



University of
Portsmouth

Classification, Distinction, and Merit

Academic Registry

Revised January 2015

Examples of Classification, Merit and Distinction

Examples of Classification

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Examples of Merit and Distinction at Undergraduate Level

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Examples of Merit and Distinction at Postgraduate Level

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Name of student **Student A**
Course **BA (Hons) Area Studies**

Mode of Study **Full Time**
University Reference 123456
Date of birth 27 November 1980
HESA reference 00000987654321

Awarding Institution University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution University of Portsmouth

Record of Learning and Achievement

2011/2012 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 4		Mark	Credit	Decision
U11111	Study Skills A	53	20	Pass
U11112	Special Language Project 1	40	20	Pass
U11113	Contemporary Spain	45	20	Pass
U11114	Study Skills B	65	10	Pass
U11115	Special Language Project 2	40	20	Pass
U11116	Introduction to Literature	55	10	Pass
U11117	Spanish History	50	20	Pass

2012/2013 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 5		Mark	Credit	Decision
U22221	The Government in Europe	70	20	Pass
U22222	Further Contemporary Spain	66	20	Pass
U22223	Television in Europe	66	20	Pass
U22224	Special Language Project 3a	68	20	Pass
U22225	Special Language Project 3b	68	20	Pass
U22226	Hollywood and Europe	62	20	Pass

2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 6		Mark	Credit	Decision
U33331	Aspects of Professional Interpreting	58	20	Pass
U33332	Spanish Language Grade 6a	60	20	Pass
U33333	Spanish Language Grade 6b	61	20	Pass
U33334	Dissertation	70	60	Pass

Credits gained for award **360**
Credits gained (ECTS) **180**

L X	Levels 5 & 6						Credits by Level					L6	L5	Split	Rule	Rule	Rule
Cr.	1	2:1			N/A	>50%	4	5	6	Oth	All	Ave	Ave.	40/60	1	2	3
	80	120				2:1	120	120	120		360	66.20	67.60	66.8	67	66	2:1

Student A: This example demonstrates how each of the rules works.

Rule 1 requires an average mark to be arrived at for the student's performance at level 5 (not necessarily the same as stage 2) and for that average to be weighted by .4. Before this is calculated, the worst 20 credits at level 5 are identified and not included – in this case, unit U22226. The Board then determines an average mark for the student's performance at level 6 and weights that average by .6. Before this is calculated, the worst 20 credits at level 6 are identified and not included – in this case, units U33331. The Board then adds together the products of the two weightings and rounds the result to an integer.

Rule 2 is the average mark of the student's performance at level 6, rounded to an integer. . Before this is calculated, the worst 20 credits at level 6 are identified and not included – in this case, unit U33331.

Rule 3 looks at the preponderance of credits in the various classification categories. The student has to achieve more than 50% of the relevant credits (i.e. the credits used in the calculations) - after discounting the worst 20 credits at Level 5 and level 6 - from level 5 and 6 combined in a classification band or higher to be awarded that classification. To carry out the calculation, the Board must start with the highest classification and keep applying the rule until the student meets the condition. Student A has 200 relevant credits so must achieve more than 100 in the classification category or better for the Board to recommend that particular classification. Therefore, to apply rule 3 the Board starts with the first class category. Student A has only 80 credits combined between level 5 and 6 at first class honours. Therefore, the student does not meet the condition. At upper second-class honours, or better, the student has a total of 80 credits at level 5 and 120 credits at level 6, giving a combined total of 200 credits. This meets the condition. By rule 3, therefore the Board should award the student a 2:1.

The best performance, by any of the rules is an upper second class honours, so that is what the Board would recommend.

Name of student **Student B**
Course **BA (Hons) Area Studies**

Mode of Study **Full Time**
University Reference 123456
Date of birth 27 November 1980
HESA reference 00000987654321

Awarding Institution University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution University of Portsmouth

Record of Learning and Achievement

2011/2012 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 4		Mark	Credit	Decision
U11111	Study Skills A	53	20	Pass
U11112	Special Language Project 1	40	20	Pass
U11113	Contemporary Spain	45	20	Pass
U11114	Study Skills B	65	10	Pass
U11115	Special Language Project 2	40	20	Pass
U11116	Introduction to Literature	55	10	Pass
U11117	Spanish History	50	20	Pass

