

Becoming eligible for an award with “Distinction” or “Merit”: *a guide for new postgraduate students*

DOES THIS APPLY TO ME??

- ✓ This guidance applies from the academic year 2021/22 to ***students on all taught postgraduate courses except PGCE, EdD and MEd***

How do my marks relate to award classes?

- Your marks and grades for individual assessments relate to award classes as shown opposite.
- If all of your marks fall in the same class band, that is what you will get!
- However, most students aren't quite so consistent

Grade	Class
A++, A+, A	Distinction
B+, B	Merit
C+, C	Merit

I'm on a Masters degree: how will my award class be calculated?

Your class will be based on [your rounded overall](#) aggregate mark.

Aggregates are **rounded** to whole numbers as normal. For example:

- 69.5, 69.6, 69.7, 69.8 & 69.9 are rounded up to 70;
- 69.1, 69.2, 69.3 & 69.4 are rounded down to 69.

If your aggregate falls clearly within the boundaries defined for a classification you will be granted that classification.

If your rounded aggregate is between 70 and 79 you will achieve a DISTINCTION, if its between 60 and 69 a MERIT and between 50 and 59 you will be awarded a PASS

Borderline Candidates

If your final rounded aggregate is within 2 points of a classification borderline your profile will be considered by the Assessment and Progression Board to determine which classification you will be awarded.

For example,

If you achieve a rounded aggregate of 68 or 69 the Board will look at how much assessment you have in the distinction band. If 50% of your individual assessments are 70 or above you will be raised to a distinction. If they are not you will remain on a merit.

If you achieve a rounded aggregate of 58 or 59 the Board will look at how much assessment you have in the distinction band. If 50% of your individual assessments are 60 or above you will be raised to a distinction. If they are not you will remain on a merit.

I'm on a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate: how will my award class be calculated?

Your class will be based on your rounded overall aggregate mark.

Aggregates are **rounded** to whole numbers as normal. For example:

- 69.5, 69.6, 69.7, 69.8 & 69.9 are rounded up to 70;
- 69.1, 69.2, 69.3 & 69.4 are rounded down to 69.

If your rounded overall aggregate mark is 2 marks or less below the next class:

- The Board of Examiners will consider whether to move you to the higher class.

EXAMPLE ONE.

Student takes PG Dip in History.

A. Overall aggregate mark = 67.

B. Threshold for Distinction = 70.

MORE THAN TWO MARKS FROM DISTINCTION, so: Merit

EXAMPLE TWO.

Student takes PG Dip in International Relations.

A. Overall aggregate = 68.

B. Threshold for Distinction = 70.

ONLY TWO MARKS FROM DISTINCTION, so: Board decides whether to award a Merit or a Distinction.

What if I was granted exemption from some modules via APL or Advanced Standing?

- If you were granted exemption via the Accreditation of Prior Learning [APL]:
 - this means that the exemption was based on work you had completed *in another institution*;
 - your award class will be calculated in the normal way, EXCEPT that
 - **your aggregate mark will be based totally on assessments you did at this University.**
 - If you were granted exemption from more than 60 credits, your classification will be a Pass.
- If you were granted exemption via Advanced Standing:
 - this means that the exemption was based on work you had completed *for an award of this University*;
 - your award class will be calculated in the normal way, EXCEPT that
 - **your aggregate mark will take into account the marks for relevant assessments in your earlier award.**

If you fail one or more assessments...

→ If you pass your module[s] on aggregate, & all your marks are at least F+:

☺ *you will **normally** be deemed to have passed your degree. [You will NOT have a resit opportunity.]*

→ If you get less than F+ for any assessment:

☹ *you will be deemed NOT to have passed your degree.*

⇒ The Examiners will decide your options, which might include:

- EITHER resubmitting the failed assessments;
- OR retaking all or part of the degree with attendance;
- OR finishing your studies without taking a Masters degree.

→ If you get less than Grade C for the Dissertation or other “Qualifying Component” specified for your degree:

☹ *you will be deemed NOT to have passed your degree.*

⇒ The Examiners will decide your options, which might include:

- EITHER resubmitting the failed assessments;
- OR retaking all or part of the degree with attendance;
- OR finishing your studies without taking a Masters degree.

If you simply don't submit one or more assessments ..

→ You will NOT be eligible to graduate.

⇒ The Examiners will decide your options, which might include:

- EITHER “re”submitting the assessments;
- OR retaking the relevant modules with attendance;
- OR finishing your studies without completing your course.

→ The marks you gain on any resits/retakes the Examiners require will NOT raise your aggregates any higher than a bare pass [any higher aggregate you already hold will not be lowered].

→ Not submitting work is NEVER a good idea! If you aren't fit to do an assessment, follow the advice in the next slide.

If you aren't fit to do an assessment..

- If you miss an assessment due to approved mitigating circumstances [not necessarily "medical"], you will normally be entitled to undertake the assessment later **with no penalty.**
- Therefore, it is **essential** to:
 - ⇒ submit evidence of mitigating circumstances to explain absence from an exam;
 - ⇒ seek an extension if you are not able, for good reasons, to submit work on time.
- If, without letting the University know why, you don't do an assessment, or hand it in late, your degree is at risk!

Where do I find more information?

- ✓ This information is for Guidance Only.
- ✓ Further information about how merits and distinctions are calculated is available on: www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/students/
- ✓ If you have any queries, please contact your Faculty Office and ask for an appointment to talk to a Senior Academic Adviser.
- ✓ ***Please seek advice immediately if you think you have mitigating circumstances.***