



# Degree Outcomes Statement

## 2021-2022

An overview of Leeds Arts University's degree classification profile (with sector comparison), assessment practices, governance and current related actions.

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# Profile

The University's classification figures are presented alongside the figures for two other distinct groups (where the University is removed from both):

- 1) The student-level average across 'arts' courses, specifically 'creative arts & design' courses<sup>1</sup> until 2019/20 and 'design, and creative and performing arts' courses<sup>2</sup> thereafter.
- 2) The student-level average across all courses not included in the previous group.

## All classifications in 2021/22

The University's classification profile broadly matches that of other arts courses, with slight differences in the first-class proportion and lower-second class proportion.

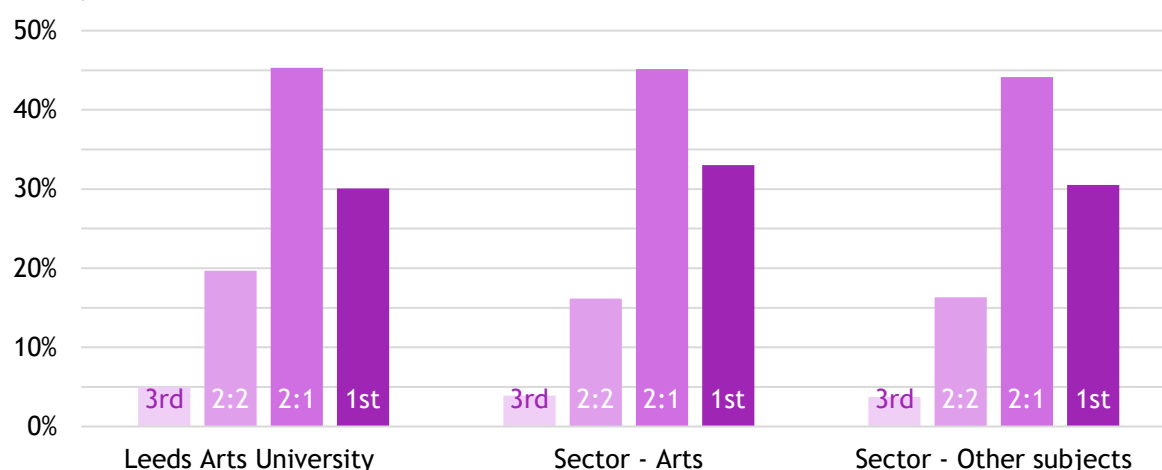
The difference to the non-arts subjects is even smaller, with equal first-class proportions, a very small difference in upper-second proportion, and a slightly larger difference in lower-second proportion.

It is clear from these comparisons that the University's most recent classification profile is in-line with the rest of the sector.

Table 1: 2021/22 first degree classifications by group (proportions for unclassified first degrees omitted)

	Third class honours/Pass	Lower second class honours	Upper second class honours	First class honours
Leeds Arts University	5%	20%	45%	30%
Sector - Arts subjects	4%	16%	45%	33%
Sector - Other subjects	4%	16%	44%	30%

Figure 1: 2021/22 first degree classifications by LAU & course group (proportions for unclassified first degrees omitted)



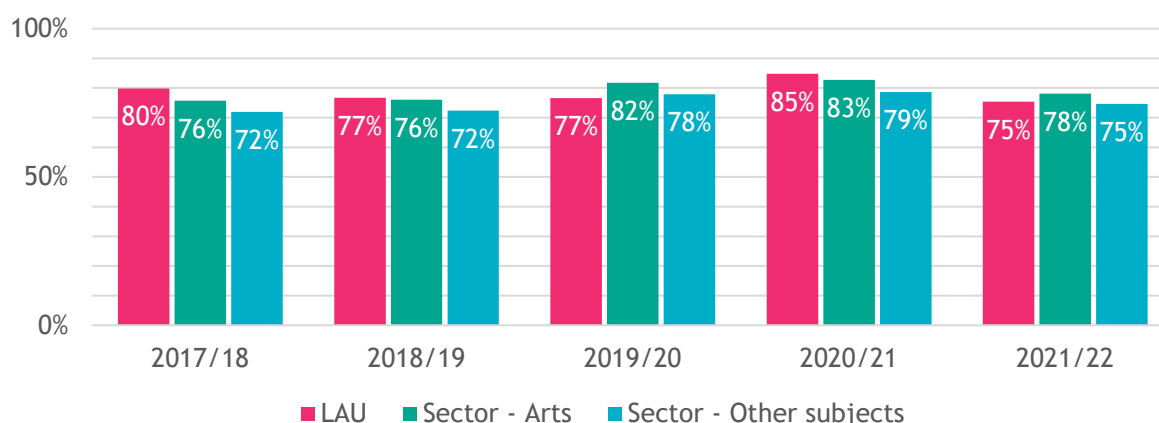
<sup>1</sup> Joint Academic Coding System 3.0 area H.

