How your final degree classification is calculated at UAL

Your final degree classification is a recognition of the overall standard of work you have submitted whilst studying on your course. Some students develop their abilities over time and some students are consistent throughout their studies. In order to recognise this, that some students develop and learn at a different pace, the University is amending the way in which the final classification will be calculated.

From 2019/20, the majority of graduating UG students will have their final classification calculated using two separate algorithms. To assure the standards of all University of the Arts London awards it is a requirement to have external examiners verify the level of student achievement. This involves sampling the assessment outcomes from units that contribute to the calculation of the award.

Classification One is a calculation based on the grades achieved in the final year of an undergraduate degree.

Classification Two uses all of the grades from the final year of an undergraduate course and 100 credits from the second year[1]. The 100 credits chosen will be those that represent the strongest performance of a student in their second year.

The final grade will be the outcome which provides the most accurate representation of a student's abilities, that which gives the better grade of the two results provided.

Both final grades will be based on the individual unit results achieved on UAL's current letter grade marking scale.

The University 15 Point Marking Scale

When marking your work tutors will award it one of fifteen Letter Grades, representing a high, middle and low point within each classification. The Letter Grades map directly onto the levelled Assessment Criteria, as outlined in your Assessment Feedback. Each Letter Grade has a point value, as illustrated in the UAL Marking Scale table on the following page (for example an A- is worth 13 points).

For your grade classification, the points achieved for each unit will be weighted according to the number of credits in the unit. The two classifications are explained in more detail under the Marking Scale table.

---

[1] A student will need to have passed 120 credits and attained a UAL grade in a minimum of 60 credits at level 5 (year two) for the second year to be counted in the classification algorithm.

15 Point Marking Scale

Letter grade	Point value	Classification			
		Undergraduate			Postgraduate
		BA, BSc	FdA, FdSc	CertHE, DipHE	Taught Masters, PGDip, PGCert, GradDip, GradCert
A+	15	1st	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
A	14	1st	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
A-	13	1st	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
B+	12	2:1	Merit Plus	Pass	Merit
B	11	2:1	Merit Plus	Pass	Merit
B-	10	2:1	Merit Plus	Pass	Merit
C+	9	2:2	Merit	Pass	Pass
C	8	2:2	Merit	Pass	Pass
C-	7	2:2	Merit	Pass	Pass
D+	6	3rd	Pass	Pass	Pass
D	5	3rd	Pass	Pass	Pass
D-	4	3rd	Pass	Pass	Pass
E	3	Marginal fail			
F	2	Fail			
F-	1	Fail			
NS	0	Non-submission			

How Classification One is calculated:

The first classification calculation option is based entirely on your final year grades and their relative weighting. In every year of your undergraduate course, you study on units that total 120 credits. This means that a grade from a unit with 60 credits will have a bigger impact on the overall calculation than a grade for a unit which has 20 credits.

As an example:

1. The following Unit Letter Grades are awarded for a final year:
   Unit 1 (20 credits out of 120) = A
   Unit 2 (40 credits out of 120) = B
   Unit 3 (60 credits out of 120) = A
2. The Letter Grade for each unit has an equivalent points value:
   Unit 1 (20 credits) = 13
   Unit 2 (40 credits) = 10
   Unit 3 (60 credits) = 14

3. The points are weighted according to the credit-rating of the unit:
   Unit 1 (20 credits): 13 x (20 credits/120 credits) = 2.167
   Unit 2 (40 credits): 10 x (40/120) = 3.333
   Unit 3 (60 credits): 14 x (60/120) = 7.000
4. The weighted points for all the units are added together:
   Unit 1 = 2.167
   Unit 2 = 3.333
   Unit 3 = 7.000
   Total = 12.500
5. The final grade for the year is rounded to the nearest whole number:

   12.5000 becomes 13/ A-/ 1st Class Honours

How Classification Two is calculated:

The second Classification is more complex as it includes a proportion of your second year results as well as those from year three. Rather than use the full 120, the best 100 credits of your second year will be used to confirm this result. These credits are included in a calculation with 70% of the final grade taken from your year three marks and 30% from the 100 credits from year two.

How your 100 credits from year two are calculated:

All of your second year will be included with the exception of 20 credits worth of your lowest performance in year 2 will be removed. **It is not the case that if your course has one unit worth 20 credits this will automatically be the 20 credits that is removed from your profile.** To be clear: If the unit with the lowest grade in a second year profile has greater than 20 credits attached, it would be split and 20 credits removed.

Example:

Year Two Results

Unit 1 (20 Credits of 120 credits) = A-

Unit 2 (40 Credits of 120 credits) = A

Unit 3 (60 Credits of 120 credits) = B-

In that profile, Unit 3 is clearly the lowest of the three results achieved. 20 credits would need to be removed from this unit for the final grade calculation. This would be the 100 credit calculation:

Unit 1 (20 Credits) = A- + Unit 2 (40 Credits) = A + Unit 3 (40 Credits after 20 removed) = B-

With the numerical values as follows:

Unit 1 (20 Credits) = 13 + Unit 2 (40 Credits) = 14 + Unit 3 (40 Credits) = 10

The points are weighted according to the credit rating of the unit:

Unit 1 (20 Credits) = 13 x (20 credits/100 credits) = 2.6

Unit 2 (40 Credits) = 14 x (40 credits /100 credits) = 5.6

Unit 3 (40 Credits) = 10 x (40 credits /100 credits) = 4

Those weighted points are all added together to get the 100 credit total for year 2:

2.6 + 5.6 + 4 = **12.2**

Calculating the overall result with the year 2 result included:

The score from the 100 best credits of year 2 is then combined with the score from Year 3's full 120 credits. A weighting of 70/30 is used in the favour of year 3 in this calculation:

(Year 2 100 credit score x 30%) + (Year 3 120 credit score x 70%) = Final Grade

Example:

If we take the results set out above the calculation would be as follows:

Year 2 100 Credit grade example = 12.2

Year 3 120 Credit grade example = 12.5

(12.2 x 30%) + (12.5 x 70%) = 12.41

Rounded to the nearest full number = 12 = Upper Second Class honours

Determining a student's final grade:

The final grade for a student will be whichever of the two calculations recognises their strongest performances throughout their time on their course. Using the examples above:

Classification One: 13 points – First Class Honours

Classification Two: 12 points – Upper Second Class Honours

This would mean the student in our example would be awarded a First Class degree using the result from Classification One.