University of Aberdeen
Academic Quality Handbook

Student Summary: Code of Practice on Assessment: 2019-20

This student summary applies to *undergraduate* students who started their Honours programme **in or after academic year 2019-20**. Full details can be found in the Code of Practice on Assessment 2019-20.

Common Grading Scale (CGS)

1.1 The Common Grading Scale (CGS) provides a common marking scale which is used across the University. Each Grade on the CGS is associated with a numerical **Grade Point** (0-22).

Determination of Overall Course Grade

1.2 Most courses involve more than one component of assessment. In order to determine the overall grade for a course, the individual component grades must be aggregated taking account of the relative weightings of each component. Candidates must be made aware of the relative weightings of each component at the outset of the course.

1.3 Once aggregated, the overall course grade (to two decimal places) determines the alphanumeric grade that is awarded for the course and is used to calculate degree classification.

1.4 For example: A course has two essays each weighted 20% and one exam weighted 60%, the grades for which are B2, A3 and C1 respectively. The overall grade for the course would be determined as follows:

Grade	Grade Point	Weighting	Calculation
B2	16	20%	(20% x 16) + (20% x 20) + (60% x 14)
A3	20	20%	= 3.2 + 4 + 8.4
C1	14	60%	= 15.6
			= B3

Determining Honours Degree Classification

1.5 Degree classification should be based on performance across the honours programme as a whole, i.e. programme years 3 and 4. Only courses coded at level 3 and above count towards honours classification.

1.6 Degree classification is based on the ***Grade Point Average (GPA)*** system. Details of the GPA bands associated with each honours degree classification are provided below:

Grade Point Average (GPA)	Degree Classification
18.0-22.0	First Class
greater than 17.49, less than 18.0	*Borderline*
15.0 – 17.49	Upper Second Class
greater than 14.49, less than 15.0	*Borderline*
12.0 – 14.49	Lower Second Class
greater than 11.49, less than 12.0	*Borderline*
9.0 – 11.49	Third Class
greater than 8.49, less than 9.0	*Borderline*
0 – 8.49	Fail

1.7 The GPA is determined by aggregating the Grade Points for each course, taking account of the relative weightings both in terms of credit and level of study. *If a student:*

(i) *fails an honours course, and is successful at a subsequent resit attempt, the passing resit grade will be capped at D3 for GPA/Degree Classification purposes.*

(ii) takes additional credits in programme 3 and/or programme year 4 which are at level 3 or above, Schools will (i) have approved the extra credits and (ii) will have asked students to identify which of the 120 credits they wish to be included in their GPA calculation *at the point at which the extra credits were chosen.*

1.8 GPAs are calculated as follows:

- Step (1): For each course, calculate the course contribution to the GPA, i.e. Course GPA [grade point x course weight / total credits taken at that **level**]
- Step (2): Calculate GPA for each **level** of study i.e. sum total of course GPAs for level of study
- Step (3): Apply the appropriate weighting (either 50: 50 or 30: 70*) to the level of study GPAs, and combine the weighted GPAs to gain overall GPA

1.9 Schools are permitted:

(i) *For four-year programmes:* to weight Honours years as 50: 50 (L3: L4) or 30:70 (L3:L4)

(ii) *For five-year programmes:* weight Honours years as 33: 33: 34 (L3: L4: L5) or 25: 35: 40 (L3: L4: L5)

(iii) Weight on the level of the course *only*, not the programme year of study

Schools weight their Honours programmes as follows:

School	Weighting of Level 3: Level 4	Weighting of Level 3: Level 4: Level 5
Biological Sciences	50: 50	n/a
Business	50: 50	n/a
Divinity, History and Philosophy	50: 50	n/a
Education	50: 50	n/a
Engineering	50: 50	33: 33: 34
Geosciences	50: 50 *(Archaeology programmes)* 30: 70 *(Geography/Geology programmes)*	25: 35: 40
Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture	50: 50	n/a
Law	tbc	tbc
Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition	30: 70 *(for intercalated degrees, Level 4 to be weighted at 100*)	30: 70: 0
Natural and Computing Sciences	tbc	tbc
Psychology	50: 50	n/a
Social Science	50: 50	n/a

1.10 For example (i): based on 30: 70 weighting of level of course (not programme year they were studied in)

Step 1*: Calculate course contribution to GPA* (Note: two L3 courses have been taken in PY4 so the total number of L3 credits = 150 and total number of L4 credits = 90)