2012/2013 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 5		Mark	Credit	Decision
U22221	The Government in Europe	40	20	Pass
U22222	Further Contemporary Spain	48	20	Pass
U22223	Television in Europe	40	20	Pass
U22224	Special Language Project 3a	70	20	Pass
U22225	Special Language Project 3b	70	20	Pass
U22226	Hollywood and Europe	48	20	Pass

2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 6		Mark	Credit	Decision
U33331	Aspects of Professional Interpreting	48	20	Pass
U33332	Spanish Language Grade 6a	42	20	Pass
U33333	Spanish Language Grade 6b	70	20	Pass
U33334	Dissertation	70	60	Pass

Credits gained for award **360**
Credits gained (ECTS) **180**

L X	Levels 5 & 6						Credits by Level					L3	L 2	Split	Rule	Rule	Rule	
Cr.	1	2:1	2.2	3	F	N/A	>50%	4	5	6	Oth	All	Ave	Ave.	40/60	1	2	3
	120			80			1	120	120	120		360	65.6	55.2	61.4	61	66	1

Student B has an unusual marks profile but illustrates the different possible effects of the three rules.

Student B has performed strongly at level 6, and particularly well in the major project. By rule 1, the student earns 61 – an upper second-class performance. The stronger performance at level 6 earns Student B an average of 66 for rule 2 and a recommendation of an upper second class honours, the average depressed by some poor performance in several units. However, the application of rule 3 earns student B a first class honours degree – 120 credits from level 5 and 6 combined fall into the first class classification criteria.

Please note, that under the regulations, this is not a case for discretion or argument, and it is not a borderline case; it is a straightforward recommendation of a first class honours degree.

Name of student **Student C**
Course **BA (Hons) Area Studies**

Mode of Study **Full Time**
University Reference 123456
Date of birth 27 November 1980
HESA reference 00000987654321

Awarding Institution University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution University of Portsmouth

Record of Learning and Achievement

2011/2012 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 4		Mark	Credit	Decision
U11111	Study Skills A	53	20	Pass
U11112	Special Language Project 1	40	20	Pass
U11113	Contemporary Spain	45	20	Pass
U11114	Study Skills B	65	10	Pass
U11115	Special Language Project 2	40	20	Pass
U11116	Introduction to Literature	55	10	Pass
U11117	Spanish History	50	20	Pass

2012/2013 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 5		Mark	Credit	Decision
U22221	The Government in Europe	55	20	Pass
U22222	Further Contemporary Spain	63	20	Pass
U22223	Television in Europe	58	20	Pass
U22224	Special Language Project 3a	60	20	Pass
U22225	Special Language Project 3b	58	20	Pass
U22226	Hollywood and Europe	57	20	Pass

2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 6		Mark	Credit	Decision
U33331	Aspects of Professional Interpreting	54	20	Pass
U33332	Spanish Language Grade 6a	58	20	Pass
U33333	Spanish Language Grade 6b	56	20	Pass
U33334	Latin American Studies	60	20	Pass
U33335	Dissertation	61	40	Pass

Credits gained for award **360**
Credits gained (ECTS) **180**

L X	Levels 5 & 6						Credits by Level					L3	L 2	Split	Rule	Rule	Rule
Cr.	1	2:1			N/A	>50%	4	5	6	Oth	All	Ave	Ave.	40/60	1	2	3
		100				2:1	120	120	120		360	59.2	59.2	59.2	59	59	2:1

Student C is an example of a student who has come close, by all three rules, to an upper second class honours but the Board must recommend a lower second class honours.

By rule 1, Student C has 59; by rule 2, Student C has 59. The Board cannot round up these averages. Rule 3 gives Student C 100 credits in the upper second-class category, and the student has 200 relevant credits from performance at level 2 and level 3 combined after discounting the worst 20 credits at each level. This does not quite meet the preponderance rule of more than 50% of the relevant credit.

This is not a case for discretion or argument – it is a straightforward recommendation of a lower second class honours degree although Student C has come close.

