**Guidance for Students on Degree Classification Calculations**

**How we calculate classifications for our undergraduate honours degrees**

We understand that your degree classification is very important to you, so we want you to have as clear an understanding as possible about how your degree classification will be calculated and where discretion may be used.

We regularly review our processes to ensure they are fair and transparent. The way that degree classifications are calculated is set out in the [Determination of Honours Degree Classifications Policy](https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/professional-services/student-academic-and-corporate-services/academic-registry/academic-policy-and-practice/quality-handbook/examination-and-degree-classification/#six). In addition, more guidance is provided here on how the University calculates classifications.

**The calculation**

**Marks included in the calculation**

Overall, the calculation of a degree classification is based on your module marks for modules taken in years 3 and 4 (or equivalent for part time), but there are some important details within this to note.

The calculation does not include:

* Any modules assessed on a pass/fail basis
* Your lowest marked 20 credits

It includes:

* compulsory and option modules equally
* The dissertation (or equivalent project)

BUT, if your degree is not a standard 240 credit format over years 3 and 4, the calculation is adjusted:

* If your modules add up to more than 240 credits from years 3 and 4, only the best 220 credits are considered in the calculation
* If you have 120 credits or less with attributed marks (e.g. you have taken pass/fail modules, you arrived at Stirling with credit from another institution during 3rd or 4th year, you have undertaken placement modules or study abroad where no marks are assigned) they will all be considered in the calculation.

Once these types of adjustments have been made as appropriate for your degree, the classification is then calculated based on the relevant credits and the marks attributed to them.

**Weighted average marks**

We calculate the average of all your marks for the modules included in the calculation, weighted by the number of credit points for each relevant module, to determine your classification. This is called a “weighted average mark”.

As an example, the mark you receive for a 60-credit dissertation will have three times the impact on your overall degree classification than the mark for a 20-credit module because of the credit weighting. You will find the credit weighting for each of your modules in the information on your course provided in the Degree Programme Tables which you can access on the Portal.

**Rounding up**

The weighted average mark is then rounded to a whole number. The classification thresholds are as follows:

* First class: 70
* Upper second class: 60
* Lower second class: 50
* Third class: 40

**The predominance rule**

For any classification to be awarded, your mark profile must have at least 50% of all the credits counted in the calculation at or above the classification threshold - we call this the "predominance rule". If your mark profile is mainly in the lower classification, then this will be awarded.

**Calculation algorithm**

Our algorithm calculates your weighted average mark and checks that the mark profile has met the predominance rule. The appropriate degree classification is proposed for approval or discussion at the Awards Board at the end of your degree.

**Discretion in calculating a degree classification**

There is limited discretion in the determination of an honours degree classification calculation. In most cases your mark profile and predominance of marks will fall into the same classification. However, if they don’t and your weighted average mark falls within a higher classification, then your case will be discussed by the Awards Board.

This Board takes place at the end of your degree, when all your module marks are available and have been confirmed. Your Programme Director, the Chief Examiner and External Examiners are on this Board.

The Awards Board will consider cases that require to be discussed and make decisions to ensure that the classification is awarded fairly and reflects your overall performance profile. Your identity will not be shared with the Board to ensure decisions are impartial. Awards Boards may decide to award the higher classification, but this is not automatic, and the decision is made at the judgement of the Board.

This is the only area on which Awards Board can exercise discretion on honours classification. In all other cases, the classification generated by the algorithm will be applied.

**How do Extenuating Circumstances affect degree classification?**

[Extenuating Circumstances](https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/professional-services/student-academic-and-corporate-services/academic-registry/student-information/exams/extenuating-circumstances/) applications are dealt with through an Extenuating Circumstances Board and their recommendations generally apply to the module grades which are determined before the final Awards Board process takes place.

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