

Degree Outcomes Statement London Metropolitan University 2020-21

In producing this Degree Outcomes Statement, London Metropolitan University (London Met) has completed a full review of our degree classification profile, using the findings to provide the basis of this statement. The statement articulates how we are meeting the expectations of the Office for Students new regulatory framework on academic standards.

This statement has a particular emphasis on our post pandemic review of our degree outcomes, following the decisions the University took to ensure no student would be disadvantaged during the pandemic and the impact this has had on our degree outcomes. We have also considered the recently published OfS analysis of degree outcomes in reviewing our data.

1. Institutional degree classification profile

Table 1 and Figure 1 below identifies the trend in degree classification awards (degree outcomes) at London Met and within the sector over a five-year period between the academic years 2016-17 and 2020-21

Table 1 - Degree classifications for (all First Degree qualifiers on all modes of study)

Class	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
First-class honours	18%	27%	28%	38%	39%
Upper second-class honours	34%	33%	33%	35%	36%
Lower second-class honours	33%	26%	28%	20%	20%
Third-class honours/Pass	15%	13%	12%	6%	5%
Unclassified	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1st and 2:1	52%	60%	60%	74%	75%
Sector 1st and 2:1	71%	72%	73%	78%	79%

Figure 1 - Percentage of 1st and 2:1 London Met against the sector

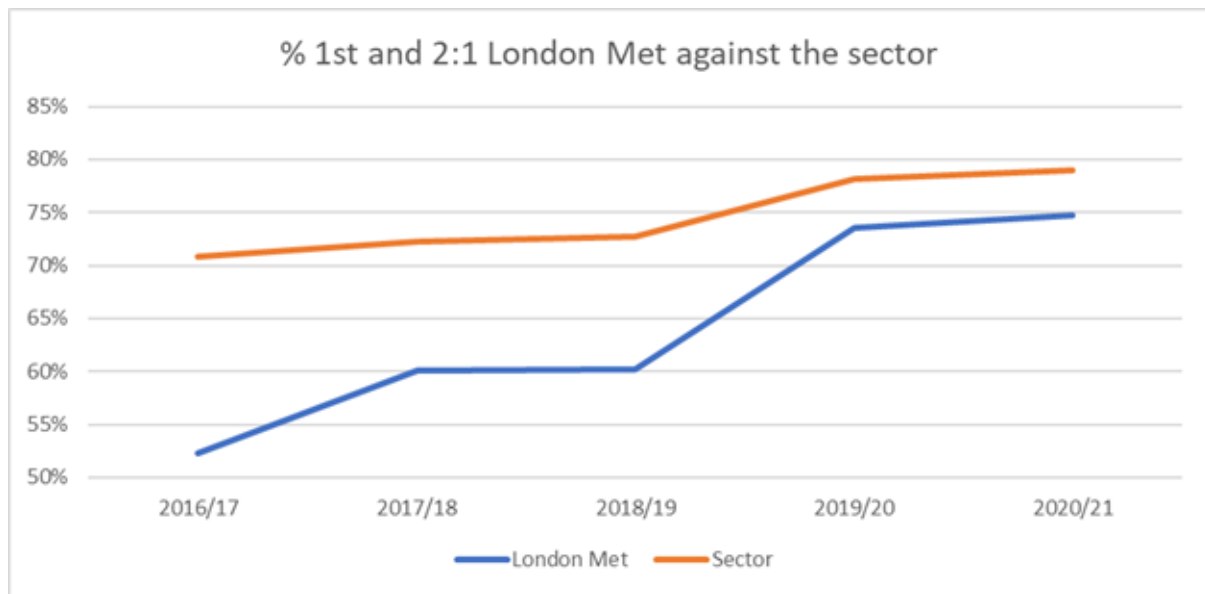
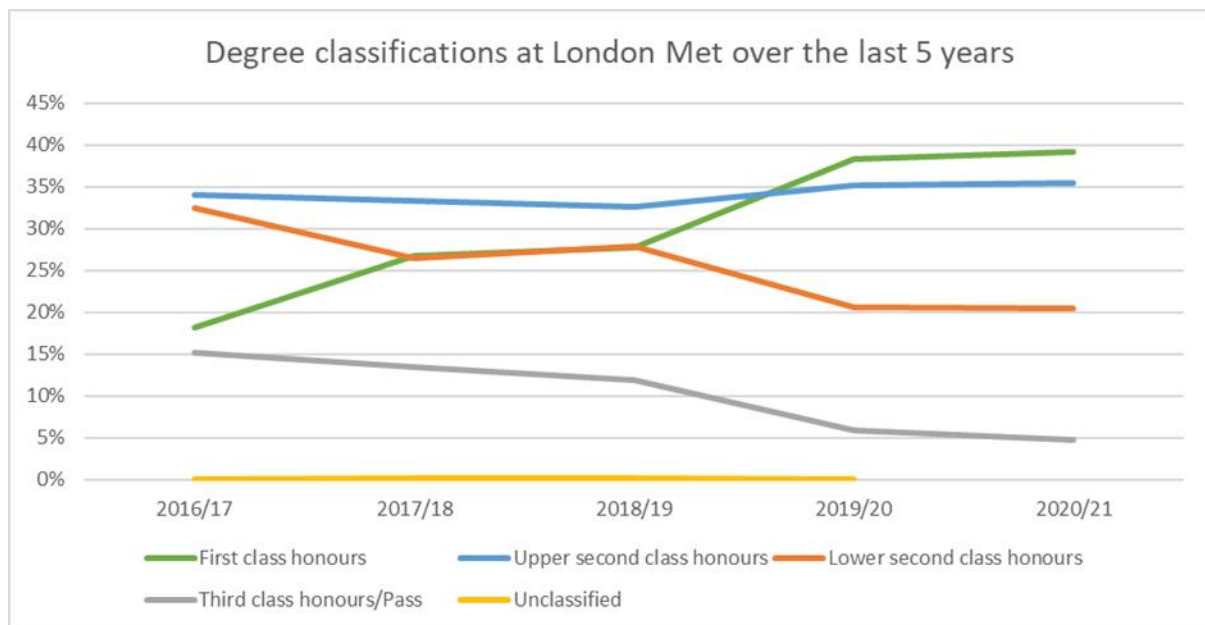


