The information in these guidance notes is taken from the Credit Framework for Taught Programmes: Information for Students, Teachers and Examiners, available in full at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/index.html.

Relevant academic regulations may be found on the Quality Assurance Office website at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html.

Examiners should also take note of the requirements of Annex J (Meetings of Boards of Examiners) and Annex K (External Examiners) of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, and Annex 9 (Concessions Applications ) of the Credit Framework.

It should be noted that undergraduate programmes delivered by the Medway School of Pharmacy are governed by a distinct set of academic regulations, and the procedures and conventions for classification for those programmes differ in several areas from the terms of this guidance document. Other collaborative programmes leading to joint or dual awards may also be subject to alternative sets of bespoke academic regulations. See: https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/regulations/index.html

**Areas of change in 2017/18 and other notable points:**

There are few changes to the conventions to report for 2017/18:

i. **Deferral – ‘As if for the Second Time.’**

Clarification has been provided as to when it would be appropriate to offer a deferral ‘as if for the second time’, i.e. where a student may have concessionary circumstances but 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. Although the student will be permitted to retrieve the credits for a capped module mark, this would take place without incurring a further reduction in the number of permitted attempts (see 13.2).

ii. **Classification of Programmes that Allow for Incremental Registration**

Students who successfully complete the stated requirements are entitled to receive the award for which they are registered at the University. Where programmes of study allow for ‘incremental registration’ a successful student will, therefore, pick up each award in turn. Although the conventions for the classification of UG programme of study of this design were stated clearly in the Credit Framework, the position was less clear with regard to the classification of PGT programmes of study of this type. This has now been rectified (see 18.2).

There have been no other changes to the standard conventions for 2017/18.

**Other Matters of Note:**

iii. **Special Conventions Implemented in Mitigation of Disruption to Teaching and Assessment Caused by Industrial Action**

In line with the licence afforded by University Ordinance 28, Senate approved the implementation of a number of special conventions intended to mitigate the impact of the industrial action on student performance, as set out in (Senate Paper: S2017-S01 / 28/03/18). At the time of writing, these conventions are in the
main limited to some specific interventions that allow for concessionary adjustments to be made to offset the non-delivery of module materials/content and/or the non-staging of assessments due to the strike action. These special conventions are not covered in this more generic document. Staff and students are encouraged to consult the guidance documentation produced for the purpose of providing advice on the implementation of the special conventions, which may be found on the QA Office website, here:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/guidance/docs/revised-grading-scale.docx

iv. Pre-2011/12 Classification Conventions for UG Programmes

PGT Programmes: Discretionary Consideration of Candidates at the Borderline to a Higher Class Band

Although the discretionary consideration of candidates whose profile of marks places them at the borderline to a higher class band was withdrawn in 2011/12 for students on undergraduate programmes of study, it remains in operation in 2017/18 for students on taught postgraduate programmes (PGT). Feedback from at least one PGT external examiner suggests that confusion exists in some quarters with regard to the operation of this process. The source of this confusion would appear to be the failure to recognize that PGT student profiles can be flagged by SDS as ‘borderline’ under both the average and preponderance methods of classification.

Clause 16.1.7 of this document sets out the qualifying requirements for such consideration:

“Boards of Examiners may recommend the award of a higher classification than that indicated by the marks obtained provided that the [PGT] student would have qualified for a higher classification if he/she 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.”

It is perhaps more intuitive to accept the interpretation of the above clause that arises from the ‘average’ method of classification: that candidates falling at the borderline are easily identifiable as their final weighted average mark lies within two percent of the boundary for an award in a higher classification band. Adding two more marks to every module would have the effect of raising the candidate's profile into one that merits an award in that higher class according to the average method of classification.

The wording of clause 16.1.7, however, allows equally for the performance of PGT candidates to be considered as borderline to a higher classification under the preponderance method. Preponderance as operated on PGT programmes is a methodology that requires the achievement of a qualifying mark over all contributing modules of either 57 (for a merit) or 67 (for a distinction), along with fifty percent or more of the credits scoring in the relevant higher class band.

Therefore, if by adding two more marks to every module a candidate’s performance would achieve (i) the qualifying mark or higher and (ii) the requisite volume of credit in the higher class band, the candidate will be flagged by SDS on the composite mark-sheet as ‘borderline’ under preponderance. This is no doubt the reason why, in the example cited as unclear by one Board of Examiners, a PGT candidate with an average of 66.8 was marked by SDS for consideration as a borderline candidate. This is because
student performance on PGT programmes can be considered as borderline to a higher classification under both the average and preponderance methodologies.

It is worth noting that the University is committed to making the PGT classification conventions consistent with those introduced for undergraduate programmes of study in 2011/12, which will remove the facility for the discretionary consideration of PGT candidates whose profile of marks and credits places their performance at the borderline to a higher class band. This change, however, is dependent on the implementation of the ‘KentVision’ student record system. While it was anticipated that this would transpire in time for the start of the 2017/18 academic year, the twelve-month delay in the implementation of KentVision meant that the proposed harmonisation of UG and PGT classification conventions must now be deferred until the 2018/19 academic year. Until that time, the procedure for the discretionary consideration of PGT candidates whose performance places them at the borderline to a higher class band will remain in operation.
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Appendix 1: Classification of Honours Degrees for Students admitted to the University up to and including 2010-2011.

Appendix 2: Undergraduate Students – Credit Framework Conventions by Cohort.
1. **Duties of Boards of Examiners**

Each School will have a Board or Boards of Examiners which will:

- review the marking of and confirm the marks to be awarded for all modules for which the School holds responsibility;
- make recommendations for the award of Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees to students who have successfully completed programmes of study for which the School holds responsibility;
- make recommendations with regard to progression, referrals and termination of registration of students taking programmes of study for which the School holds responsibility.

All discussion at meetings of Boards of Examiners shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed to students except where such disclosure is authorised by the Academic Registrar.

2. **Membership**

Each Board of Examiners which considers work that contributes to the award of a certificate, diploma or degree shall include one or more External Examiners whose appointment has been approved by the Vice-Chancellor acting on behalf of Senate and Council.

Other members of the Board of Examiners shall be appointed by the appropriate Faculty Board on the recommendation of the School. These members shall include an internal marker for each module for which the Board of Examiners holds responsibility. One of these members shall be appointed by the Faculty Board as Chair of the Board of Examiners. Faculty Boards shall be authorised to appoint representative Boards of Examiners to consider referral results. All meetings of Boards of Examiners will have a Secretary in attendance.

The **Secretary** to the Board is responsible for:

- advising the Board with regard to regulations and conventions and their interpretation;
- keeping a record of the decisions made by the Board and for ensuring that these decisions are acted upon;
- where the Board makes a decision other than that indicated by the conventions, recording the reasons for so doing on the official record of results;
- keeping a record if the consideration given to borderline cases and to concessions cases (Nb. PGT only)
- confirming with the Chair the accuracy of the official record of the decisions of the Board;
- asking the External Examiner(s), where present, to sign the official record to confirm their acceptance of the decisions made by the Board.

3. **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 if:
he/she meets the minimum requirements in terms of the number and levels of credits for the award in question as set out in Annex 4 of the Credit Framework, except where the student has been granted limited exemption from these requirements through credit transfer, accreditation of prior learning or accreditation of prior experiential learning;

and

he/she meets the requirements of the programme 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 credit transfer or the accreditation of prior learning.

4. Successful Completion of Module

A student who successfully demonstrates via assessment that he/she has 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. Module specifications will state the pass mark and whether this has to be achieved overall and/or in prescribed elements of assessment. Where a student has an overall mark for a module which is above the pass mark but has failed a component of the assessment which must be passed, the overall mark for the module will be recorded as one mark below the pass mark, i.e. if the pass mark is 40%, an overall mark of 39% will be recorded. In certain modules, assessment may be on a Pass/Fail basis and numerical marks will not be awarded. For modules taken as part of a HNC or HND programme assessment will be graded Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction. In all other cases, the pass mark for modules taken at levels 3, 4, 5, and 6 is 40%. For modules taken at level 7 from 2015/16 and thereafter the pass mark is 50%.

