

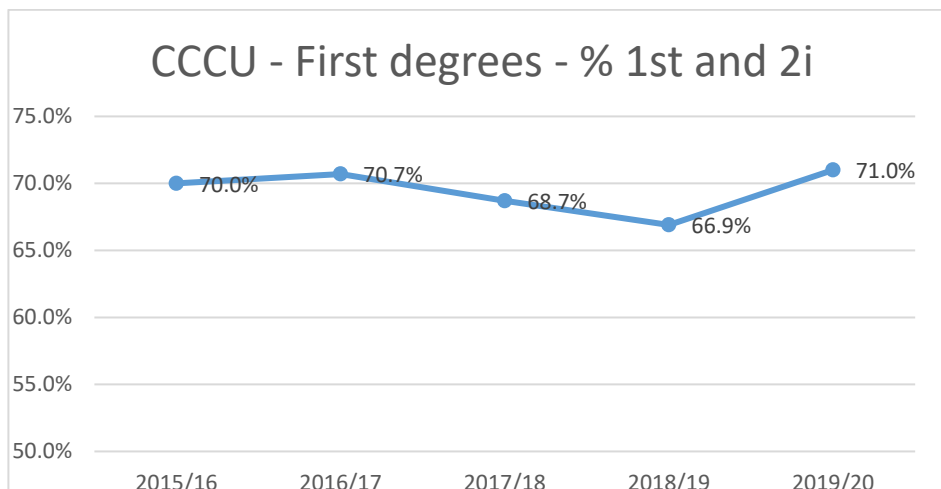
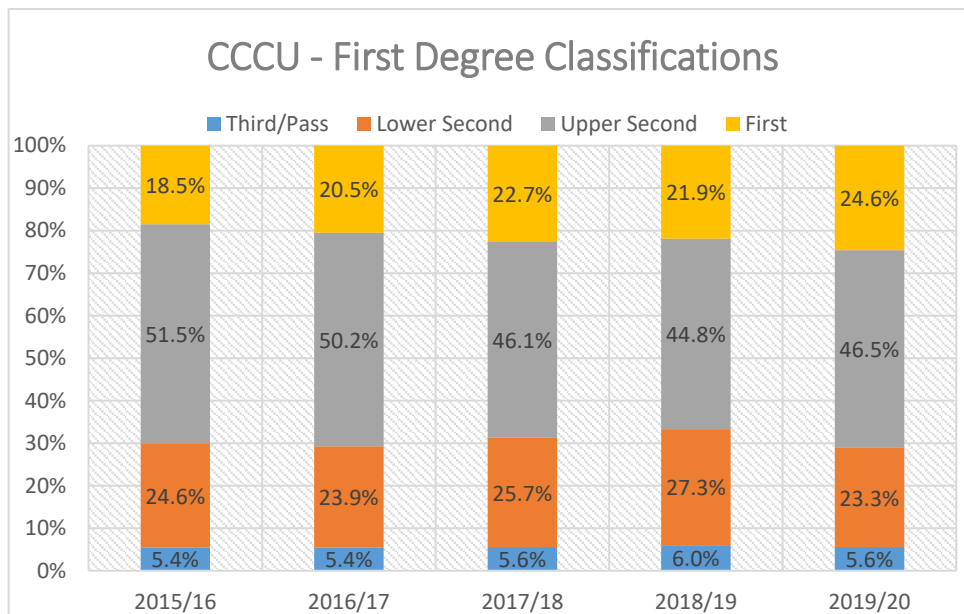
Canterbury Christ Church University Degree Outcomes Statement 2021

(UKPRN: 10001143)

1. Institutional Degree Classification Profile

1.1 The University's degree classification profile is provided in the tables below. It sets out degree outcomes over the last five years, identifying the percentage of undergraduate degrees awarded in each class and the percentage of 1st/2:1 class degrees, as opposed to 2:2/3rd class degrees. All undergraduate degrees were awarded at level 6.

