



Cardiff  
Metropolitan  
University

Prifysgol  
Metropolitan  
Caerdydd

## Degree Outcome Statement

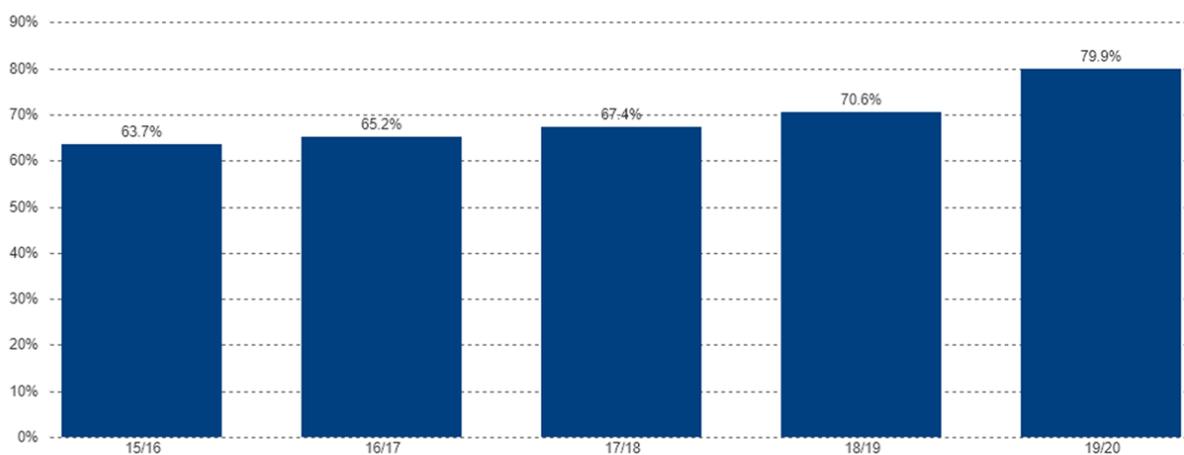
### Institutional Degree Classification Profile

At Cardiff Metropolitan University we strive to be as transparent as we can, this ensures the integrity of our awards and the value that we place on the Quality Standards and Enhancement of our awards. This document forms an annual part of the core university business and it provides confidence to our Academic Board and to our Board of Governors, through our assurance statement to HEFCW that the University meets national standards for degree standards.

Towards the end of academic year 2019/20 there was growing support in the HE sector for the need to revive safety net policies for the 2019/20 Academic Year. This was due to the impact of Covid-19 on the student experience and student wellbeing. As such, due to the nature of the Covid disruption and restrictions in the 2019/20 academic year, Cardiff Met was proactive in adopting a no detriment, safety net policy. This new policy had to cover all students and create parity cross the student population.

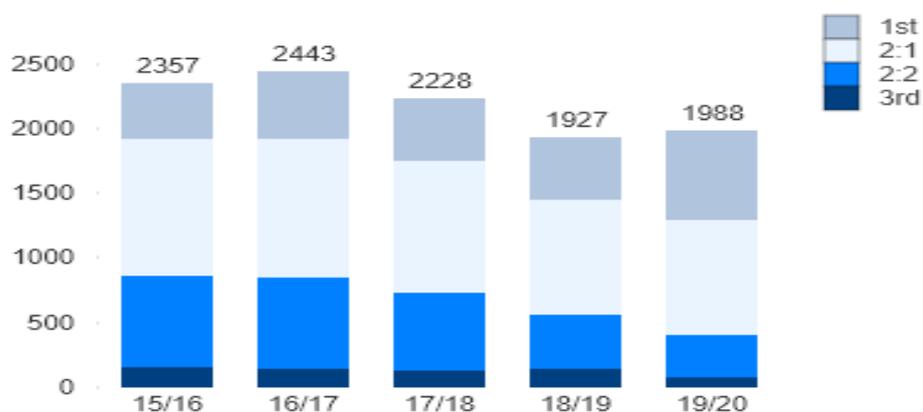
The degree classification profile for Cardiff Metropolitan University for the academic years 2016/17 to 2019/20 is illustrated in the table below.