4.1 The pass mark for all level 7 (M) modules was changed from 40% to 50% for work marked from the 2015/16 academic year onwards. As this change negatively impacted those students who had marks allocated for level 7 (M) modules prior to the implementation of this change but whose degrees would not be classified until the following academic year or thereafter, the Academic Registrar devised a scale for converting any such remaining marks to the 50% pass scale, as follows:

An original mark in the range 0 to 40 will map to 0 to 50, the intermediate replacement mark will be calculated as the original mark x 5/4

An original mark in the range 40+ to 60 will map to 50+ to 60, the intermediate replacement mark will be calculated as the (original mark)/2 + 30

The rounding rule in Annex 6, paragraph 16 of the Credit Framework will be applied to the intermediate replacement mark to produce the final replacement mark.

Final overall marks for a module that fell into the compensatable range when originally marked to a pass mark of 40 (i.e. 30-39) will remain compensatable after the conversion above has been applied, even where the recalculated final replacement mark does not fall into the range 40-49. This is to ensure that no student is disadvantaged by the introduction of the higher pass mark of 50 at level 7.

Detailed guidance on the implementation of the 50% pass mark at level 7 can be found at http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/guidance-key-changes-regulations.html.

5. Condonement

Where a student fails a module or modules but claims 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 programme of study, provided that there is evidence to show that the student has achieved the programme 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. Programme specifications specify modules in which failure cannot be condoned.

Detailed guidance on the application of all concessionary measures available to Boards can be found at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/guidance-concessions-ug-students.html.

6. Compensation

Where a student fails a module or modules but has marks for such modules which are within 10 percentage points of the pass mark\(^1\), 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 programme of study, provided that the student has an average mark for the stage which is at or above the pass mark and provided that there is evidence to show that programme 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 when an award is classified, where credit for a module is awarded by compensation the mark used for classification should be the pass mark for the module. The mark on the transcript will not be adjusted. Programme specifications specify modules in which failure cannot be compensated.

**Note 1:** i.e. In 2017/18, the achievement of a mark in the range 30%-39% for modules taken at levels 3 – 6; or the achievement of a mark in the range 40%-49% for modules taken at level 7.

**Note 2:** Marks awarded for level 7 modules in the 30-39 range prior to 2015/16 remain compensatable when being considered by Boards in the present or subsequent academic years. See 4.1 above.


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


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.

Detailed guidance on the application of other concessionary measures available to Boards is provided in a separate guidance document, which can be found at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/guidance-concessions-ug-students.html.
For the purpose of ensuring institutional level overview, Boards are required to keep a summary record of the decisions made to award credit via compensation, condonation and other concessory measures. A template for recording this data will be provided to Schools.

### 9. Progression

When a student has completed a stage of a programme 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 programme of study, or to another programme of study.

The normal requirement for progression from one stage of a programme of study to the next is that the student should have obtained at least 75% of the credits for the stage and should have obtained credits for those modules which the programme specification indicates must be obtained before progression is permitted.

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 programme 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 programme of study; or (ii) receive an appropriate exit award (as outlined in the approved programme specification for the cohort under consideration).

Where a Board of Examiners is satisfied that a student has attained the minimum learning outcomes for Stage 1 of an undergraduate degree programme, 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 student has failed to obtain marks necessary to proceed on modules whose learning content is not central to the learning outcomes of the programme, where the marks on the failed modules are inconsistent with the overall performance of the student and where they have been able to demonstrate achievement of the minimum programme 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 student's core programme, such as languages or interfaculty modules, and so as not unreasonably to penalise students who have elected to take such modules but through experience have found them particularly difficult and burdensome.

When a student has completed a year of study but has not completed a stage of a programme of study, the Board of Examiners will recommend whether the student may continue with his or her studies.

### 10. Referral

10.1 Where a student is not permitted to progress to the next stage of a programme, or at the end of a year of study other than the end of a stage of a programme has failed a module or modules, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to undertake further assessment in failed modules. The Board of Examiners will specify which elements of assessment the student is required to undertake. 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. Marks already obtained for elements of assessment which the student is not required to undertake again will be carried forward unless the Board of Examiners specifies otherwise. Where a student is referred in a module, a maximum of two referral opportunities per module will be permitted\(^1\), the first of these will be normally available during the long vacation following the initial failure. This means that a student may not be withdrawn on grounds of failure unless s/he has exhausted both referral opportunities for any failed module.

10.1.1  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).

10.2 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 programme, 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 programme of study are still met, but must do so before progressing to the next stage of the programme.

10.3 **Referral - Taught Postgraduate Dissertation**
A student who is referred in the dissertation element of a taught postgraduate programme 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.

10.4 Marks for modules in which a student has been referred or which a student has repeated or in which a student has attempted to retrieve an initial failure should be treated as set out in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Result</th>
<th>Resit Result</th>
<th>Marks to be used for Award of Credit, Progression and Eligibility for Award</th>
<th>Marks to be used for Classification/Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Best Mark</td>
<td>Best Mark **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Best Mark</td>
<td>Minimum Pass Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Original Mark</td>
<td>Original Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Original Mark</td>
<td>Original Mark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**  Where credit for a failed module is awarded via compensation, the mark used for the purposes of classification will be the pass mark for the module. This step is undertaken for reasons of equity, as the decision by a Board to compensate denies the student an opportunity to achieve a capped mark of 40 under the arrangements for referral. The mark shown on the transcript will not be adjusted to the pass mark, but will show the Best Mark achieved by the student.

\(^1\) Except for the dissertation element of taught postgraduate programmes of study. See 10.3.
10.5 **Further Guidance on Referral**

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 long vacation. 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 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.

11. **Referral Arrangements**

Arrangements for the involvement of Boards of Examiners and External Examiners:

11.1. require the full (summer) Board of Examiners to set the parameters regarding progression possibilities for those students who are required to re-sit; therefore, the External Examiner will not be required to be present at the resit Board of Examiners;

11.2. invite the full summer Board of Examiners to nominate representatives for the resit Board to act on behalf of the full Board of Examiners, and for this to be approved by the Dean on behalf of the Faculty Board.

12. **Trailing and Retrieving Credit**

Where a student is permitted to progress to the next stage of a programme, but has not been awarded full credit for the previous stage, the student will still need to obtain credits for modules for which he/she has so far not been awarded credit in order to meet requirements for the award of the certificate, diploma or degree for which he/she is 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:

12.1. 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 programme of study are still met.

12.2. By progressing to the next stage of the programme 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 programme specification or may specify assessment to be undertaken satisfactorily for the award of the credits in question. 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 programme, e.g. a student will not be permitted to progress to Stage 3 of a programme unless he/she has obtained all Stage 1 credits and met the minimum progression requirements in Stage 2.
Where a student is referred in a module, two (and no more than two) referral opportunities per module will be automatically permitted, the first of these will normally be available during the long vacation following the initial failure.

13. Deferral

13.1 Where a student has failed due to circumstances such as illness, and where there is written evidence to support this, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to undertake some or all of the assessment for some or all of the failed modules comprising the stage at a later date either (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. Where the student has met requirements for progression to the next stage of the programme, he/she 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 12.2 above).

13.2 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. Where a student has failed due to circumstances such as illness, and where there is written evidence to support this, the Board of Examiners may permit the student to undertake some or all of the assessment for some or all of the failed modules comprising the stage at a later date and as for the first time. Where the student has met requirements for progression to the next stage of the programme, he/she 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.

14. Concessionary Committees

Before each meeting of a Board of Examiners, the Chief Examiner will convene a meeting of a small number of internal members of the Board of Examiners (i.e. normally no more than three members, to include the Chief Examiner, the Senior Tutor, a third member and, typically, with the Student Support Officer in attendance) to assess the severity of the impact on student performance of documented concessionary circumstances. Based on these assessments, the Committee will agree recommendations to be made to the Board about what action might be appropriate in order to arrive at a fair outcome that reflects the student’s overall level of performance - an outcome that is evidence-based, merited, proportionate to the severity of the impact of the circumstances on student performance and is permissible within the prescribed limits for action and for ensuring the achievement of academic standards.