Classification of first degrees awarded by year



- 1.2 It can be seen from the tables above that the percentage of 1st/2:1 degrees has been stable over the last five years, returning in 2019-20 to the levels seen in 2015-16 and 2016-17, with a slight rise in 2019-20 of 3.2 percentage points. During the same period across the sector there was a 6 percentage point rise in 1st/2:1 awards. The sector average increased from 76% in 2018-19 to 82% in 2019-20, whereas at Christ Church the percentage of 1st/2:1 degrees was 71%.¹
- 1.3 The University produces a detailed Student Outcomes Report annually, which is considered at School, Faculty and University levels. The University ensures that there is a consistent understanding of student achievement within Faculties, Schools and Professional Service Departments, but it has not intervened in any way to influence the overall percentage of 1st/2:1 degree awards. The algorithm used to calculate the degree classification has remained unchanged during this period.
- 1.4 A breakdown of the degrees by student characteristic shows that:
- students from disadvantaged backgrounds are awarded 1st/2:1 degrees at the same rate as other students at the University;
 - there is no attainment gap where students have a disability;
 - white students are consistently awarded a higher proportion of 1st/2:1 degrees in comparison with all minority ethnic groups;
 - female students are more likely to be awarded a 1st/2:1 than male students;
 - the gap between younger students and mature students graduating with a 1st/2:1 has closed in 2019-20.
- 1.5 It is a strategic priority of the University to eliminate any attainment gaps, and significant work is being undertaken to remove barriers to success, to challenge perceptions and to ensure that the sense of community of which the University prides itself encompasses all students. The University-wide Closing Our Gap project was fully established in 2019-20 to lead this area of work.

2. Assessment and marking practices

- 2.1 The University operates a two-tier system of Boards of Examiners.
- The first tier, a Module Board of Examiners, confirms marks and awards credit at module level for all students studying the modules, and reviews module performance against centrally-produced metrics.
 - The second tier, the Progression and Award Board of Examiners, uses those confirmed marks to confirm the progression of students and the classification of awards.
- 2.2 Both tiers make rigorous use of External Examiners, who ensure that standards are maintained and the awards are comparable to national expectations in the subject. External Examiners submit an annual report to the University and may write directly to the Vice-Chancellor should they wish to raise an issue.

¹ Universities UK, Degree Classification in 2019-20, April 2021, <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-08/degree-classification-2019-20.pdf> (last accessed 18/11/2021)

- 2.3 The University has a single set of regulations for its taught awards and an extensive range of supporting procedures, which together provide a robust framework for assessment. University marking procedures, last formally reviewed in 2020/21, mandate the rigorous use of moderation and second marking and set out the role of External Examiners in ensuring that marking standards are consistent and appropriate.
- 2.4 In line with much of the sector, in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances experienced by students and staff as result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the University's Academic Board approved a set of exceptional regulations for progression and award during 2019-2020 which applied to Foundation Year, Level 4, 5, 6 and 7. This included relaxing the progression arrangements for Foundation Year and Level 4 where this was not prevented by the requirements of Professional Statutory or Regulatory Bodies, extending the undergraduate compensation arrangements from 20 to 40 credits at each Level, adapting the Extenuating Circumstances procedure, removing the 60 credit threshold requirement for summer reassessment and the application of a No Detriment policy to ensure that students' academic outcomes were not negatively impacted by the pandemic.

3. Academic Governance

- 3.1 The University's Academic Board is responsible for the conferment of all University awards and for assuring that the value of those awards, including those delivered in partnership with others, is maintained over time. The Academic Board exercises its oversight of academic governance through its Committees and Sub-Committees. It receives and approves an Annual Report on the maintenance of academic standards. This report has been provided annually to the University's Governing Body since the University acquired taught degree powers in 1995.
- 3.2 The University ensures compliance with the Office for Students conditions of registration for quality and standards through its policies and procedures. It utilises best practice for enhancement from the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*. The University's academic portfolio contains a significant number of courses that operate under the auspices of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body [PSRB].
- 3.3 All courses must:
- conform to the Framework for Higher Education Awards;
 - align with subject benchmarks where they exist;
 - have an assessment strategy that delivers well-formulated Course Learning Outcomes.
- 3.4 Courses are approved by a University Panel, chaired by a senior member of academic staff. A subject specific external academic advisor must be involved at the course development stage and must confirm that a course meets national standards and subject expectations. No course may run until it is signed off by Academic Board.
- 3.5 The University directly approves all courses offered at its collaborative partners and maintains direct control over the management of quality and standards and student registration. All collaborative courses have a home in an academic School and a subject-specific Academic Link Tutor, who ensures that all University requirements

are met, including those relating to assessment. A Memorandum of Agreement with each partner ensures that obligations are well understood.

