Degree Outcomes Statement

September 2021

Institutional degree classification profile

This statement

Over the 5-year period, 22% of all students attained first-class degrees. The proportion of first-class degrees increased by 15% over the 5-year period and by 8% in the most recent year.

Over the 5-year period, the most frequently awarded class of degree was an upper second (39%) followed by a lower second (29%), first (22%) and third class (9%), respectively. The proportion of upper-second class degrees declined consistently with a decrease of 7% overall and a decrease by 1% in the most recent year.

In the most recent year (2019/20)
In the most recent year, 67% of all students attained 'good honours' degrees and 31% of all students attained first-class degrees. The distribution of degree classifications changed in 2019/20 when the most frequently awarded class of degree was an upper second (36%) followed by a first (31%), lower second (26%) and third class (7%), respectively. In that year the University awarded more first class than lower-second class degrees.

No discernible differences by demographic characteristics of the students:

Over the 5-

Assessment and marking practices

At the programme approval stage, programme teams are referred to the QAA's *Framework for Higher Education* and *Assessment Advice and Guidance* when developing assessment strategies. External Advisors are approved and appointed to advise and sign off on new programme developments including the assessment strategies. University-wide annual assessment design guidance is produced and disseminated, alongside the University's Assessment and Moderation Procedures and General Assessment Guidelines, Levels 3 to 8. This guidance draws on the QAA's Framework for HE Qualifications and Advice and Guidance on

The University provided support to academic staff for remote working/delivery through a series of webinars including *Remote Assessment, Managing the Online Classroom, Supporting Students Remotely, Supporting Students with their Mental Health.*

Academic governance

Academic governance of matters which reflect, influence or otherwise relate to degree

University Strategic Update, including the Key Performance Indicators;
individual programme approval and periodic review and re-approval rep00000BT/F2 12 Tf1 0 0 1 350.1

assessment, marking, moderation and external examining; and annual planning and review at programme, subject and University levels. It ensures that assessment and marking practices are influenced by and subject to a strong, institution-wide regulatory and quality

which recognises that the nature of the student intake reflects the University's widening participation mission and steers us towards an 'exit velocity' classification model. It also avoids discouraging study outside a main specialism and does not penalize atypically low module outcomes for individual students. For 'top-up' degrees the final honours classification is calculated from a simple average of the equally weighted marks from modules worth 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 which represent the best marksachieved by a student at that Level.

be applied. The normal practice, summarised above, may be varied in the case of students with validated mitigating circumstances.

Teaching practices and learning resources

In 2017, the University developed its *Curriculum Philosophy* and guidance on embedding this is provided at course design stage. Guidance at this stage of programme approval, as identified under *Assessment and Marking Practices,* also involves support for the development of effective assessment strategies and refers to the QAA's Assessment Advice and Guidance.

Since 2012, the University has required all new academic staff to undertake a teaching qualification, gain fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) now Advance HE and gain a PhD. The number of academic staff has risen since 2014 from 280 to 395 (HESA Returns 2014 and 2020). The number of academic staff holding a teaching qualification has risen from 68% to 75%. The University has a two-stage approach to gaining teaching qualifications. Academic staff undertake a 20-credit Level 6 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) module *Preparation for Education and Training* prior to completion of the full Level 7 *Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher and Professional Education*, which is accredited by Advance HE. Approximately 40-60 staff per annum undertake this qualification and gain Fellowship (FHEA) as part of the qualification. The proportion of staff who have gained the Fellowship (FHEA) has been significantly above the sector average for the last four years, when it has ranged from 71.6% (2016/17) to 75.1% (2019/20). A Master's degree in Teaching and Learning in Higher and Professional Education is offered to academic staff as a further progression route. The University also supports development for professional recognition with the Association of Learning Technologists.

In 2016, the University appointed its first Teaching Professors to support development of learning, teaching and assessment. Since when there have been three additional rounds of promotion to Teaching Professorships for academic staff. The Teaching Professors lead and engage academic and professional support staff in an annual *Teaching Intensive, Research Informed (TIRI)* conference. The University raises aspirations in relation to the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme and has a robust process to select and support potential candidates. The selection process is supported internally by senior staff and externally by two Visiting Professors.

The University's award-winning *LEAP Online* platform supports students in developing a wide range of academic skills, including academic writing, critical thinking, digital skills, referencing and avoiding plagiarism.

The University's library provides a wide range of support to help students make the most of the learning resources available to them. This includes library-focused sessions and workshops embedded in the curriculum as well as self-directed learning opportunities and online guides. The library's website was significantly redeveloped in June 2021 with a range of new support content including help videos and guides. The library developed a number of new online support services during the COVID-19 pandemic, including an online chat service