

Guidance to staff advising students progressed to an Ordinary

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Guidance to staff advising students progressed to an Ordinary Degree (FHEQ level 6 / UG Year 3)

Introduction

- 1 The award of an Ordinary degree is typically based upon a profile of 300 credits in total, including at 100 credits at FHEQ level 5 (UG Year 2) and 80 credits at FHEQ level 6 (UG Year 3). In the case of students progressed to Ordinary, the award is based upon the best 80 credits, even if more than 80 credits of assessment have been attempted.
- 2 It is recognised that students should be allowed a certain amount of flexibility in relation to which modules/assessment blocks they follow at FHEQ level 6 (UG Year 3) if they are progressed to Ordinary.
- 3 It is recognised that students progressed to Ordinary are those who have failed to perform strongly at FHEQ level 5 (UG Year 2) and have therefore not met the minimum progression requirements for an honours degree. Therefore, it would be unwise for such students to attempt the full 120 credits of assessment required for an honours degree at FHEQ level 6 (UG Year 3). This could place an unreasonable burden of assessment upon the student and could therefore result in failure.
- 4 The various different options for managing the assessment of students progress to Ordinary are detailed below. It should be recognised that a balance needs to be struck between ensuring a manageable assessment load and appropriate breadth. The approaches are as follows:

Scenario	Issues	Advice
80 credits of assessment from modular/assessment blocks other than the Year 3 project	A manageable assessment load but does not allow for the 'best 80' credits to be used in the profile for award – ie little flexibility. However, allows the student to focus on a smaller number of assessments whilst maintaining breadth.	Students to be advised of the risks involved in this approach – i.e. no possibility of using 'best 80' credits
100 credits of assessment from modular/assessment blocks other than the UG Year 3 project	Allows for the 'best 80' credits to be used in the profile for award. Is likely to over-stretch students due to breadth and number of assessments.	Students to be strongly advised of the risk of being over-stretched by this approach.
80 credits of assessment from modular/assessment blocks including the UG Year 3 project	A manageable assessment load but does not allow for the 'best 80' credits to be used in the profile for award – i.e. little flexibility. Restricts breadth.	Students to be discouraged from this approach as only studying/being assessed in 40 credits of taught content may restrict breadth. Risk associated with no ability to use 'best 80' credits

100 credits of assessment from modular/assessment blocks including the UG Year 3 project	Allows for the 'best 80' credits to be used in the profile for award and an appropriate breadth. Should the student achieve E in the 40 credit Project it would be possible to use only 20 credits of E from this in the profile for award.	This may be the most appropriate approach for the majority of students as it provides a balanced approach.
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Guidance should therefore be offered to students as follows:

- a) In the event that a student is progressed to Ordinary, there must be an early discussion between the student and their appropriate academic advisor to determine which modules/study/assessment blocks should be attempted at FHEQ level 6 (UG Year 3). This discussion should take place at an early stage following the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- b) Students should be advised not to attempt a volume of more than 100 credits of assessment and must not attempt less than 80 credits. There should be flexibility regarding which modular/study/assessment blocks are chosen and the choice must form part of the discussions with the academic advisor.
- c) The most appropriate approach which should be recommended to students is that they attempt 100 credits of assessment from modular/assessment blocks including the UG Year 3 project. This allows for flexibility regarding the best 80 credits to be used in the profile for award and also provides appropriate breadth of study and assessment for the student, thereby being the most balanced approach. Should students wish to choose one of the other approaches as detailed in the table above, they should be informed of the risks associated with these options.
- d) Should a student be progressed to Ordinary, the UG Year 3 project should not be treated as either compulsory or core ([SR2.16](#)). Should programme teams wish to ensure that the UG Year 3 project is attempted by students progressed to Ordinary, this should be stated on the relevant programme specification.
- e) Should students attempt 100 credits of assessment, Boards of Examiners must use the best 80 credits in the profile for consideration for award.
- f) Should the UG Year 3 project be attempted and an E obtained, Boards of Examiners are reminded that, should it be necessary to include it in the profile for award, it is possible to use only 20 credits of E from the project in the profile for an award of Ordinary.