Figure 2 - Degree classifications at London Met over the last 5 years



The proportion of first class honours and upper second class honours awarded by the University remains below the average for the sector, this gap has closed somewhat in the most recent years, bringing closer alignment to the sector.

The sector and the University were faced with the challenge of the global pandemic and subsequent lockdown in early 2020 regarding ensuring our students were not disadvantaged in any way. The University took action, introducing Force Majeure Regulations including mark adjustments, providing every student with a week extension and an uncapped resit.

The data in table 1 and figures 1 and 2 show the result of actions taken by the University.

Following reflections on the impact of decisions on our degree outcomes at the Academic Board, the University made further revisions to the Force Majeure regulations. These amendments were in response to changes in the impact of the pandemic on our student body in the academic year 2020-21 and to continue to protect students' interests while protecting the integrity of our awards.

The Academic Board revoked the Force Majeure regulations in June 2021.

The University reflects on the proportion of first and upper second-class honours being awarded to our student body by analysing awards by subject, student entry qualifications and student characteristics with a focus on the student characteristics identified as a priority within our [Access and Participation Plan](#).

White students are consistently awarded a higher proportion of first and upper second-class honours when compared to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students. Positively, since 2015-16, the degree awarding gap for our UK domiciled, first degree undergraduate students closed steadily from 32 percentage points to 14 percentage points in 2019-20. However, following the removal of the Force Majeure regulations last year we saw the gap increase by 2.5 percentage points to 16.8 percentage points for 2020/21 graduates. Analysis of the awards data indicates that on average our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students are meeting their expected degree outcomes when benchmarked against the sector for entry qualifications and subjects of study, but we still want to eliminate any gaps. The University has rolled out the Education for Social Justice Framework supported by a programme of Inclusive Behaviours training for all staff in order to help address disparities in award outcomes for different student groups.

