, fails to meet the requirements for that award, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to undertake further assessment in failed modules. Please see section 7.4 above for referral and section 7.6 for deferral.

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12.3 Classification of Awards

Students who successfully complete an Honours degree course will be awarded a degree with First Class, Upper Second Class, Lower Second Class or Third Class honours. Students who successfully complete a course of study leading to the award of a Certificate or Diploma may be awarded a Certificate or a Diploma with Merit or with Distinction. Students who successfully complete course of study leading to the award of a Foundation degree or Master's degree may be awarded the degree with Merit or with Distinction. The requirements for such awards are set out below.

12.4 General Requirements

- 12.4.1 Marks obtained for all modules taken as part of the course of study will contribute to the classification of an award except in the case of Honours degree courses where classification will be based only on Stages 2 and 3 and, where relevant, Stage 4, i.e. marks obtained in the first year of a full-time honours degree course and marks obtained in any foundation year will not contribute to Honours classification.
- 12.4.2 The volume of credit to be awarded for the successful completion of student placement years, whether taken in industry as part of an approved undergraduate course, will be 120 credits. The level of the credits will be stated in course specifications. While such credits will contribute to the total volume of credits required for an award, and may contribute to classification where the marks have been awarded by Kent staff¹⁰ they should not be included in any calculations undertaken for the purpose of determining fields of study for joint awards, major/minor awards or major/major/minor awards.
- 12.4.3 Where a student fails to achieve the required credits for successful completion of a year in industry, the student will be required to recover the failed credits. Where the year in industry is not integral to the subject matter of the qualification overall failed, the student might alternatively be awarded a degree without a reference to the 'year in industry' in the award title.
- 12.4.4 The conventions governing the award of credit for periods of study abroad are set out in Annex 14 of the Credit Framework.
- 12.4.5 While modules taken on a pass/fail basis contribute towards the volume of credit required for an award, they should be discounted when calculating overall average marks for the stage and for classification.
- 12.4.6 Where a student is exempted from part of the course of study on the basis of credit transfer, marks obtained for such prior learning will not be used for classification purposes except where it is agreed as part of an inter-institutional agreement that they should be so used.
- 12.4.7 In order to ensure that the application of compensation and condonement do not disadvantage a student when an award is classified:

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- Where credit for a module is awarded by compensation, the mark used for determining progression and classification should be the pass mark for the module.
- Where credit for a module is awarded by condonement, the mark awarded for that module should normally be excluded from the calculation of the classification of the award.

The marks on the transcript will not be adjusted.

12.4.8 Where a student fails a module at the first attempt and subsequently passes the module, or takes and passes an alternative module in place of a module which has been failed, the minimum pass mark will be used for classification.

12.4.9 With respect to students who first registered on a course leading to a postgraduate taught award¹¹ prior to 2019-20, Boards of Examiners may recommend the award of a higher classification than that indicated by the marks obtained provided that the student would have qualified for a higher classification if they had obtained two more marks for each module and provided that the Board of Examiners is satisfied that there is substantial evidence that the marks obtained do not fully reflect the candidate's overall achievement. Such evidence should normally take one or more of the forms stated below. The marks obtained should not be changed.

- a) Documented evidence of significant medical or personal problems or of unexpected hardship.
- b) Evidence obtained from a viva voce examination.
- c) The views of an External Examiner on the quality of work of the candidate
- d) Performance in one module substantially below that on other modules.
- e) Evidence of achievement commensurate with the higher classification. Such evidence might include a significant number of answers to individual questions which are of appropriate quality or, in appropriate subjects, evidence of problem solving ability.

Credit may not be awarded through this means.

12.4.10 Boards of Examiners have discretion to make recommendations notwithstanding the Conventions in exceptional cases provided that such recommendations do not lower the classification arising on the application of the Conventions and provided always that the student has obtained at least seven eighths of the credits normally required for the award of the qualification in question (including credits awarded via condonement and/or compensation). "Exceptional" in such cases should be interpreted as having reference to the unique and severe concessionary circumstances of individual candidates.

¹¹ Or students who entered Stages 2, 3 or 4 of their undergraduate courses of study in 2011-12.