4. Classification Algorithms

- 4.1 The University has a single algorithm for undergraduate bachelor's degrees that is varied only in three circumstances as set out in 4.3. The algorithm has the following attributes:
- Levels 5 and 6 determine 40% and 60% of the final calculation respectively;
 - there may be compensation of 20 credits at each level, providing a student achieves an average for the level of 40% and no mark lower than 30%, except where PSRB or other professional requirements prohibit that;
 - the mark for the lowest 20 credits is discarded at both level 5 and 6 for the purposes of the algorithm;
 - there is no use of discretion and no procedure for raising or lowering borderline marks.
- 4.2 The University permits two reassessment attempts, both of which are uncapped. Where students have not passed a particular credit threshold, they are required to undertake reassessment with attendance to consolidate their learning. The University does not allow retaking of modules for uncapped marks. This revised regulation for reassessment was introduced in Sept 2017 following an extensive review of the assessment regulations to ensure alignment with the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- 4.3 The three exceptions to the algorithm are as follows:
- for Integrated Masters Degrees which have been recently included in the University's portfolio, the weighting is level 5, 20%, level 6, 30%, level 6, level 7, 50%.
 - in a small number of degrees, where 240 credits at levels 4 and 5 are followed by more than 120 credits at level 6 to meet the requirements of PSRBs, the weighting is level 5, 10%, level 6, stage 1, 30%, level 6, stage 2, 60%.
 - where a student enters with advanced standing into level 6, the classification is based entirely on the level 6 marks.
- 4.4 The University undertook a detailed review of its classification algorithm in 2017/18 in order to ensure that it was able to deliver the ambitions of the University *Learning and Teaching Strategy*. The report, *Degree Classification over time* (2018) was approved by Academic Board and supported by the Governing Body.
- 4.5 The Report reflected on two sector-wide papers, UUK and GuildHE, *Understanding degree algorithms* (October 2017) and the UK Standing Committee on Quality Assessment, *Degree Classification: Transparent, Consistent and Fair Academic Standards* (November 2018). It considered at length the case for either eliminating the discounting of 20 credits or discounting both the highest and lowest mark. It took the decision to retain the discounting of 20 credits, as a means of delivering its *Learning and Teaching Strategy*, enabling students to experiment in subject terms without detriment to their overall classification, and supporting the commitment to

widening participation. This was subsequently mapped against the principles in UKSCQA, *Degree Classification Transparency, Reliability and Fairness – A Statement of Intent* (May 2019) to confirm the continuing validity of the University's review.

5. Teaching Practices and Learning Resources

- 5.1 The University has invested significantly in creating an infrastructure to support the delivery of outstanding learning and teaching. Its commitment to educate the whole person, through developing excellence in learning and teaching, delivering bespoke and scheduled staff development, and playing a key role in driving pedagogical innovation and enhancing assessment literacy is central to its learning and teaching strategy.
- 5.2 The University is fully committed to the objectives of the UK Professional Standards Framework and Fellowship of the HEA is valued as a means of both ensuring that academic staff are able to deliver high-quality and innovative learning and teaching, and that such activity is appropriately rewarded.
- 5.3 The University was one of the first universities to gain accreditor status when it was introduced in 2013, and has had verifier status since 2016.
- All new members of academic staff are required to complete the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, which confers Fellowship, and are allocated to a mentor for the PGCAP and also a mentor within their School.
 - The University Certificate in Academic Practice (UCAP, which articulates with the PGCAP), provides sessional part-time, and professional service staff with an opportunity to enhance their learning and teaching as well as acquire Associate Fellowship of the HEA.
 - The University's promotion structure requires Fellowship of the HEA for promotion from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer and Senior Fellowship of the HEA for promotion to Principal Lecturer, while Fellowship of the HEA is mandatory for those applying for a Readership.

6. Identifying Good Practice and Actions

- 6.1 Action currently being taken to close the University's attainment gap is outlined in its *Access and Participation Plan*, available at www.canterbury.ac.uk/outreach/docs/Access-and-Participation-Plan-20-25.pdf.
- 6.2 The University is currently taking specific and targeted action to close its BAME attainment gap, as set out in the *Closing Our Gap Strategic Framework*, under the areas of culture, curriculum and community.

7. Risks and Challenges

- 7.1 The University continues to monitor its outcomes and ensure that its algorithm remains fit for purpose and will continue to reflect on any sector-wide developments.