It remains the University’s policy that External Examiners should not participate in the meetings of the Concessionary Committee. It is recommended, however, that Schools should consider staging an additional briefing session with External Examiners in order to explain the operation of Kent’s processes in managing concessions, the types of decision that can be made and the general rationale for making them with respect to the differently graded assessments of the impact of concessionary circumstances. This briefing may take the form of a separate meeting or be included on the agenda of the main meeting of the Board of Examiners, but clearly to be of most use it should take

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2 Except for the dissertation element of taught postgraduate programmes of study. See 10.3.
place prior to the discussion of candidates’ profiles of marks and any decisions on progression and awards.

The scale provided below offers a framework for determining the appropriate intervention (if any) that should be made in response to the negative impact of concessionary circumstances on a student’s performance and this should be used for the purpose of reporting this assessment and the resulting recommendations to the Board.

Detailed guidance on the application of the conventions for considering concessionary submissions is provided in a separate document, which can be found at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/guidance-concessions-ug-students.html.

Conventions for the Application of Concessionary Measures

14.1 Where a concessionary committee determines that a student’s performance on a module or modules has been impaired by illness or other mitigating circumstances, it may recommend to the Board of Examiners that one or more of the measures set out in the table below should be adopted, within the limits prescribed and as appropriate to the circumstances and its assessment of the severity of the impact of the student’s performance.

14.1.1 Condonement

Where the overall marks for a module or modules are condoned and are, therefore, excluded from the calculation of the classification of the award, Boards of Examiners must be satisfied that there is evidence to show that the student has achieved the programme learning outcomes.

14.1.2 Adjusted Overall Marks for Modules

Boards of Examiners should be satisfied that, where the overall marks on modules are adjusted by means of marks substitution or the disregarding of specific assessments, the adjusted overall mark(s) for the module(s) arrived at by these means properly represents the student’s achievement in the module as a whole.

14.2 Condonement may only be applied to a maximum of 25% of the credit available for the stage.

In addition, the following measures may also be used:

14.3 For concessions assessed at Grade 1 or above, where the assessments to be disregarded contribute less than 20% to the overall mark for the module, Boards of Examiners may consider use of this measure without restriction.

Boards of Examiners should be satisfied that the adjusted overall mark(s) for the module(s) arrived at by these means properly represents the student’s achievement in the module as a whole.

Nb.1: Condonement would not normally be applied for a Grade 1 concession.

Nb.2: Use of mark substitution would be inappropriate for a Grade 1 concession.

14.4 For concessions assessed at Grade 2, where a module or modules have been failed and where the assessment[s] to be disregarded contribute 20% or more to the overall mark for the module[s] in question, the cumulative application of this measure is limited to a maximum cumulative total of 25% of the credit available for any stage.

Nb. Where adjustments to module marks made via these means result in the award of credit for the module (i.e. the intervention turns an overall fail for the module into a pass for the module), they should be recorded by the Board of Examiners as resulting in the award of the full volume of credit available for the module in question (i.e. 15 or 30 credits; the credits recorded should not
be fractions based on the contribution of individual assessments to the overall mark for the
module).

Boards of Examiners should be satisfied that the adjusted overall mark(s) for the
module(s) arrived at by these means properly represents the student’s
achievement in the module as a whole.

14.5 For concessions assessed at Grade 3, where a module or modules have been failed
and where the assessment[s] to be disregarded or substituted contribute 20% or more
to the overall mark for the module[s] in question, Boards of Examiners may consider use
of the measures of mark substitution and the disregarding of affected assessments for
up to a maximum cumulative total of 25% of the credit available for the stage.

Note. Where adjustments to module marks made via these means result in the award of credit for
the module (i.e. the intervention turns an overall fail for the module into a pass for the module),
they should be recorded by the Board of Examiners as resulting in the award of the full volume of
credit available for the module in question (i.e. 15 or 30 credits; the credits recorded should not
be fractions based on the contribution of individual assessments to the overall mark for the
module). The limits set out at (a) above for use of such interventions must be observed.

Boards of Examiners should be satisfied that the adjusted overall mark(s) for the
module(s) arrived at by these means properly represents the student’s
achievement in the module as a whole.

14.6 For concessions assessed at the appropriate grade, where a module or modules have
been passed, Boards of Examiners may consider disregarding affected assessments
(for Grade 2 and/or Grade 3 concessions) and substituting marks (for Grade 3
concessions only) without restriction.

Boards of Examiners should be satisfied that the adjusted overall mark(s) for the
module(s) arrived at by these means properly represents the student’s
achievement in the module as a whole.

14.7 Boards of Examiners may only defer a candidate with respect to modules that have been
failed.

### Sliding Scale of Concessionary Measure in Full

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Severity of Impact</th>
<th>Actions Might Include</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>The evidence submitted does not indicate that the concessionary circumstances had any adverse impact on the performance of the student in his/her assessment(s); OR the circumstances described have already been sufficiently mitigated through the granting of a concession; OR the alleged circumstances were experienced in a timeframe not relevant to the assessment(s) in question.</td>
<td>Discount concessionary submission. Note at the BoE, however, that it has been considered and discounted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The evidence submitted indicates that the concessionary circumstances are likely to have had limited adverse impact on the performance of the student in his/her assessment(s).</td>
<td>Override late submission penalties; grant time-limited extension; offer equivalent assessment, where appropriate (e.g. reschedule missed in-class test); AND/OR Disregard affected assessments or c/w requirement for the affected module or modules, where these contribute less than 20% of the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Guidance for Examiners 2017/18

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Guidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>The evidence submitted indicates that the concessionary circumstances are likely to have had a significant adverse impact on the performance of the student in his/her assessment(s).&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>mark</strong> for the module(s) in question. Such adjusted marks should properly represent the student's achievement on the module as a whole.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Any actions available for a Grade 1 concession; and&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Disregard</strong> individual assessments for the affected module or modules, including where these contribute 20% or more to the overall mark for the module(s) in question, provided that (i) the learning outcomes for the module(s) are achieved; and (ii) such adjusted marks properly represent the student's achievement on the module(s) as a whole.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Nb.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;(a) Where the modules in question have been <strong>failed</strong>, the disregard measure may only be used with respect to a maximum of 25% of the credit available for the stage;&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;(b) Where the modules in question have been <strong>passed</strong>, this measure may be used without restriction.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Nb. Where adjustments to module marks made via these means result in the award of credit for the module (i.e. the intervention turns an overall fail for the module into a pass for the module), they should be recorded by the Board of Examiners as resulting in the award of the full volume of credit available for the module in question (i.e. 15 or 30 credits; the credits recorded should not be fractions based on the contribution of individual assessments to the overall mark for the module). The limits set out at (a) above for use of such interventions must be observed.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<em><em>AND</em>/OR</em>*&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;*Within limits, see 14.2 - 14.7 above.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Where student has failed up to a maximum of 25% of the credit for the stage, consider condoning;&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>OR</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Consider recommending deferral as per clause 13 of this guidance document;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>The evidence submitted indicates that the concessionary circumstances are serious and are likely to have had a very significant adverse impact on the performance of the student in his/her assessment(s).&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Any actions available for a Grade 1 concession; and&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Disregard</strong> individual assessments for the affected module or modules, including where these contribute 20% or more to the overall mark for the module(s) in question; and/or&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Substitute</strong> c/w for exam mark or vice versa, or, where the assessment pattern does not include an examination, c/w mark for c/w mark, provided that (i) the learning outcomes for the module(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are achieved; and (ii) such adjusted marks properly represent the student’s achievement on the module as a whole.

**Nb.**

(a) Where the modules in question have been **failed**, the **disregard** and/or **substitute** measures may only be used cumulatively with respect to a maximum of 25% of the credit available for the stage;

(b) Where the modules in question have been **passed**, these measures may be used without restriction.

**Nb.** Where adjustments to module marks made via these means result in the award of credit for the module (i.e. the intervention turns an overall fail for the module into a pass for the module), they should be recorded by the Board of Examiners as resulting in the award of the full volume of credit available for the module in question (i.e. 15 or 30 credits; the credits recorded should **not** be fractions based on the contribution of individual assessments to the overall mark for the module). The limits set out at (a) above for use of such interventions must be observed.