2. Teaching practices and learning resources

The University prides itself on the support it offers to our diverse range of students, developing a tailored approach to teaching practices while providing world leading learning resources. The appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor in October 2018 has resulted in a strategic focus on engaging with students to improve their academic and professional outcomes. This is demonstrated in our [institutional strategy](#).

The University has in place structures, facilities, policies, procedures and strategies to enhance teaching practices, support and learning resources, all of which have a discernible effect on the success of our students, particularly their degree classifications. Our commitment to enhancing opportunities for all is cemented within our University [Strategy](#), our [Equality and Diversity Policy](#), our [Access and Participation Plan](#) and our [Race Equity Strategic Plan](#). The University Board has oversight of all of these key documents.

Significant recent developments in the academic and student support offer include changes to induction, support for financial hardship, academic mentoring and a

[Student Success Strategy](#).

The [Education for Social Justice Framework](#), which has been put together by a Working Group of over 30 staff, students and Student Union officers, is essentially the way the University strategy will be delivered through the curriculum, and is also a key aspect of the University's work to address awarding gaps. The framework had been developed from the starting point of an inclusive curriculum, combined with the best practice of the sector and a values-driven vision of the curriculum at London Met.

National Student Survey (NSS) results have shown that we are seeing recognition that our enhancements are making a difference. We have seen improvements in student satisfaction in every category for the University, particularly with teaching, learning opportunities, academic support, student voice and the learning community.

3. Assessment and marking practices

Quality assurance and enhancement processes and procedures, including those related to assessment and marking practices, are defined within the London Met Quality Manual and have been developed in consultation with the QAA Quality Code published in March 2018, and the QAA Advice and Guidance on Monitoring and Evaluation published in November 2018. They are designed to meet the core practices of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code, internal (Academic Regulations, General Student Regulations) and external reference points such as Competition and Markets Authority guidance.

Internal and external reference points including Subject Benchmark Statements, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England (FHEQ), Apprenticeship Standards and any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) requirements are all taken into account in the setting of our assessment and marking practices.

Assessment is designed to determine whether students have achieved the learning outcomes and aims of the modules and courses that they undertake. The University has adopted principles to encourage the design of appropriate assessment instruments and tasks and these are outlined in the University Assessment Framework. Operational matters are covered in the Guide to Assessment Processes and other communications issued by the University.

London Met identifies that the quality assurance and enhancement of our courses is a key priority in ensuring a positive student experience in a thriving academic community. This includes assuring that the standards of qualifications are set at appropriate levels and that confidence can be placed on the quality of the learning experience at London Met.

London Met has prioritised ensuring academic integrity is at the forefront of learning and assessments. The University has launched its [Academic Integrity](#) campaign to reinforce a preventative method in tackling academic misconduct. The Academic Integrity Campaign has centralised all information covering Academic Integrity, its

resources, and support available to students.

Externality plays a fundamental role in our quality assurance of our assessment and marking practices. London Met aims to ensure that its provision meets threshold standards and that the quality of provision and the student experience is continuously reviewed, therefore, External Examiners are a key element in this. The University requires that an external examiner is appointed for every course that leads to an award of the University. London Met External Examiners are appointed and managed by Academic Quality and Development on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor and the Academic Board and are key in maintaining the academic standards of its Awards. London Met will be reviewing its work with External Examiners in light of the recent QAA/UUK/GuildHE review on external examining.

4. Academic governance

London Met's quality processes and procedures are defined and embedded in the Academic Regulations, Quality Manual, and university structures. The University has recently put in place a revised senior management structure with roles accountable for the delivery of actions and reporting of outcomes, and governance arrangements provide oversight and routine monitoring of student outcomes and the impact of the action plans.

The terms of reference of senior committees clearly set out responsibility for monitoring student support with specific reference to academic and professional outcomes. Similarly, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee has oversight of student support and successful academic outcomes and employability in its terms of reference, and the Student Experience Sub-Committee considers relevant reports on student progression, attainment and outcomes and recommends action as appropriate.