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- 12.4.11 With respect to students who first registered on a course leading to a postgraduate taught award from 2019-20 onwards, the provision allowed under sections 12.4.8 – 12.4.9 for raising candidates to a higher classification band may not be applied.
- 12.4.12 The signature of all the External Examiners present shall be appended to the final list of results as evidence that they endorse the classifications.
- 12.4.13 Students who successfully complete the stated requirements are entitled to receive the award for which they are registered at the University. Where courses of study allow for 'incremental registration' a successful student will, therefore, pick up each award in turn. The classification of such awards will be managed as follows:
- (i) **Undergraduate courses:** where students are permitted to register on an incremental course basis (Certificate > Diploma > Degree) they should normally be classified for their degree not only on the basis of their performance in the degree, but also with regard to their performance in the diploma course. Such students will, therefore, be classified over two 'stages' (diploma and degree).
Note: This regulation does not apply to students entering the University for the final stage of a degree course from another institution, or to students taking 'top-up' degrees, or students progressing into the final stage of a degree course from either a HND or Foundation Degree (i.e. the marks obtained at another institution or in the final stage of either a FD or a HNC/HND cannot be factored into a calculation of degree classification).
 - (ii) **Postgraduate courses:** where students are permitted to register on an incremental course basis (PG Certificate > PG Diploma > Master's Degree, or PG Diploma > Master's Degree) they should normally be classified for their award on the following basis:
 - a) PG Certificate – students to be classified on the basis of their performance on the PG Certificate.
 - b) PG Diploma – classification will be made on the basis of student performance across both the PG Cert and PG Dip 'stages'; or, where the PG Dip consists of a single 120 credit stage, across the PG Diploma as a whole.
 - c) Master's – award to be made on the basis of either student performance across the PG Cert, the PG Dip and the Master's 'stages'; or, where the PG Dip consists of a single 120 credit stage, on the basis of student performance on the PG Dip and the Master's together.
- 12.4.14 Taught courses at both UG and PGT level will normally be classified by **both the 'average' and the 'preponderance'** methods, with students to benefit from the better result derived from each method.
- 12.4.15 It may be appropriate for courses of study validated at other institutions by the University to operate alternative marking and classification schemes. Decisions to operate alternative marking schemes will normally require

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approval by the Working Group for Regulations and Conventions. The decision will be recorded in the course approval documentation. Where such a decision has been approved, courses may be exempt from the classification methods set out in Annex 6 of the Credit Framework.

12.5 Stage Weighting

12.5.1 Undergraduate Degree Courses

- 12.5.1.1 The standard weighting of stages for three year undergraduate degree courses will be 40% for Stage 2 and 60% for Stage 3.
- 12.5.1.2 The standard weighting of stages for four year undergraduate degree courses (i.e. degree courses leading either to Bachelor's or integrated Master's¹² awards) will be 20% for Stage 2, 30% for Stage 3 and 50% for Stage 4.
- 12.5.1.3 Where a student completes Stages 1 to 3 of a four stage Bachelor's or undergraduate integrated Master's degree course, but does not complete Stage 4 and, therefore, qualifies for the award of an approved alternative exit Bachelor's degree, the standard stage weighting in such cases will be 40% for Stage 2 and 60% for Stage 3.
- 12.5.1.4 With regard to stages or terms taken in placement in industry, the following rubric will apply:
- (i) where the student's mark or marks have not been awarded by Kent staff, the placement will be graded on a pass/fail basis and will therefore be zero-weighted with respect to classification;
 - (ii) where the student's mark or marks have been awarded by Kent staff, the mark or marks achieved will be recorded and will carry such weighting towards classification as has been approved by the relevant Director of Division (or nominee);
 - (iii) Where a stage includes a term abroad, that stage will make a contribution to the final classification in the normal way. The standard weighting of 40/60 will apply in such cases.
 - (iv) Terms abroad may not form part of the final stage of a UG degree course, as this condenses the greater weighted contribution of the final stage to classification to those few modules taken at Kent and may disproportionately impact on the classification outcome.
- 12.5.1.5 Where individual assessment elements of any module are marked by a non-Kent marker the principle of point (i) above will also apply.
- 12.5.1.6 Where assessments are marked by a non-Kent staff member as part of the arrangements leading to a University of Kent award for a franchised, validated, dual or joint course of study, the marks awarded will make the same contribution as if they had been recorded by a Kent member of staff.

¹² For the purposes of this Code, Integrated Master's Degrees are regarded as undergraduate courses.