**AND*/OR**

*Within limits, see 14.2 -14.7 above:

Where student has failed up to a maximum of 25% of the credit for the stage, consider condoning;

**OR**

Consider recommending deferral as per Clause 13 of this guidance document;

**OR**, where applicable:

Re. the classification of UG students under the pre-2011/12 conventions and students on PGT programmes, where candidates have the relevant borderline profile of marks, consider recommending use of the examiners’ discretion for raising candidates under the ‘Two More Marks’ convention (i.e. Clause 16.1.7 of this guidance document).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>The evidence submitted indicates that the concessionary circumstances are extreme and are likely to have had a severely adverse impact on the performance of the student in his/her assessment(s), so as to prevent the achievement of the full volume of credit required for the award.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any actions available for concessions graded 1-3; <strong>OR</strong> Consider recommending deferral as per Clause 13 of this guidance document; <strong>AND/OR</strong>, where applicable: Where a finalist has achieved seven-eighths of the credit required for the award (including credits awarded via condonement and/or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
compensation), consider use of the “notwithstanding” convention (see the glossary of measures attached to this guidance document).

See explanatory notes

Detailed guidance on the application of the conventions for considering concessionary submissions is provided in a separate document, found at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/guidance-concessions-ug-students.html.

14.8 A written record shall be kept of all decisions reached at the meeting of the Concessionary Committee, the rationales for the decisions, and of the concessionary evidence considered (see 14.10 below).

14.9 Along with a graded assessment of the severity of the impact of concessionary circumstances, the Concessionary Committee should provide information to the Board of Examiners as to whether the recommendation is for a general concession, or if it might have application only to specific assignments or modules.

14.10 A template in Excel for reporting the decisions of Boards of Examiners with respect to the application of concessionary measures and condonement will be provided (see http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/guidance/docs/concessions-compensation-data-returns.xls).

14.11 Where a student submits a concessionary case relating to a minor or short-term problem incurred during the delivery of a specific module, which might include, for example, concessions submitted for in support of an extension to a coursework deadline, or to a failure to submit coursework by a deadline or a failure to attend classes, the concessionary case in question should be considered by the ‘module-owning’ school.

14.12 Where a student submits a concessionary case in support of a long-term problem with academic performance, which may have impacted on one or more modules, or where

---

3 Some explanatory notes on the above:

1. Where students have failed, the measures of disregarding marks (for a grade 2 concession) and mark substitution (for a Grade 3 concession) can be applied to 25% of the credit for the stage.

1.1 Applying these measures allows for Boards to arrive at a pass for these credits.

2. In addition to 1 and 1.1 above, students can be condoned for up to 25% of the stage.

3. Thus, where as much as 50% of the credit for the stage has been failed (i.e. before any disregarding and mark substitution adjustments come into play), there is scope for Boards to award the credit for the failed modules by applying the measures set out at 1 and 2 above.

4. Condonement cannot be applied where a student failed (post applying mark adjustments at 1) more than 25% of the credit for the stage. This principle is unchanged.

4.1. So, where a student has failed more than 50% of the credit for the stage (i.e. before any disregarding and mark substitution adjustments come into play), condonement cannot be applied, because applying the disregarding and mark substitution adjustments would leave more than 25% of the credit for the stage as failed. In such concessionary cases, the failed credit would have to be deferred.

5. In summary of 1-4 above (see foot of page 15 for summary):

(a) If a student (with an appropriately graded concession) has failed up to 50% of the credit for the stage, credit can be awarded via condonement and adjustments.

(b) If a student (with an appropriately graded concession) has failed more than 50%, the credit remaining as failed (post disregarding and mark substitution adjustments) must be deferred.

6. Where a student has a grade 2 or grade 3 concession but has passed the modules to which this applies, the marks may be adjusted for the full set of affected modules via the appropriate mechanism for doing so for a concession of that grade (in order to arrive at a mark or marks that properly represent the student’s level of achievement).
there has been a failure to attend an examination or the student has suffered an impaired exam performance due to concessionary factors, the concessionary case should be considered by the Concessionary Committee of the Board of Examiners for the programme in question. Concessionary cases of this nature submitted by students registered on joint honours programmes should be considered by the Concessionary Committee of the Board of Examiners of the lead School for the programme in consultation with the joint School where appropriate.

14.13 The Board of Examiners should normally follow the recommendations of the Concessionary Committee, which has assessed the concessionary evidence in advance on its behalf.

14.14 The recommendations of the Concessionary Committee as to the severity of impact of concessionary circumstances on a candidate’s performance may not be altered during the course of the meeting of the Board of Examiners.

Year/Term Abroad Marks

14.15 One of the measures introduced as part of the revised 2011/12 conventions for classification was the decision to treat placement marks, where awarded by the placement provider, as pass/fail and zero-weight them for the purposes of classification. The requirements for a ‘pass’ for the year/term abroad should be defined in the relevant programme specification. Any retrieval arrangements should also be as set out in the specification.

Where a student has submitted evidence related to concessionary circumstances that may have affected his/her performance during the year abroad, care should be taken to establish the following:

(i) where condoning failure, that the limits for the volume of credit per stage that might be condoned are observed and that there is evidence to suggest that the student has achieved the relevant programme level learning outcomes;

(ii) where adjusting marks awarded on modules, that the learning outcomes for the module(s) have been achieved and that any adjusted marks properly represent the student’s achievement on the module(s) as a whole.

(iii) where compensating failure for a near-fail (i.e. within 10% points of the pass mark), that the limits for the volume of credit per stage that might be compensated are observed and that there is evidence to suggest that the student has achieved the relevant programme level learning outcomes.

14.16 Consideration of Concessions Applications Regarding Non-attendance of Examination or Non-submission of Coursework

14.16.1 Where a student's concessionary submission indicates that s/he will be unable to attend an examination, the Concessionary Committee (or the Chair of the Concessionary Committee acting on its behalf) is authorised, as it sees appropriate, to grant permission in advance for the absence and report this to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.

14.16.2 Where a student's concessionary submission indicates that s/he will be unable to submit an item or items of coursework by the published deadline, the Concessionary Committee (or the Chair of the Concessionary Committee acting on its behalf) is authorised, as it sees appropriate, to set a new deadline or deadlines for the submission of the coursework concerned. Where the item of coursework in question constitutes the final piece of coursework for the module, such matters should normally be considered prior to the published deadline for that item.
14.17 Definitions of Concessionary Measures

Adjustment: The adjustment, for documented concessionary reasons, of the overall mark awarded for a module in order to arrive at a result that properly reflects the student's level of achievement on the module as a whole. Mark adjustment takes two forms:

(i) Disregarding of assessments: the exclusion of the piece or pieces of assessment affected by illness or other mitigating circumstances from the calculation of the final module mark;

(ii) Mark substitution: the substitution of a mark awarded for the piece or pieces of assessment affected by illness or other mitigating circumstances by the mark awarded for another piece of assessment taken as part of the same module.

Condonement: the award of credit for a failed module where student performance has been impacted by illness or other mitigating circumstances; 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. (Nb. 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).

Deferral: the decision on concessionary grounds to allow a student to retake some or all of the assessment for a failed module or modules as if for the first time (see 13 above).

The “Notwithstanding” convention: recommendations by Boards of Examiners on the classification of awards made notwithstanding the conventions of the Credit Framework where a student who, despite suffering concessionary circumstances judged as extreme and as having a severely adverse effect on his/her performance, has nonetheless achieved at least seven-eighths of the credit normally required for the award in question.

14.18 Use of the Special Conventions for Applying Concessions to Mitigate the Impact of the Industrial Action

Concessionary interventions undertaken under the Special Conventions approved by Senate to offset the disruption caused by the industrial action and the impact of this on student performance should be regarded as allowable in addition to the standard set of interventions permissible under the conventions for applying concessions that are set out in this document. Adjustments to marks undertaken as a result of the Special Conventions' process and the volume of any credit awarded as a result should therefore be viewed as allowable in addition to any such measures undertaken for individual students through the standard concessionary processes. For guidance on applying the Special Conventions, see the link below:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/guidance/docs/revised-grading-scale.docx

15. Pre-meeting of the Board of Examiners

Before each meeting of a Board of Examiners, and separate to the Concessionary Committee meeting, the Chair may convene a pre-meeting to consider such matters as it deems appropriate. These might include reviewing the range of marks awarded for each module and the identification of any other issues that might require discussion by the Board of Examiners. The pre-meeting also might entail, where applicable*, deciding which candidates for the award of a degree should have a viva voce examination (see
section 25 for detail) and formulating any recommendations to be made regarding borderline candidates (see section 16.1.7 for detail). The identities of candidates shall not be made known to examiners during the course of this meeting.