<sup>2</sup> Higher Education Classification of Subjects level 1 area 25.

## Trend in 'higher' classification proportions

The University's higher-class proportion (first-class and upper-second-class) for 21/22 is at a five-year low; this contrasts with the sector averages, which remain higher than pre-pandemic levels.

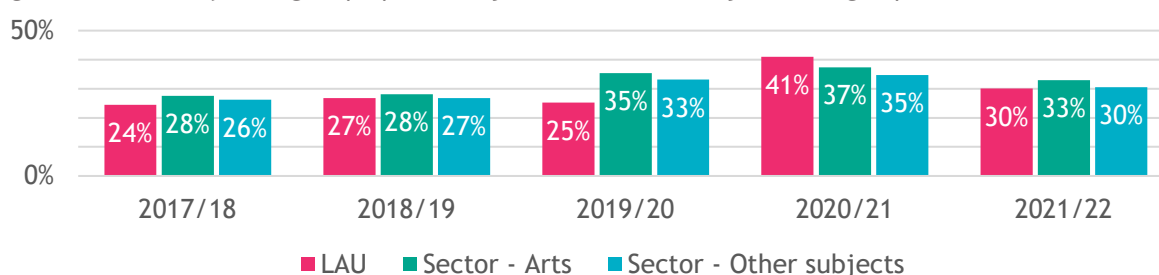
Figure 2: Sum of first-class and upper-second-class first degree proportions by Leeds Arts University & course group



## Trend in first-class proportions

The University's first-class proportion is less than or equal to the other groups' first-class proportions in 4 of the 5 years examined. The only exception is 20/21, where classifications boundaries were temporarily lowered to mitigate against the effects of the pandemic.

Figure 3: First-class first degree proportions by Leeds Arts University & course group



# Academic Governance

The Academic Board is the University's senior academic committee, with overarching responsibility for policies and procedures for assessment and examination of the academic performance of students; the content of the curriculum; academic standards and the approval and review of courses; and the procedures for the award of qualifications and honorary degrees. The Academic Board is chaired by the Vice Chancellor, who is also a member of the Board of Governors.

The University's Academic Regulations form the basis of the academic governance framework and are approved by the Academic Board. The Academic Regulations set out the rules which the University follows to determine a student's final degree classification.

The Quality Handbook sets out in detail the quality assurance procedures and arrangements which are necessary to support the implementation of the Academic Regulations, including moderation and module review.

External examiners are members of the Course Examination Board which makes recommendation on awards. The Chief External Examiner is a member of the Final Examination Board which confirms degree classifications awarded.

## Classification Algorithm

The University applies one algorithm for all undergraduate courses, which has been in place since 2006. Upon attaining Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) in 2016, the University removed the discretionary consideration of borderline cases.

The algorithm is explained to students during induction and briefing sessions. Staff receive regular training in the application of the Academic Regulations, including how the algorithm works.

Module Specifications sets out the weighting/credit value of the module within a course. All modules must be passed at 40% to achieve the stated qualification unless compensation is awarded.

Classification is based on an aggregate mark from level 5 and level 6 at a ratio of 1:2, i.e., the level 5 average accounts for 33.33% of the final classification mark, and the level 6 average accounts for the remaining 66.67%; this weighting (and the omission of level 4 marks) reflects how students develop their abilities over time, and particularly during their final year. Marks are rounded to 2 decimal places for Level 5 and Level 6. The classification boundaries used in the 2021/22 year are given below.