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12.5.1.7 Schools seeking to apply non-standard weightings to stages may only do so with the approval of the relevant Divisional committee (i.e. DESEC/DGSSEC). Such applications should demonstrate that there is sound pedagogical reason for applying the non-standard weighting or provide evidence that the non-standard weighting meets a PSRB requirement.

12.5.2 Foundation Degrees and Postgraduate Taught Courses

For the purpose of classification, modules and/or stages may have different weightings as approved by the relevant Divisional committee (i.e. DESEC/DGSSEC). With respect to Foundation Degrees, stages will be weighted equally for classification unless a specific differential weighting has been approved.

12.5.3 Classification of Awards other than HNC/Ds or Honours Degrees and of Stage 1 of Honours Degrees

12.5.3.1 The following classification rules apply to all Certificates and Diplomas, including Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education, Graduate Certificates and Diplomas¹³ and Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas, to Foundation Year courses, Foundation Degrees and Master's* degrees other than 'Extended Master's' degrees (which are awarded with Honours following successful completion of an extended undergraduate Honours degree course), the Master of Architecture (M.Arch) and to Stage 1 of Honours degree courses.

12.5.3.2 *Some courses leading to the award of a Master's degree do not make provision for the award to be made 'with Merit' or 'with Distinction' while others make provision for the degree to be awarded 'with Distinction' but not 'with Merit'.

12.5.3.3 Taught courses at both UG and PGT level will normally be classified by **both the 'average' and the 'preponderance'** methods, with students to benefit from the better result derived from each method.

12.5.4 'Average' Method of Classification

'with Merit': an average mark of 60 or above but less than 70.

'with Distinction': an average mark of 70 or above.

12.5.5 'Preponderance' Method of Classification

The following calculation is to be used¹⁴:

'with Merit':

an average mark over all contributing modules of **57** or above and

¹³ For the purposes of this Code, Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas are regarded as undergraduate courses.

¹⁴ Except with regard to students who enrolled on a relevant course of study prior to 2015-16. Contact the QACO for guidance on this point.

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a mark of **60** or above for **50%** or more of the credits obtained
‘with Distinction’:

an average mark over all contributing modules of **67** or above and

a mark of **70** or above for **50%** or more of the credits obtained

12.5.6 **Classification of Honours Degrees**

Taught courses at both UG and PGT level will normally be classified by **both the ‘average’ and the ‘preponderance’** methods, with students to benefit from the better result derived from each method.

Where there is clear evidence, however, that there is a PSRB requirement for an undergraduate course of study to be classified by a single method, Schools must seek the prior approval of the relevant Divisional committee (i.e. DESEC/DGSSEC) to classify solely by either the **‘average’** method or the **‘preponderance’** method (refer to sections 12.5.4-12.5.5 above).

i) Weighted Average Mark

The final weighted average mark for classification purposes will be determined by the application of weighting to the average marks achieved for each relevant stage of the degree course. The final weighted average mark will be used for classification under both the average and preponderance methods of classification.

ii) ‘Average’ Method of Classification

A candidate who has met the requirements for the award of an Honours degree will be placed in an Honours class based on the rounded weighted average mark, with modules weighted as agreed by the relevant Divisional committee (i.e. DESEC/DGSSEC) and calculated to two decimal places, over all modules in Stages 2, 3 and, where relevant, 4 of the course of study according to the following table:

First Class Honours	70 and above
Upper Second Class Honours	60 – 69.49
Lower Second Class Honours	50 – 59.49
Third Class Honours	40 – 49.49

iii) ‘Preponderance’ Method of Classification

A candidate who has met the requirements for award of an Honours degree will be placed in an Honours class on the attainment of:

at least the following number of credits in that class or above AND

at least the following weighted average mark over the examination as a whole:

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For degrees with 240 contributing credits:

Class	Number of Credits in class or above	Average mark over all contributing modules
First Class	120	67
Upper Second Class	120	57
Lower Second Class	120	47
Third Class	240*	Not Applicable

For degrees with 360 contributing credits:

Class	Number of Credits in class or above	Average mark over all contributing modules
First Class	180	67
Upper Second Class	180	57
Lower Second Class	180	47
Third Class	360*	Not Applicable

For degrees/students with contributing credits other than above:

Class	% of Credits in class or above	Average mark over all contributing modules
First Class	50%	67
Upper Second Class	50%	57
Lower Second Class	50%	47
Third Class	100%*	Not Applicable

* where credits have been awarded via compensation for a module mark of less than 40, the credits should be treated as being in the Third Class category.