*Nb. It should be noted that the revised conventions for classification of undergraduate degrees introduced in 2011/12 no longer allow for the discretionary consideration of candidates at the boundary for a higher classification or for the use of a viva voce examination for the purposes of determining undergraduate student classification. These measures therefore only remain in force for PGT students and for those undergraduates whose initial registration for their programme of study preceded the introduction of the new conventions in 2011/12. See the sections indicated above for more detail.

16. Classification of Awards in 2017/18

Students who successfully complete a programme 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 some programmes 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 in section 17.

Appendix 1 to this document sets out the requirements for the classification of Honours Degrees for Students admitted to the University up to and including 2010-11.

16.1. General Requirements for Classification

16.1.1. Marks obtained for all modules taken as part of the programme of study will contribute to the classification of an award except in the case of Honours degree programmes 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 programme and marks obtained in any foundation year will not contribute to Honours classification.

16.1.2. The volume of credit to be awarded for the successful completion of student placement years, whether taken in industry or in academic institutions overseas as part of an approved undergraduate programme, will be 120 credits. The level of the credits will be stated in programme specifications. While such credits will contribute to the total volume of credits required for an award, 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.

16.1.3. 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.

16.1.4. Where a student is exempted from part of the programme of study on the basis of credit transfer, marks obtained for such prior learning will not be used for classification purposes except where (a) it is agreed as part of an inter-institutional agreement that they should be so used, or (b) where the marks in question contribute to the award of a HNC or HND offered under licence with Pearson.

16.1.5. In order to ensure that the application of compensation and condonation do not disadvantage a student when an award is classified:
• Where credit for a module is awarded by compensation, the mark used for 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.

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

16.1.7. With respect to students registered for a programme leading to a **postgraduate taught award**, 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 he/she 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.

- Documented evidence of very significant medical or personal problems or of unexpected hardship.
- Evidence obtained from a viva voce examination.
- The views of an External Examiner on the quality of work of the candidate.
- Significant improvement in final stage performance. (Note: This factor should not be taken into account where final stage marks are weighted more heavily than marks obtained in earlier stages.)
- Performance in one module substantially below that on other modules.
- 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. (Note: this factor should not be taken into account where the preponderance method is used in classification.)

Credit may not be awarded through this means.

16.1.8. 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.

Detailed guidance on the application of the conventions for considering concessionary application is provided in a separate document, which can be found at [https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/guidance-concessions-ug-students.html](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/guidance/guidance-concessions-ug-students.html).

16.1.9. The views of the External Examiner(s) shall be particularly influential in the case of disagreement on the final classification for a particular candidate.
16.1.10. The External Examiner has the right to see all work submitted for assessment except for work submitted for modules within Honours degree programmes for which the marks obtained do not contribute to the Honours classification and should see at least a selection of such work. In those cases where it is agreed that the Chair of the Board of Examiners should make a selection of assessed work to be seen by an External Examiner, the principles for such selection should be agreed in advance.

16.1.11. Where a selection is made External Examiners should normally see a reasonable sample of assessed work taken from each class band and all fails. For PGT programmes, as well as all fails, external examiners should also see all assessed work that is marked as falling at the borderline of a higher class band.

16.1.12. An External Examiner should only change a mark for an individual candidate where, (i) having seen all the scripts for the module in question, he/she has been invited by a Board of Examiners to consider a mark for an individual candidate; or (ii), where there is disagreement between two internal markers about the mark to be awarded. Alternatively, an External Examiner may ask that the marks for all candidates for a module be systematically adjusted where, having seen either all scripts or a sample of scripts, he/she considers this to be appropriate.

16.1.13. The signature of all the External Examiners present shall be appended to the final list of results as evidence that they approve the classifications.

16.2 Stage Weighting

Undergraduate Degree Programmes

16.2.1 The standard weighting of stages for three year undergraduate degree programmes will be 40% for Stage 2 and 60% for Stage 3.

16.2.2 The standard weighting of stages for four year undergraduate degree programmes (i.e. degree programmes leading either to Bachelor’s or Integrated Master’s awards) will be 20% for Stage 2, 30% for Stage 3 and 50% for Stage 4.

16.2.3 Where a student completes Stages 1 to 3 of a four-stage Bachelor’s or undergraduate Integrated Master’s degree programme, 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.

16.2.4 With regard to stages or terms taken in placement either abroad or 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 Faculty Board.

16.2.5 Schools seeking to apply non-standard weightings to stages may only do so with the approval of the relevant Faculty Board. 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.

16.2.6 With respect to the cohorts of students that entered Stages 1, 2, 3 or 4 of their UG honours degree programme in 2011/12, the University agreed to calculate the classification of their award based on (a) the standard weighting as set out in this clause; and (b) the stage weighting in force at the time of their initial registration, with the students concerned to benefit from the better result derived from both calculations.
Results derived by these means are referred to in SDS terms as being derived through the “Comparison Stage Weighting” mechanism. In 2017/18 this will only be applied to those returning UG intermitters who were registered for their programmes part-time students or at the time of its introduction in 2011/12. See Appendix 2 for further explanatory guidance.

Foundation Degrees and Postgraduate Taught Programmes

16.2.7 For the purpose of classification, modules and/or stages may have different weightings as approved by Faculty Board.

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

17.1 The following classification rules apply to all Certificates and Diplomas, including Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education, Graduate Certificates and Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas, to Foundation Degrees and Masters* degrees (which are awarded with Honours following successful completion of an extended undergraduate Honours degree programme), the Master of Architecture programme (MArch) and to Stage 1 of Honours degree programmes.

* Some programmes 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’.

17.2 Each Faculty Board may decide or may authorise Schools in the Faculty to decide whether the award of Merit and Distinction will be based on:

- either the ‘average’ method,
- or the ‘preponderance’ method
- or both the ‘average’ and the ‘preponderance’ methods.

If a Faculty Board fails to agree on the classification method to be used then both methods should be used. Where a School is authorised to decide which method is to be used for programmes of study specified as within its area of responsibility, the School shall have authority to do so on a programme by programme basis.

17.3 ‘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.

17.4 ‘Preponderance’ Method of Classification

Note: The parameters for calculation of the preponderance method of classification have been adjusted from 2015-16 onwards, to ensure that the qualifying mark and volume of credit required in each band are equivalent for all awards.

i) For students enrolled on a programme of study prior to 2015-16 the following calculation is to be used:

- ‘with Merit’:
  - an average mark over all contributing modules of 57 or above and
  - a mark of 60 or above for 55% or more of the credits obtained

- ‘with Distinction’:
  - an average mark over all contributing modules of 65 or above and
a mark of 70 or above for 50% or more of the credits obtained

ii) For students enrolled on a programme of study in 2015-16 or thereafter the following calculation is to be used:

‘with Merit’:
an average mark over all contributing modules of 57 or above and
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

17.5 ‘Average’ and ‘Preponderance’ Methods of Classification

Where both methods of classification are used, in the event of a difference in the classification derived for a particular student, the higher of the two classifications will be awarded.

17.6 Student performance on PGT programmes can be considered as borderline to a higher classification under both the average and preponderance methodologies.

18 Classification of Honours Degrees

18.1 Undergraduate degree programmes will 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 that there is a PSRB requirement for an undergraduate programme of study to be classified by a single method, Schools must seek the prior approval of the relevant Faculty Board to classify solely by either the ‘average’ method or the ‘preponderance’ method.