Name of student **Student D**
Course **BA (Hons) Area Studies**

Mode of Study **Full Time**
University Reference 123456
Date of birth 27 November 1980
HESA reference 00000987654321

Awarding Institution University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution University of Portsmouth

Record of Learning and Achievement

<i>2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 1</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Decision</i>
U11111 APEL	Pass	120	Pass

<i>2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 2</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Decision</i>
U22221 APEL	Pass	120	Pass

<i>2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 3</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Decision</i>
U33332 Spanish Language Grade 6a	53	20	Pass
U33333 Spanish Language Grade 6b	55	20	Pass
U33334 Translation Theory and Practice	48	20	Pass
U33335 Dissertation	60	40	Pass
U33336 Latin American Studies	58	20	Pass

Credits gained for award	360
Credits gained (ECTS)	180

L X	Levels 2 & 3						Credits by Level					L 3	Split	Rule	Rule	Rule
Cr.	1	2:1	2.2		N/A	>50%	1	2	3	Oth	All	Ave.	40/60	1	2	3
	40	60				2.2	-	-	100		120	57.2	-	-	57	2:2

Student D is an example of a student admitted directly to Stage 3 of the programme. Admissions tutors use AP(E)L to give the necessary credit at levels 1 and 2.

The credits earned from AP(E)L do not count towards classification. The relevant total is therefore 100 credits at Level 3 once the worst 20 credits have been discounted.

The Board must follow regulation 16.4.iv when considering students admitted with advanced standing direct to stage 3 of the programme. As explained above, the Board has to use 100 credits in this case. Student F has a lower second-class honours degree by both of the relevant rules. The Board would recommend a lower second-class honours award, therefore. This is not a borderline case.

Name of student	Student E
Course	Certificate of Higher Education in Area Studies
Mode of Study	Full Time
University Reference	123456
Date of birth	27 November 1980
HESA reference	00000987654321
Awarding Institution	University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution	University of Portsmouth

Record of Learning and Achievement

2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 1		Mark	Credit	Decision
U11111	Study Skills A	75	20	Pass
U11112	Special Language Project 1	47	20	Pass
U11113	Contemporary Spain	57	20	Pass
U11114	Special Language Project 2	58	20	Pass
U11115	Spanish History	67	20	Pass
2013/2014 BA (Hons) Area Studies – Level 2		Mark	Credit	Decision
U22221	The Government in Europe	74	20	Pass
Credits gained for award		120		
Credits gained (ECTS)		60		

*Compensated at Board

Method 1

Total	Total credits	Ave.
756	120	63

Method 2

Distribution of Grades					
A	B	C	D	F	>50%
30	20	40	20	10	C

Student E illustrates the application of merit and distinction.

In this course, a CertHE programme, the units are predominantly core and predominantly 10 credit, although some level 2 and some 20-credit units are available as options.

The example illustrates three features of the regulation. Firstly, the requirement is to determine the average of all relevant units rounded to the nearest integer; Secondly, a compensated unit does not give the Board discretion to depart from the regulations for the determination of an award with merit or distinction. Thirdly, for CertHE, the level of the units is not an issue.

There are two methods of calculating the classification and the student is given the better of the two classification methods.

Under method 1, the weighted average, Student E has an average of 60 and this would suggest the award of a Certificate of Higher Education with Merit, the merit range being 60 to 69. Under method 2, similar to the preponderance rule for degree classifications, we look at where the credits lie. Student K has 60 credits at Grade C or above which refers to the mark range of 50-59 and this would suggest the award of a Certificate of Higher Education.

The Board would chose the better of these two methods and recommend the award of a Certificate of Higher Education with Merit

Name of student	Student F
Course	MA Area Studies
Mode of Study	Full Time
University Reference	123456
Date of birth	27 November 1980
HESA reference	00000987654321
Awarding Institution	University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution	University of Portsmouth

Record of Learning and Achievement

2013/2014 MA Area Studies – Level M		Mark	Credit	Decision
U11111	Study Skills A	36	30	Refer*
U11112	Special Language Project 1	72	30	Pass
U11113	Contemporary Spain	75	30	Pass
U11114	Study Skills B	68	30	Pass
U11115	Spanish History	74	60	Pass
Credits gained for award		120		
Credits gained (ECTS)		60		

*Compensated at Board

Method 1

Total	Total credits	Ave.
11970	180	66

Method 2

Distribution of Grades				
Dist	Merit	Pass	F	>50%
120	30		30	Dist

Student F is an example to illustrate how a Board should apply the distinction and merit criteria to postgraduate awards. The relevant credits are those derived from Level M units.

Again, there are two methods of calculating the classification and the student is given the better of the two classification methods.

Using method 1, the profile would suggest the award with Merit for student F, as the student has achieved an overall weighted average of at least 66% from all relevant units.

Using method 2, the profile also suggests the award with distinction for student F, as the student has achieved more than half the units at Distinction or above.

The second method leads the Board to recommend a Distinction.

The compensated unit does not give the Board discretion to depart from the regulations for the determination of an award with merit or distinction.