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13 Conventions for Managing Progression, Resits and the Award of Credit on Distance Learning Courses (including Apprenticeship Courses)

13.1 Introduction

Courses delivered by distance learning may be designed to permit multiple in-stage attempts by students to pass modules. The conventions set out in this document are therefore established in order to accommodate this greater flexibility in design that are a feature of such courses of study.

13.2 Conventions

Where a course of study is delivered to a significant proportion via distance learning the following conventions may be used to manage progression, resits and the award of credit:

- 13.2.1 Distance Learning Courses should retain the standard volume of credit per stage for the award in question;
- 13.2.2 Students will be permitted no more than three attempts to pass any module;
- 13.2.3 Resit or repeat attempts will be permitted in the term following the failed attempt;
- 13.2.4 Referral/Deferral Boards may be staged at the end of any term in order to make decisions on permitting a resit or repeat attempt in the following term.
- 13.2.5 Referral/Deferral Boards will operate on a membership of Chief Examiner, one other examiner involved in the assessment of the modules and a secretary.
- 13.2.6 A Progression and Award Board of Examiners will be staged at least annually in order to make decisions on progression, the award of credit and the award of qualifications; such Boards will comprise the standard membership for Boards of Examiners;
- 13.2.7 Decisions on condonement, compensation and the trailing of credit will remain end-stage decisions and will be considered by the Progression and Award Board;
- 13.2.8 Students who have not exhausted the maximum number of permitted attempts at a module may, at the discretion of the Progression and Award Board, be allowed to trail up to 30 credits to the next stage of the course.
- 13.2.9 Progression and Award Boards may permit a student to take up to 30 credits from the next stage of the course before the student has formally progressed to that stage. Such higher stage credit should not be used for the purposes of progression or be permitted to contribute to an award until the progression requirements for the current stage have been confirmed by the Board of Examiners.
- 13.2.10 Other than the provisions set out in these conventions, Distance Learning courses will be subject to the standard requirements of the Credit Framework.

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14. Special Dispensation

14.1 The Education and Student Experience Board is authorised to approve exceptions to the requirements of the Credit Framework for Taught Courses in individual cases under special circumstances provided that it is satisfied that there is good reason to do so. Such special circumstances would encompass extreme events beyond the control of the student concerned and which caused severe difficulty.

14.2 Where an exemption from the requirements of the Credit Framework is sought the procedure to be followed is:

- i) The relevant School or Partner Institution (as appropriate) should determine whether there is good reason for an exemption and that there is support for making the request. If it is determined at this stage that there is not good reason and/or support for the exemption the student should be so informed and the matter will be closed. Note that without support from the Division or Partner Institution the request for an exemption will not be considered further.
- ii) If it is determined that there is good reason and support for the request, the details and a rationale for the required exemption should be forwarded to the Quality Assurance and Compliance Office (QACO). The QACO will confirm the particular requirements of the Credit Framework for which the exemption is sought and review whether the rationale addresses those requirements.
- iii) The QACO will submit the request and rationale to the Chair of the Education and Student Experience Board (or nominee) with any accompanying comments. The Chair will approve or not approve the exemption request on the basis of this submission. The QACO will inform the Division or Partner Institution concerned of the decision.
- iv) Exemption approvals will be reported to the next meeting of the Education and Student Experience Board.
- v) The approval or non-approval of an exemption request is a discretionary power and no appeal is permitted.

14.3 Where the request is for a deviation from the course specification, but it does not require an exemption from the Credit Framework, the request can be considered and approved/not approved by the Divisional DESE or DGSSE. A record must be kept of the consideration and outcome of all such requests.

14.4 Posthumous awards

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- 14.4.1 Where a student has died before completion of their course of study, the Board of Examiners may recommend a posthumous award if it is satisfied that the evidence indicates that the award would have been passed. The recommendation will be made to the Chair of the Education and Student Experience Board, who will consider the matter on behalf of the Board and report back to it on the outcome, via the Quality Assurance and Compliance Office.
- 14.4.2 Should any regulations or credit conventions require dispensation in order to confirm the recommendation, the Chair may consider the appropriateness of doing so as relevant to the case in question. Where the Chair exercises this power, this will also be reported to the Education and Student Experience Board, normally at its next meeting.