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 programme. 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 Faculty Board and calculated to one decimal place, over all modules in Stages 2, 3 and, where relevant, 4 of the programme of study according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class Honours</td>
<td>70 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class Honours</td>
<td>60 – 69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class Honours</td>
<td>50 – 59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class Honours</td>
<td>Below 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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:

**For degrees with 240 contributing credits:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of Credits in class or above</th>
<th>Average mark over all contributing modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>240*</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**For degrees with 360 contributing credits:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of Credits in class or above</th>
<th>Average mark over all contributing modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>360*</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**For degrees/students with contributing credits other than above:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>% of Credits in class or above</th>
<th>Average mark over all contributing modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>100%*</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
* where credits have been awarded via compensation or condonement for a module mark of less than 40, the credits should be treated as being in the Third Class category.

**Note 1:** Although credits are normally awarded for a mark of 40 or above in a module, a student might obtain the credits required for award of an Honours degree but have an average mark of less than 40 where some credits have been obtained via compensation and/or condonement 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.

**Note 2:** Where marks are awarded for a placement stage either in industry or as a year abroad, these will carry the weighting approved by Faculty Board (see para. 16.2.5). Additionally, the number of credits that contribute for the purposes of classification under preponderance will reflect the total volume of credit available for the stage.

**Note 3:** Appendix 1 to this document sets out the requirements for the classification of Honours Degrees for Students admitted to the University up to and including 2010-11.

18. 2 **Classification of Programmes that Allow for Incremental Registration**

Students who successfully complete the stated requirements are entitled to receive the award for which they are registered at the University. Where programmes 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 programmes:** where students are permitted to register on an incremental programme 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 programme. 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 programme from another institution, or to students taking ‘top-up’ degrees, or students progressing into the final stage of a degree programme 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 programmes:** where students are permitted to register on an incremental programme 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.
Marking and Classification of HNC and HND Programmes Under Licence

19.1 Rules for the In-Module Resubmission and Marking of Failed Assignments on HNC/Ds

19.1.1 Failed assignments may be resubmitted on one further occasion during the module.

19.1.2 Revised deadlines for resubmitted assignments must allow sufficient time for such assignments to be marked and, as appropriate, considered by the External Examiner ahead of the Board of Examiners.

19.1.3 Such resubmitted assignments may achieve no higher mark than ‘pass’.

19.1.4 Two failures of an assignment will entail the failure of the module.

19.1.5 Failed HN modules will be subject to the conventions of the Credit Framework with regard to the number and nature of further attempts permitted.*

*Note: In practice 19.1.1 – 19.1.5 mean that a student on a HNC or HND Partner College programme who initially submits a piece of work which is marked as a Fail (below a mark of 40) has the opportunity, prior to a Board of examiners (BoE), to resubmit the work and only the component mark will be capped at 40 (concessionary evidence may mean this is not capped), rather than the overall, aggregate module mark as is standard practice elsewhere under the credit framework.

Kent’s Student Data System (SDS) has not been programmed to accommodate the reporting of this additional attempt at the component level. To ensure some form of auditable track is kept of the in-course resubmission marks for HNC/Ds, the following practice will be observed:

1. College staff to input the grade for the initial submission of the HNC/D component via SDS. The mark will be verified overnight and thereby locked on the SDS system so any update would have to be completed via Cressida by a Kent member of staff.

2. Initial mark to be reported at the HNC/D BoE, where it is likely the module will be an overall Fail, particularly if the assessment component is set to against a compulsory requirement e.g. Construction, Civil & Building Services Engineering.

3. Second attempt mark to be reported at HNC/D BoE and composite annotated accordingly at component and overall module level. If the student has passed the component, the mark will be reported as 40 or if still a fail, the new sub-40 mark to be reported to ensure latest mark is reported.

4. Post HNC/D BoE, a member of the Medway Student Administration team will input and verify the new component and overall module mark on SDS and retag as a standard first (of a maximum three), re-sit attempt if the student has not managed to retrieve their initial fail at the component level.

Partner College BoEs will need to be explicit as to what is being defined as a second attempt at the component level for HNC/Ds (timeframe may be too tight for the second piece of assessment to be set, taken and marked pre-BoE) and what should be a resit attempt where the overall module mark will potentially be capped so that the Medway team can annotate and retag modules accurately.

19.1.6 Late-Submitted Work

Unauthorised late-submitted work will be accepted for marking at the discretion of the tutor concerned, and providing there is sufficient time allowing before the Board of Examiners, but may receive a mark no higher than ‘pass’.

19.1.7 Condonement, Compensation and Concessions on HNC/Ds

Failing performance may not be condoned or compensated. Students may not submit concessionary applications or appeal on the grounds of mitigating circumstances or...
the failure of examiners to consider concessionary evidence, except where the appeal is made on documented concessionary grounds against the decision of examiners to reject or fail work for reason of lateness.

Classification of HNC/Ds

19.2 HNC and HND programmes leading to awards of the University of Kent under licence are subject to the conventions and procedures of the Credit Framework except insofar as they are amended or qualified by Annex 12, which can be viewed in full at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex12.html.

19.3 HNC/D programmes will be classified according to the following rubric:

- **Qualify for HND**: Achieve credit for all [normally 16] modules;
- **Qualify for HND with Merit**: Achieve credit for all [normally 16] modules with at least 55% or more of the credits [normally 9 modules] obtained at merit or distinction grade of which at least 75 credits [normally 5 modules] must be at Stage 2;
- **Qualify for HND with Distinction**: Achieve credit for all [normally 16] modules with at least 50% or more of the credits [normally 8 modules] obtained at distinction grade of which at least 75 credits [normally 5 modules] must be at Stage 2 and at least 50% or more of the remaining credits [normally 4 modules] obtained at either merit or distinction grade;
- **Qualify for HNC**: Achieve credit for all [normally 8] modules;
- **Qualify for HNC with Merit**: Achieve credit for all [normally 8] modules with at least 55% or more of the credits [normally 5 modules] obtained at merit or distinction grade;
- **Qualify for HNC with Distinction**: Achieve credit for all [8] modules with at least 50% or more of the credits [normally 4 modules] obtained at distinction grade and at least 50% or more of the remaining credits [normally 3 modules] obtained at either merit or distinction grade.

20 Credit Transfer, Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) on HNC/HND Programmes

20.1 Accreditation of Prior Experiential/Certificated Learning (APECL) is subject to the regulations and procedures of the Code of Practice as set out in Annex R, which can be viewed at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/taught/annexr.html.

20.2 Where the prior learning has taken place at another UK HEI it will be regarded as Credit Transfer. 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.

20.3 Where considered appropriate by the Board of Examiners, and within the limits set by the University, the following conventions will apply:

20.3.1 Credit awarded via forms of accredited learning, such as the accreditation of prior learning or Credit Transfer, will be treated as a pass for the purposes of classification, except with respect to the exceptions set out at 20.3.2 below.

20.3.2 Where credit is imported via Credit Transfer, the marks achieved by a candidate at another institution on a cognate HNC or HND programme will be used for the purposes of classification (see 16.1.4b above).
21 Minimum Credit Requirements for 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 at the levels prescribed for the award in question as set out in Annex 4 of the Credit Framework and must meet any further requirements specified for the particular programme of study and award concerned unless he/she has been granted exemption from these requirements via credit transfer.

The minimum credit requirements for awards are set out in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Minimum number of credits required</th>
<th>Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate/Certificate of Higher Education</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>At least 120 credits at level 4 (C) or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>At least 90 credits at level 5 (I) or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* BTEC Higher National Diploma</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>At least 135 credits at level I and at least 90 credits at level 4 (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* BTEC Higher National Certificate</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>At least 90 credits at level 4 (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma of Higher Education</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>At least 90 credits at level 5 (I) or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation degree</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>At least 90 credits at level 5 (I) or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Honours degree</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>At least 150 credits at level 5 (I) or above including at least 60 credits at level 6 (H) or above at stage 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours degree</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>At least 210 credits at level 5 (I) or above including at least 90 credits at level 6 (H) or above at stage 3 (three stage programmes) or at stage 4 (four stage programmes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Top-Up’</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>At least 90 credits at level 6 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Integrated’ Master’s degree</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>At least 330 credits at level 5 (I) or above including at least 120 credits at level 7 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>At least 30 credits at level 6 (H) or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>At least 60 credits at level 6 (H) or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>At least 40 credits at level 7 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>At least 90 credits at level 7 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA/MSc/LLM</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>At least 150 credits at level 7 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught MPhil</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>At least 240 credits at level 7 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught/Professional Doctorate</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>At least 510 credits at level 7 (M) or above including at least 360 credits at level 8 (D)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: This reflects Pearson’s credit requirements for new HNs from September 2010. For BTEC awards where student registration commenced prior to 31 December 2010, the minimum credit requirements are as follows:
### Higher National Diploma
- Credits: 240
- Requirement: At least 90 credits at level 5 (I) or above

### Higher National Certificate
- Credits: 150
- Requirement: At least 30 credits at level 5 (I) or above

#### 22 Alternative Exit Awards
A student who successfully completes an appropriate volume of credit as part of a programme of study, but who does not successfully complete the whole programme **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 he/she has achieved sufficient credit at the appropriate level required for the award concerned and has satisfied any further requirements for the particular programme of study where such have been specified in the relevant approved programme specification.