Programme Year 3	Course	Grade	Grade Pt	Credits	Step 1 Course GPA	Calculation
19/20	CS3017	D3	9	15	0.9	9*15/150
19/20	CS3024	B3	15.4	30	3.08	15.4*30/150
19/20	CS3025	B3	15	15	1.50	15*15/150
19/20	CS3026	C2	13.7	15	1.37	13.7*15/150
19/20	CS3518	A5	18.5	15	1.85	18.5*15/150
19/20	CS3524	C1	14	15	1.40	14*15/150
19/20	CS3525	B1	17.2	15	1.72	17.2*15/150

Programme Year 4	Course	Grade	Grade Pt	Credits	Step 1 Course GPA	Calculation
20/21	CS4025	C1	14	15	2.33	14*15/90
20/21	CS4028	D3	9.87	15	1.65	9.87*15/90
20/21	CS4040	B3	15	15	2.50	15*15/90
20/21	CS4520	B3	15.67	15	2.61	15.67*15/90
20/21	CS4529	B2	16.67	30	5.56	16.67*30/90
20/21	SX3009	C1	14	15	1.40	14*15/150
20/21	SX3504	B1	17	15	1.70	17*15/150

***Step 2**: Calculate GPA for each level of study*

Total Level 3 course GPA	**14.92**
Total Level 4 course GPA	**14.65**

***Step 3:** Apply the appropriate weighting to the level of study GPAs, and combine the weighted GPAs to gain overall GPA*

Assuming a 30/70 split between Level 3 and Level 4 courses	
Level 3 contribution to GPA	14.92 x 30% = 4.48
Level 4 contribution to GPA	14.65 x 70% =10.26
Final GPA	4.58+10.26 = 14.74 [borderline (between 2:2 / 2:1 classification)]

1.11 For example (ii): based on a 50:50 weighting of level 3 to level 4

***Step 1**: Calculate course contribution to GPA (*Note: a zero credit-rated course has been assigned a weighting of 15 credits at L4 so the total number of L3 credits = 120 and total number of L4 credits = 135)

Programme Year 3	Course	Grade	Grade Pt	Credits	Step 1 Course GPA	Calculation
19/20	XY3001	A3	20	15	2.5	20*15/120
19/20	XY3002	B3	15	15	1.88	15*15/120
19/20	BC3001	A2	21.6	30	5.4	21.6*30/120
19/20	BC3502	B2	16.4	30	4.1	16.4*30/120
19/20	XY3510	C1	14	30	3.5	14*30/120

Programme Year 4	Course	Grade	Grade Pt	Credits	Step 1 Course GPA	Calculation
20/216	XY4001	A3	20	30	4.44	20*30/135
20/21	XY4010	B1	17	30	3.78	17*30/135
20/21	BC4501	B1	17	30	3.78	17*30/135
20/21	BC4502	A3	20	30	4.44	20*30/135
20/21	ZZ4001**	A2	21	15	2.33	21*15/135

** 15 credit weighting given to zero credit-rated ZZ4001

***Step 2**: Calculate GPA for each level of study*

Total Level 3 course GPA	**17.38**
Total Level 4 course GPA	**18.77**

***Step 3:** Apply the appropriate weighting to the level of study GPAs, and combine the weighted GPAs to gain overall GPA*

Assuming a 50/50 split between Level 3 and Level 4 courses	
Level 3 contribution to GPA	17.38 x 50% = 8.69
Level 4 contribution to GPA	18.77 x 50% = 9.39
Final GPA	8.69 + 9.39 = 18.08 [First class classification]

NB: All GPA calculations are computed to 2 decimal places

Borderline Candidates

1.12 Where a candidate is borderline for a higher class of degree the examiners will take account of the following:

a) **Grade profile** across Honours courses. Students with 50% or more of their credits in the higher classification should be considered for upgrading.

b) **Exit velocity:** *This can only be considered for undergraduate students if equal weighting (50:50) is adopted for that student's programme of study.* A borderline student should be considered for upgrading to the higher classification if their GPA for **level 4 courses** (not courses taken in programme year 4) is higher than their GPA for level 3 courses.

c) **Mitigating circumstances:** This can only be considered for a borderline student if not already considered at course level.