Good Honours by Year



The table below shows the classifications over time

**Degree Outcomes by Classification**



The data shows that that the University’s profile of First and Upper Second Class honours degrees (good honours) has shown proportional growth over this period.

This table below is a sector comparison, which shows that the student outcomes achieved by Cardiff metropolitan University students are broadly inline with wider sector outcomes.

Academic year	Classification of First Degree			
	First class honours	Upper second class honours	Lower second class honours	Third class honours/Pass
2015/16	23%	49%	22%	5%
2016/17	26%	49%	20%	5%
2017/18	28%	48%	19%	5%
2018/19	28%	48%	19%	4%
2019/20	35%	47%	15%	3%

The table below shows Percentage of Good Degrees Awarded to First Degree Students by Academic Year and Student Characteristic

ACCYEAR	Good Hons	Female	Male	Mature	Young	Disabled	BAME
15/16	63.7%	69.9%	56.2%	59.8%	72.1%	68.2%	47.2%
16/17	65.2%	70.9%	58.7%	59.0%	78.0%	73.4%	43.5%
17/18	67.4%	74.4%	58.9%	61.9%	79.9%	72.8%	47.2%
18/19	70.6%	73.9%	66.6%	65.7%	80.4%	73.4%	55.3%
19/20	79.9%	82.8%	76.4%	76.8%	85.6%	78.2%	68.7%

## **Assessment and Marking Practices**

The University's assessment and marking practices place a strong emphasis on the constructive alignment of intended learning outcomes, assessment methods and assessment criteria to ensure that assessment is fair, valid and reliable. Programmes are approved for delivery following confirmation that the curriculum (including proposed assessment methods) align with the FHEQ/CQFW and any relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements or PSRB requirements. Regulations governing marking and moderation are available to staff and students in the Academic Handbook and seek to ensure that marking is fair, consistent and transparent. The University's band descriptors steer markers and moderators to the academic standards students are expected to achieve in order to receive marks in a particular category and map to FHEQ descriptors. The appropriateness of programme assessment criteria is monitored annually by an external examiner. In their annual report External Examiners are required to confirm whether standards are appropriate for the award and are aligned to the relevant level of the FHEQ and QAA subject benchmark statements. They are also required to judge whether the standards of awards are comparable to those of other institutions and, where relevant, that they meet PSRB requirements. External Examiners scrutinise a specified sample of assessed work so that they are able to make judgements about the standards of students' performance and the consistency and fairness of assessment processes. Cardiff Met's engagement in the pilot of the Advance HE (AHE) Degree Standards Project has enabled University staff to participate in delivering the AHE External Examiner Development Programme and has resulted in a greater alignment between the University's induction process for External Examiners and the AHE programme. The University's assessment practices were mapped against the revised QAA Quality Code in 2019 and it was confirmed that they continue to map to QAA Expectations and Practices. For programmes delivered with partners, assessment and marking practices are the same as those described above.

## **Academic Governance**

The University's Academic Board is responsible for the standards and quality of all provision that leads to the award of credit in its name. The Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) is empowered by Academic Board to have oversight, on its behalf, of the academic standards of its awards and for the quality of the student learning experience. On an annual basis the University, through the work of its AQSC, assures its regulator HEFCW that 'the standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately set and maintained.' It does so following scrutiny of a suite of reporting on the University's programme approval and review processes, annual monitoring processes, assessment processes, and arrangements for Examination Boards. This exercise includes scrutiny of External Examiner reporting on whether assessment designs are appropriate, criteria and marking schemes are set at the right level and whether assessment processes are fair reliable and thorough. For programmes delivered with partners the exercise of authority and oversight is the same as that described above.

### **Classification Algorithm**

There are two available algorithms for undergraduate honours degrees, however only one is used for each award – the relevant algorithm is stipulated in each validated Programme Specification document.

