

# EXAMINATION CONVENTIONS (UNDERGRADUATE)

These Conventions apply to all candidates sitting examinations from June 2007 onwards

## 1. Status of Conventions

These Examination Conventions should be read in conjunction with the *General Regulations for First Degrees* published in the University Handbook and on the website.

The conventions are for guidance only and do not cover every situation which may arise. Where a Board of Examiners considers that a case before it is not covered by the conventions, or where it considers that the conventions or classification guidelines should be departed from, this will be dealt with by way of a special recommendation to Senate, indicating all the relevant circumstances.

School Examination Boards will determine and recommend to Senate a student's final degree classification subject to the required credits having been achieved at all stages of the Final Examination, and the required number of FHEQ levels having been acquired.

Students on joint honours, major minor combinations and multi-disciplinary programmes will be subject to the Conventions applied by the School in which the programme is located (e.g. Law with French (LLB) is located in the Law School, Economics, Business and Law (BSc) is located in the School of Humanities)

Preliminary Examination results will not contribute to the final degree classification.

## 2. Marking

2.1 For the purposes of marking and classification the following scale is used:

70 - 100	First Class
60 - 69	Second Class (Upper Division)
50 - 59	Second Class (Lower Division)
45 - 49	Third Class
40 - 44	Pass
0 - 39	Fail
NSA	No Serious Attempt.

Where, in the judgement of the Examiners no serious attempt has been made the letters 'NSA' should replace the numerical mark, which may have been assigned to the paper.

### 2.2 Borderline Marks

Examiners for the separate Degree Programmes should ensure that there are no marginal marks. Thus marks of 39, 44, 49, 59 and 69 should be raised or lowered before they are submitted to the relevant Board of Examiners.

## 3. Credit

**In the Preliminary Examination only**, the Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, condone a fail and award credits (described as credits by condonation) in a course or courses with a total value of not more than 30 units where:

- i) the student obtains a mark of 35-39 in the course or courses concerned; and
- ii) the weighted mean of the marks awarded in all the courses comprised within the Preliminary Examination (including any courses failed and the course in which it is proposed to award credits by condonation) is 45 or above.

In exercising its discretion, the Board of Examiners may have regard to the programme of studies which the student is following, to strength shown in the marks in other courses forming part of the Preliminary Examination, and to such other matters as the Board may consider relevant.

## 4. Progression

A student will normally be required to pass courses with a minimum total value of 30 units in any two-term block (i.e. obtain at least 30 credits on first examination in each diet of examinations) in order to proceed to the next stage of studies.

A student carrying failures in courses with a total value of less than 60 units may be permitted to proceed to the next stage of studies carrying those failures (where appropriate with the opportunity or requirement to re-sit at the next available opportunity) at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. That discretion will normally be exercised in favour of the student.

A student carrying failures in courses with a total value of 60 units or more may be permitted to proceed to the next stage of studies carrying those failures (where appropriate with the opportunity or requirement to re-sit at the next available opportunity) only at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. There is no presumption that this discretion will be exercised in favour of the student. The Board in exercising its discretion will have regard to whether any of the failures which the student is carrying include failures from a previous diet of examinations, which the student has not had the opportunity to re-sit.

Students will not be allowed to proceed to Part 2 with more than 30 units of preliminary failures.

## 5. Examination and Re-examination

A student is normally assessed in all the courses taken in any two-term block during or at the end of that two-term block.

A student who fails a course at the first examination will normally be permitted by the Board of Examiners to re-sit that course at the next available opportunity. Where the Board of Examiners so directs, a student who fails a course may be **required** to present for re-examination at the next available opportunity.

[NB General Regulations for First Degrees 12.2. **In no case may a candidate be re-examined or re-assessed more than once.**]

## 6. Choices Available to Boards

A student whose studies have been terminated by the Board of Examiners may be permitted by the student's Head of Department to restart from the Preliminary or Part I stage of studies (as appropriate) in accordance with General Regulations for First Degrees 12.8.

Where the Board of Examiners so recommends, the student's Head of Department may permit the student to repeat Part II by restarting from the Part II stage of studies in accordance with the General Regulations for First Degrees 12.8.

A student whose studies have been terminated by the Board of Examiners may also transfer to a new degree programme with the consent of the Head of Department concerned with such exemptions as may be approved by the Head of Department, subject, if necessary, to confirmation by the Chairman of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

## 7. Classification

### 7.1 (Class of Degree)

A student with no more than 45 units of Part I and II failure and 60 units of failure overall will be awarded a degree in a given class or division if the following criteria are met:

- A) More than half of the Part I and Part II courses (by unit value) have been graded at a level which is within or above the given class or division; or
- B) Half of the Part I and Part II courses (by unit value) have been graded at a level which is within or above the given class or division and the weighted mean for such courses reaches the minimum specified below (by the Board for the award of degrees in the class concerned)

Pass	37.5
Third Class	42.5
Second Class (lower division)	47.5
Second Class (upper division)	57.5
First Class	66.0

or,

- C) At least four-ninths of the Part I and Part II courses (by unit value) have been graded at a level which is within or above the given class or division and the weighted mean for such courses is within the given class or division.

## **7.2 (The Discretionary Convention)**

Exceptionally, the Board of examiners has the discretion to award a degree in a given class or division where at least four-ninths of Part I and Part II courses (by unit value) have been graded at a level which is within or above the given class or division and at least one-half of Part II courses are graded at this level or above, and the weighted mean for Part II reaches the level specified in 7.1B. In exercising this discretion, the Board of examiners shall have regard to all such matters as it considers appropriate. In such case, the full basis for the award will be reported to Senate.

## **7.3 (The First Class Convention)**

Exceptionally, the Board of Examiners has the discretion to award a first-class degree if at least one-third of all Part I and Part II courses (by unit value) are graded first-class, so long as at least one-third of Part II courses (by unit value) are graded first class. In exercising this discretion, the Board of examiners shall have regard to all such matters as it considers appropriate. In such case, the full basis for the award will be reported to Senate.

## **7.4**

Notwithstanding any other provision in these conventions concerning classification, a student who, within the minimum time required by the degree programme regulations concerned, has:

- i) been awarded credits in all the courses specified by the degree programme regulations for the Preliminary Examination, either at the first attempt or at a subsequent attempt permitted by the Board of Examiners; and
- ii) passed at the first attempt all the courses specified by the degree programme regulations for all stages of the Final Examinations shall be awarded Third Class Honours.

For the purpose of this convention a student will be treated as having completed the studies for the degree programme concerned within the minimum time where any additional period has arisen from an authorised period of intercalation, an authorised deferral of examination, an authorised resit, or any other authorised absence including absence due to debt.

Examination Conventions (Postgraduate) – see p. 285, General Regulations for Higher Degrees.