The impact of action plans is systematically considered at university, school and course level by retention activities and the Course Enhancement Process (CEP) which has as its guiding principles learning and teaching philosophy, students as partners, arrival, transition and continuation, academic support, assessment and feedback and students moving on to the next stage of their studies.

Degree awarding powers are vested in the Board of Governors of the University. The Board of Governors has delegated its authority to the Academic Board in respect of awards made to individual students.

Academic Board has delegated to the University Awards Board acting on its behalf, the conferment of awards subject to the University's Regulations and course specific regulations.

The University's Awards Board monitors the degree classifications awarded at London Met. The Board meets four times a year and confers awards for all taught provision. A rigorous process is followed in conferring awards involving internal and external scrutiny of awards.

Awards are initially calculated by staff in Academic Quality and Student Administration based on student's results and the rules for award and classification. These calculated awards are then scrutinised by school nominees (internal) for accuracy and completeness before presentation to the Awards Board. External Examiners also report annually to the University as part of their duties, and continue to comment favourably on the rigour and security with which the University approaches the process of award conferral.

5. Classification algorithms

London Met degree classification algorithms are defined within the [Regulations for undergraduate assessment](#).

Undergraduate honours degree classifications are calculated on the basis of credit achieved at Levels 5 and 6. The average of the marks for the best 90 credits at Level 6 contributes two thirds of the classification average; the average of the marks for the next best 90 credits at Level 5 or 6 contributes one third of the classification average.

Students admitted with advanced standing to Level 5 and who have partial exemption from the level through Accreditation of Prior Learning, have a classification average calculated over fewer modules. The best 90 credits at Level 6 (120 credits for placement awards) will contribute two thirds of the classification average. while the credit at Level 5 that contributes the remaining one third is reduced (from 90 credits, as above) by the total of APL credit awarded at Intermediate level.

Students entering Level 6 with advanced standing shall have a classification average calculated over the 90 credits of their Level 6 programme.

If the classification average falls no more than 2.5% short of the next highest classification boundary, the distribution of credit achieved at Level 5 and Level 6 will be considered. If the marks for at least half of the credits contributing to the award fall within a higher class than the overall average mark, the classification is raised by one class above that indicated by the classification average. Thus, students taking 240 credits at Levels 5 and 6 will require 120 credits in the higher class in order to have their classification raised; students on sandwich programmes who take a total of 270 credits will require 135 credits in the higher class in order to have their classification raised; students entering Level 6 with advanced standing and 120 credits under these regulations will require 60 credits in the higher class in order to have their classification raised.

6. Collaborative partners

Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with collaborative academic partners are implemented securely and managed effectively. Oversight of collaborative academic partnerships is included in the terms of reference of University level committees to ensure that this is embedded institutionally and this, in

turn, is reflected in the terms of reference for school level committees to ensure consistent practice across the University.

Proposals for new partner institutions and their periodic reapproval are scrutinised by the Collaborative Taught Provision Sub-Committee and Academic Portfolio Committee (at School and University level) to ensure the prospective partner offers an appropriate administrative and governance framework and institutional environment to support the delivery of higher education. New partner proposals and existing partners must meet a set of essential criteria, based on the standards, expectations and guiding principles outlined in the QAA Quality Code 2018.

7. Identifying good practice and actions

We have a fair classification of degrees algorithm that recognises the quality of our student work. We run a range of initiatives to support students, identified within this document that are sector leading and making a real difference to the outcomes of our students. Our students are supported by dedicated staff and University leadership. We have an engaged Board and a senior leadership team who are genuinely passionate about improving outcomes to all of our students.

The University periodically reviews its regulations and policies to ensure that they are relevant and in line with QAA guidance to ensure the highest level of academic standards are maintained. Oversight of the degree outcomes is embedded within our committee structure and the analysis of our data facilitates our understanding of impact.

8. Risks and challenges

The University recognises that in certain subject areas there are awarding gaps in relation to some student characteristics, particularly to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students and those from the most deprived areas. Clear plans are in place to address the awarding gaps particularly within our Access and Participation Plan.