All algorithms and award calculation methods are set out in our main Assessment Regulations, which are available here:

[https://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/registry/academichandbook/Documents/AH1\\_04\\_01.pdf](https://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/registry/academichandbook/Documents/AH1_04_01.pdf)

	Paragraph
Undergraduate Honours degrees	10.1
Foundation Degrees, HNCs/HNDs	10.1
CertHE, DipHE	10.1
BTEC	10.18
Postgraduate Master's, PGDip and PGCert	10.16-10.17

A student award may be upgraded if they meet strict criteria, which are also detailed in paragraph 10.2 of our main Assessment Regulations (link above).

When an overall award mark is calculated, it is flagged by the student system if it is within the numerical range for upgrade, then individual Examination Boards will decide if it is to be upgraded, by assessing whether the student profile meets any of the relevant criteria.

Students are required to successfully complete all modules registered against their programme in order to qualify for a final award. Where a student is unsuccessful at the first attempt to pass an assessment, they may be offered a maximum of one or two retrieval opportunities (dependent on the programme), with the overall module being capped, as detailed in paragraph 12.5 of the Assessment Regulations. This is in line with the total number of retrievals permitted across the sector, as outlined in the [Universities UK publication 'Understanding Degree Algorithms'](#).

Our degree algorithms were reviewed and updated in 2014.

The only broad change made since then was to reflect the fact that in September 2019 we changed our postgraduate pass mark from 40% to 50%. This, however, did not affect the grade boundaries for Merit (60%) and Distinction (70%).

### **Teaching and Learning Resources**

The percentage of upper honours (first and upper second-class honours classifications) awarded to students between 2014/15 and 2017/18 fluctuated between approximately 63% and 67%. In 2018/19 the figure rose to 70.6%, approximately a 3% increase on the 2017/18 figure and has risen again by 9% in 19/20. These increases correlate with the implementation of a revised Strategic Plan (2017) and the introduction of a range of teaching and student support initiatives. These initiatives, specifically intended to improve the University's

performance in student continuation, engagement and award outcomes, include the following:

- The appointment of a PVC Student Engagement and the development of a Student Engagement Strategy;
- Significant changes to the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy including enhanced use of the electronic learning platform Moodle, a requirement for all feedback to be provided electronically and the automated release of feedback to students in-line with the University's 20-day feedback requirement;
- An enhanced Personal Tutoring Policy;
- University engagement in the Jisc-funded feedback and assessment evaluation project, 'Making Assessment Count' and an enhanced support offer for academic staff in assessment design and authentic assessment.
- An enhanced professional learning offer for all staff delivered through the Quality Enhancement Directorate.

### **Identifying Good Practice and Actions**

The following are some examples of good practice in regards to assessment and marking practices, data analysis and monitoring or external examining:

- To inform the development of a series of interventions around assessment and feedback QED have been carrying out content analysis on open-answer responses from four years of NSS surveys, to draw out comments describing our students' assessment and feedback experience at Cardiff Met. The findings of this analysis were used to inform five focus groups with students, further discussing their assessment and feedback experiences. Findings were summarised in a report to senior management and have been used to develop a standard assessment brief template. This has been approved by our Academic Quality and Standards Committee and is being rolled out across our schools. The template provides consistency in how assessment briefs and marking criteria are presented to student and contain a range of information and links to aspects of assessment and feedback which are frequently raised with our students.
- In Cardiff School of Sport and Health Sciences QED have also used the above data to guide the work of a panel of academic staff in developing an assessment and feedback framework. This will be implemented across all undergraduate programmes in the school as part of a school-wide periodic review of undergraduate provision. This draws from the latest academic literature, providing guidance and threshold standards for assessment and feedback which module and programme level assessment must meet. Feedback from student representatives and focus groups is being used to refine the framework and place the student voice at its centre.
- The University's external examining systems including piloting the HEA External Examiner programme, and enhanced examiner induction, the introduction of a report triage scheme and the development of an external examiner network.

Good practice in these areas is disseminated via the University's Quality Enhancement Directorate through workshops, online videos and guides and review of core assessment guidance including, most recently, assessment briefs and marking criteria. Evidence of good practice is drawn from both within and beyond the University, with QED ensuring that the

opportunity for colleagues to learn from effective practice internally is embedded in a variety of fora.