<b>First class</b>	Aggregate mark of 70% or above
<b>Upper Second class</b>	Aggregate mark between 60% and 69%
<b>Lower Second class</b>	Aggregate mark between 50% and 59%
<b>Third class</b>	Aggregate mark between 40% and 49%

For the purposes of classification, overall aggregated marks are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point (where an aggregated mark ending in .50 would be rounded up, and less than .50 would be rounded down). Failed modules may be resubmitted with a cap of 40%.

Performance in modules for which an award of credit for prior learning has been made or relating to an equivalent study exchange is not taken into account in the calculation of the final award.

Students have the opportunity to raise appeals against academic decisions in accordance with the Academic Appeal Policy.

# Assessment & Marking Practices

Assessment strategies are subject to scrutiny as part of the process for the approval of new courses and review of existing courses. Assessment strategies are formulated to ensure that the academic standard for the award is set and maintained at the appropriate level and that student performance is appropriately assessed.

Academic standards are set and maintained, aligned with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and Subject Benchmark Statements, through the Course Approval and Periodic Review Processes. External experts contribute to both course design and review.

The Quality Handbook sets out our marking practices, including our process for the quality assurance of marking which includes a moderation process separate from marking, focusing on the marks awarded to the full set of assessed work for each module.

Staff receive regular training in assessment and marking practice. The External Examiner provides assurance to the University that the academic standards and quality achieved are in accordance with national qualification frameworks and other requirements.

## Assessment Model

Between 2017-18 and 2021-22 the University implemented a new assessment model, known as the Creative Arts Learning Model (CALM). Under this model, student work is assessed through five assessment fields which remain consistent throughout the levels of study, but which are clearly differentiated by language and assessment design. The fields measure the students learning against module expectations which map against the level learning outcomes of the courses, consistent with the FHEQ (Framework for Higher Education Qualification). The fields are applied to students' work helping them to gain an understanding of what they have accomplished, how any grade given was arrived at, and how they can improve their work in the future. They are listed below.

<b>Presentation</b>	Is the work seen relevant to the task, structured, designed, presented, performed throughout in a manner which is entirely suited to the subject-matter and integrated within the overall performance?
<b>Process</b>	Is there evidence in the learning journey of engagement with - and commitment to - the work presented or stated expectations?
<b>Idea</b>	Does the work demonstrate a clear ability to communicate ideas of significance through appropriate methods, media and formats which may include exhibition, written, oral or recital performance?
<b>Documentation</b>	Does the evidence of the learning journey demonstrate relevant detail, productive process of research, exploration and/or technical experimentation? This may include journals, sketchbooks, recording of data, file and/or portfolio.
<b>Technical</b>	Have the technical aspects of the work - within the control and skill range expected in the level of study - been skilfully dealt with, demonstrating a relevance that contributes to the conceptual core of the work?

# Summary & Actions

Module Leaders review their modules, including outcomes and assessment, as part of the Module Review Process. Courses monitor and evaluate degree standards through the Annual Course Evaluations and accompanying Course Action Plans, which are approved by the Academic Board.

External Examiners help the University in assessing that i) the threshold academic standards set for its awards are maintained in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements; ii) the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the course(s) and is conducted in line with the policies and regulations; and iii) the academic standards and the achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the External Examiner has experience.

The Chief External Examiner provides assurance to the University that the academic standards and quality achieved across the provision are in accordance with national qualification frameworks. The role of the Chief External Examiner also covers the conduct and operation of the Final Examination Board and the appropriateness and application of regulations.

As part of its approach to assurance of quality and standards monitoring, the University completes an Annual Quality Monitoring Report (AQMR) which is approved by the Academic Board. The AQMR is derived from Annual Course Evaluation reports and accompanying action plans and takes a holistic review of the outcomes and effectiveness of all quality assurance processes annually, including assessment. The report provides assurance at an institutional level regarding the maintenance of academic standards through quality assurance processes.

The Academic Board also receives and considers an analysis of degree classifications. This report summarises degree classification figures at an institutional level, at sector level, and at course level. It examines the extent to which changes in classification are explainable by changes in the student population and course profile, as opposed to being caused by an otherwise-unexplained grade inflation effect. The analysis provides statistics including detailed data on degree outcomes which is used to benchmark outcomes against sector results, and historical internal data.