Annex 5: *Alternative Exit Awards* of the *Credit Framework* sets out the detail of these arrangements and can be found at [http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex5.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex5.html).

#### 23 Categorical Marking

23.1 Use of the categorical marking scales below **for relevant assessments** is compulsory for all modules where a numerical mark is awarded:

**For undergraduate modules (i.e. levels 3 to 6):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Numerical Scale</th>
<th>Programmes Classified Under P/M/D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For postgraduate taught modules (i.e. level 7):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Scale</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>78</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Merit</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note 1:

The above scale applies to all level 7 modules where the student in question takes the module from 2015-16 onwards. For level 7 modules taken prior to 2015-16, the scale set out for undergraduate modules above applies.

### 23.2 The scale should be regarded as readily lending itself to use with respect to single pieces of work that currently attract a mark out of 100, such as essays, dissertations, reports or any similar individual assessment that requires a qualitative judgement by the marker against criterion referenced standards. Examples of assessed work that may not be suitable to be marked with reference to the categorical marking scale include assessments that take the form of tests of complex calculation or knowledge that allow for an accumulation of marks on an objective basis, or which are composed of a large number of questions, or questions where there is a single correct answer (such as numerical questions). In such cases markers will not be restricted to its use.

### 23.2.1 Similarly, where an examination paper or a project consists of a number of assessment tasks, some of which may lend themselves to the use of the scale (e.g. one or more responses in essay format which attract a mark out of 100), it is not intended that the overall aggregated mark awarded for the examination or the project should be selected from one of the marks set out on the categorical scale. The purpose of the scale is to aid the marker in making a judgement on relevant individual assessment tasks and it should play no part in determining the overall mark for an assessment where this mark results from the aggregation of a number of sub-
component elements. Therefore, while the categorical scale may be used when marking a relevant assessment element of a project or an examination, such as an answer in essay format, it should not be used for deriving the mark for the assessment as a whole where this has been reached by the aggregation of the marks for a number of such sub-component elements.

23.2.2 Where the format of assessment precludes use of the scale, markers are encouraged to consider whether they can avoid awarding marks that fall immediately below a class boundary.

24 Rounding and Display of Marks

With respect to the rounding and display of marks awarded in 2011/12 and thereafter, the University applies the following ten point algorithm (with the exception of marks recorded for HNC/D programmes):

i. The overall mark awarded for the coursework component of a module should be rounded to the nearest integer;

ii. The overall mark awarded for the project element of a module should be rounded to the nearest integer;

iii. The overall mark awarded for the examination element of a module should be rounded to the nearest integer;

iv. With regard to modules taken as part of an undergraduate programme, and noting the exception to this rule given at point v. below, the aggregated overall mark awarded for the module (the summation of the already rounded different components) should be rounded to the nearest integer;

v. With regard to modules taken as part of an undergraduate programme, and noting the exception to this rule given at point vi. below, where the aggregated but as yet unrounded overall mark awarded for the module falls within one mark of the boundary for a higher class band (e.g. a raw mark of 39, 49 [where applicable], 59, or 69), the mark will be rounded up to the nearest integer;

vi. With regard to calculating the overall mark awarded for the module as per point v. above, where an element of assessment in a module has been failed for which a pass was compulsory, any aggregated but as yet unrounded overall mark awarded for the module that falls within one mark of the boundary for a higher class band (e.g. a raw mark of 39, 49 [where applicable], 59, or 69), the mark will NOT be rounded up to the nearest integer;

vii. With regard to modules taken as part of a postgraduate programme, the aggregated overall mark awarded for the module (the summation of the already rounded different components) should be rounded to the nearest integer;

viii. The aggregated overall rounded mark awarded for the module should be displayed on composite marksheets, student transcripts and to students on the SDS as a whole number after confirmation at the Board of Examiners;

ix. The overall weighted average mark for classification purposes should be calculated and displayed to a single decimal point on composite mark-sheets and student transcripts

x. With respect to undergraduate programmes, where the overall weighted average mark for classification purposes falls within 0.5 % of the boundary for a higher class
band (i.e. a mark that fall in the ranges of 39.5 - 39.9; 49.5 – 49.9⁴; 59.5 – 59.9 or 69.5 – 69.9), it will be rounded up to the nearest integer.

All rounding is carried out within SDS. Boards of Examiners should note that Points vi and x above allow for marks ending in ‘x9’ to be displayed legitimately on composite mark sheets. Boards are not required to undertake any further rounding of such marks manually.

25 Viva Voce Examinations

Use of viva voce examination for the purposes of determining classification was withdrawn as part of the regulatory changes introduced with respect to undergraduate students who registered for Stage 1 of their programme of study in 2011/12 or thereafter.

However, use of viva voce examination as a means of determining classification remains a legitimate option for examiners with respect to UG students enrolled prior to 2011/12 and students enrolled on PGT programmes of study. Students graduating from a four-year UG degree programme, whose registration for Stage 1 was before 2011/12, may be examined by this means in 2017/18. At this point, the UG group is likely to include only part-time students and any returning intermitters who had enrolled prior to 2011/12.

Where a viva voce examination is held for a proportion, but only a proportion, of the candidates, the criteria for the selection of candidates, the purpose of the viva and the scope of the panel of viva voce examiners decision shall be agreed with the External Examiner.

The use of the viva voce examination can be considered under four categories:

25.1 Categories of viva voce examinations

25.1.1 As part of the approved diet of assessment for a module, as for example:

- Extended pieces of work such as dissertations/projects/theses may be partly assessed by an oral examination.
- Oral examinations are generally used in language modules to test communication skills.
- To test the achievement of professional competencies during or at the completion of a vocational placement.

These assessments should form part of the approved diet of assessment for the module, be designed to test specific module learning outcomes and should be taken by all candidates. External Examiners are sometimes involved in these examinations.

**Nb.** Oral assessments described in 25.1.1 above are distinctly different to the examinations which are used for the purposes of determining classification as described in 25.1.2 below.

25.1.2 As a means of assisting in decision-making with regard to borderline classifications

Examiners may exercise discretionary powers to require a viva voce examination under certain circumstances to assist decision making on borderline cases and/or provide an alternative or additional assessment where valid reasons for poor performance [concessions cases] have been established. With respect to borderline cases, examiners will normally focus on specific areas of weakness in the candidate’s

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⁴ Except where a mark in the 49.5-49.9 range does not fall close to the boundary for an award in the higher class band; e.g. with respect to the classification of stage 1 undergraduate degree programmes.
performance as might be indicated by poor results in particular module(s) or assessment(s). It should be clear which learning outcomes are under test.

25.1.3 **Benchmarking**

Examiners may use interviews with candidates from across the performance range to monitor academic standards.

*Nb. this is an interview not an examination as the process is not designed to benefit individual students, but to monitor the cohort’s academic standards of achievement.*

25.1.4 **As part of a disciplinary investigation**

A disciplinary committee might require examiners to test students via oral examination in order to authenticate the authorship of pieces of work. Such examinations must take place under the auspices of a disciplinary committee established for this purpose and must not be conducted independently by examiners or by Boards of Examiners.

25.2 **Conduct of the Viva Voce**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a set of principles in order to achieve good practice in the conduct of viva voce examinations for taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses where there is external examiner involvement in any of the scenarios identified under 25.1.2 above.

25.2.1 **Before the Viva Voce**

- Students must be advised why they have been called for a viva, to enable them to prepare in an informed way.
- Examiners should give students as much notice as possible regarding timing and arrangements for the viva voce examination. Examiners should inform students if the external examiner(s) will attend or conduct the viva voce examination and should remind students of their responsibility to attend. Operational arrangements should be clarified as early as possible by the module/programme teaching team.
- Students should be advised of the anticipated length of the examination.
- Where the viva voce is being used to determine borderline or concessions cases, students must be reminded that the viva voce can only be used to raise, not lower, the mark/grade.

25.2.2 **During the Viva Voce**

- When the student attends for the viva voce, s/he should be verbally reminded of its purpose.
- The purpose of the viva will determine how the student’s viva performance is to be assessed, i.e. what criteria might be used.
- The purpose of the viva voce will determine who should be present. The number of individuals present, while normally never fewer than two members of staff, should be the minimum required to carry out an effective assessment. Examiners should avoid overwhelming the student with an excessive number present.
- A student’s identity should be confirmed against their student ID card. (Note that students are required to have their student ID cards for invigilated written examinations.)
- A brief record of the outcome of the viva should be made.

25.2.3 **Outcome of the Viva Voce Examination**
• Where viva voce examinations have been used to help determine borderline or concessions cases, the outcomes should be discussed at the relevant Board of Examiners.

• When a student fails to attend a viva voce examination convened for the purposes described at 25.1.2 above, s/he will be deemed to have lost the opportunity to improve her/his performance.

26 Comments on Examination Scripts

26.1 There is no requirement to provide comments on examination scripts.

26.2 However, where comments are provided, these should be used to provide the examiner(s) and the External Examiner(s) with the rationale for grading in accordance with the agreed marking criteria. They are not intended to provide feedback to the student per se, although must be written in the knowledge that a student may access the script at a later date. Examiners should note the following:

26.3 Where provided, comments should be presented in a format that satisfies both the discipline concerned by adhering to the relevant marking practices and addresses the requests of the external examiners. For example, in cases where marks are to be moderated, annotation of the script may be appropriate; for double blind marking, comments may be recorded on a separate sheet.

26.4 Such comments should be intelligible - in the sense that they should clearly indicate how the marks have been allocated to the work.

26.5 All examiners should be aware that any comments or markings, either on scripts or on a separate sheet of paper, may potentially be made available to the examinee on request under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

26.6 Please note that the University’s policy is that students are entitled to receive examination feedback. Schools must therefore provide feedback at key stages in the programme to support successful progression for students. In order to provide this in a timely fashion (e.g. prior to resits; by the beginning of Autumn term at progression between stages), Schools should advise students of the timeframe for providing generic examination feedback and for responding to requests for feedback on an individual basis.

This policy can be viewed in full at https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/assessment/exampolicy.html.

27 Representation

Individual members of Boards of Examiners should not take on a formal role of representing or advocating the interests of an individual student on examination panels (see Annex G of the Code of Practice for Taught Programmes of Study).

28 Academic Discipline

Boards of Examiners are not the appropriate forum for considering the application of penalties for academic discipline offences. Academic discipline offences should have already been considered by School Disciplinary Committees and any penalties applied by that body.

29 Special Dispensation
The Education Board is authorised to approve exceptions to the requirements of the Credit Framework for Taught Programmes in individual cases under special circumstances provided that it is satisfied that there is good reason to do so.

MD/QA Office
23.04.18
Appendix 1

Classification of Honours Degrees for Students admitted to the University up to and including 2010-2011

For students admitted to the University up to and including 2010-11 the following methodology applied:

Each Faculty Board may decide or may authorise Schools in the Faculty to decide whether Honours degrees will be awarded on the basis of

either the ‘average’ method,
or the ‘preponderance’ method
or both the ‘average’ and the ‘preponderance’ methods.

If a Faculty Board fails to agree on the classification method to be used then both methods should be used. Where a School is authorised to decide which method is to be used for classification of degrees specified as within its area of responsibility, the School shall have authority to do so on a programme by programme basis.

i) Both Methods of Classification

Where the class of degree is awarded on the basis of both the ‘average’ and ‘preponderance’ methods of classification, in the event of a difference in the classification derived for a particular student, the higher of the two classes will be awarded.

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 average mark, with modules weighted as agreed by the Faculty Board and calculated to one decimal place, over all modules in Stages 2, 3 and, where relevant, 4 of the programme of study according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of Credits in class or above</th>
<th>Average mark over all contributing modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class Honours</td>
<td>70 and above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class Honours</td>
<td>60 – 69.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class Honours</td>
<td>50 – 59.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class Honours</td>
<td>Below 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 average mark over the examination as a whole:

For degrees with 240 contributing credits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of Credits in class or above</th>
<th>Average mark over all contributing modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>240*</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For degrees with 360 contributing credits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of Credits in class or above</th>
<th>Average mark over all contributing modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>240*</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>% of Credits in class or above</td>
<td>Average mark over all contributing modules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second Class</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second Class</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>100%*</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**Note:** Although credits are normally awarded for a mark of 40 or above in a module, a student might obtain the credits required for award of an Honours degree but have an average mark of less than 40 where some credits have been obtained via compensation and/or condonement.

**Note:** For a degree classification based on the pre-2011/12 credit conventions, where a differential stage weighting has been approved by the Faculty Board the number of credits which contribute for the purposes of classification will be scaled accordingly e.g. in cases where a year-abroad is half-weighted, it will contribute 60 credits (rather than 120) for the purposes of classification.
### Appendix 2

**FT Undergraduate Students – Credit Framework Conventions by Cohort**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Stage 1 Cohort Entry</th>
<th>Year of Cohort Graduation (3 stage programmes)</th>
<th>Year of Cohort Graduation (4 stage programmes*)</th>
<th>Applicable Classification Rules</th>
<th>Preponderance Compulsory?</th>
<th>Concessions Applied at the Borderline?</th>
<th>Comparison Stage Weighting Applied?</th>
<th>Vive Voce Exam Allowable?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td><strong>Pre-2011/12</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td><strong>2017/18</strong></td>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Including programmes that involve a placement stage, either abroad or in industry (Stages ‘A’ or ‘S’), and so are four years in duration.

**Table setting out the application of rules to cohorts of students following the amendments to the credit framework introduced in 2011/12.**

1. The 2011/12 UG classification conventions include such measures as the introduction of revised parameters for preponderance, the compulsory use of preponderance for all UG degree programmes, the withdrawal of discretionary consideration of borderline candidates and the removal of the viva voce examination for the purposes of determining classification;
2. The trigger for the application of the new classification rules is the year of entry into Stage 1, with the new rules taking effect for the 2011/12 UG entry cohort and thereafter. On this basis, three year and four year FT cohorts of students graduating with UG Honours degrees in 2017/18 will be subject to the same classification rules regardless the year of cohort entry.

3. The measure known as “Comparison Stage Weighting”, in which two degree results are calculated for the affected UG candidates, one based on the new standard stage weighting introduced in 2011/12 and the second on the weighting in force prior to that time, will only operate this summer for any UG degree students in course at the time of its introduction (i.e. 2011/12) and therefore will not be used for the FT UG cohort of finalists graduating in 2015/16. It will, however, continue to apply to any returning UG intermitters who were registered for their programmes at the time of its introduction in 2011/12.

4. For Foundation Year programme students in all Faculties, session of entry into Stage 1 of their degree programme will determine the application of the classification rules;

5. As students will be classified according to the classification rules in force at the time of their entry into Stage 1, the classifier log and composite marksheets have been set up to flag those students on three-year degree programmes who commenced Stage 1 before 2011/12, and who intermitted and have since returned, along with any pre-2011/12 students who are repeating a stage. Such students will be flagged as ‘pre-2012’ on the composite marksheets. Schools that do not use composite marksheets should check the Total Credit Summary report (‘stu278’ on Reporting Services), where such candidates will be similarly flagged;

6. Direct entrants will be classified according to the rules in force for the cohort that they join. A direct entrant joining a cohort that commenced Stage 1 in in 2011/12 or thereafter will be classified according to the new rules and will be flagged as ‘Post-2012’.