

DEGREE OUTCOME STATEMENT 2024/25

1. Purpose of this Statement

Lancaster University is an autonomous institution established by Royal Charter and has degree-awarding powers under the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. As an autonomous institution, it has the right to determine its own awards. This statement is designed to provide prospective and current students, academic partners and external stakeholders with clear information about our awards. It will also provide assurance on how the University monitors and manages its awards and maintains appropriate academic standards.

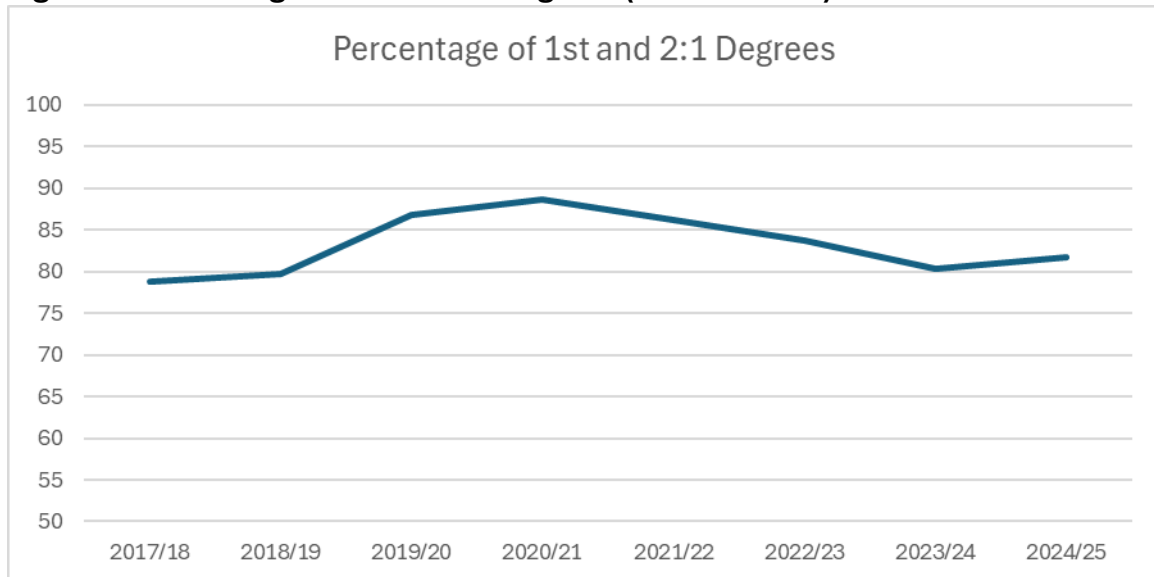
The statement is published in response to the Quality Council for UK Higher Education's [Statement of Intent](#), which requires universities to analyse their degree classification profiles and present the information in a clear and accessible manner.

This statement sets out the final degree outcomes for those who are qualified to graduate with an undergraduate degree from the University. The data presents trends from 2017/18 to 2024/25.

2. Degree Classification Profile

Figure 1 presents the trend of first-class and upper-second-class degrees over the relevant period. It can be seen that, as in the rest of the HE sector, the proportion of students who achieved a first- or upper-second-class degree rose during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was largely the result of educational safeguards put in place to protect students from being disadvantaged by the restrictions in effect at the time.

Figure 1: Percentage of 1st and 2:1 Degrees (All domiciles)



Since that time, the proportion of our highest degrees (first- or upper-second class honours) has steadily declined. This year, we have seen a modest increase, with 82% of our students achieving these grades.

Figure 2 shows the degree attainment by classification for all domiciles (each column reports a percentage of the graduating cohort). It can be seen that most classifications have remained largely stable, save for during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2: Degree attainment (all domiciles)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
1st	30	29	35	40	36	34	28	31
2:1	49	51	52	49	50	50	53	51
2:2	19	19	12	11	13	15	19	17
3rd	2	2	1	0	1	1	1	1

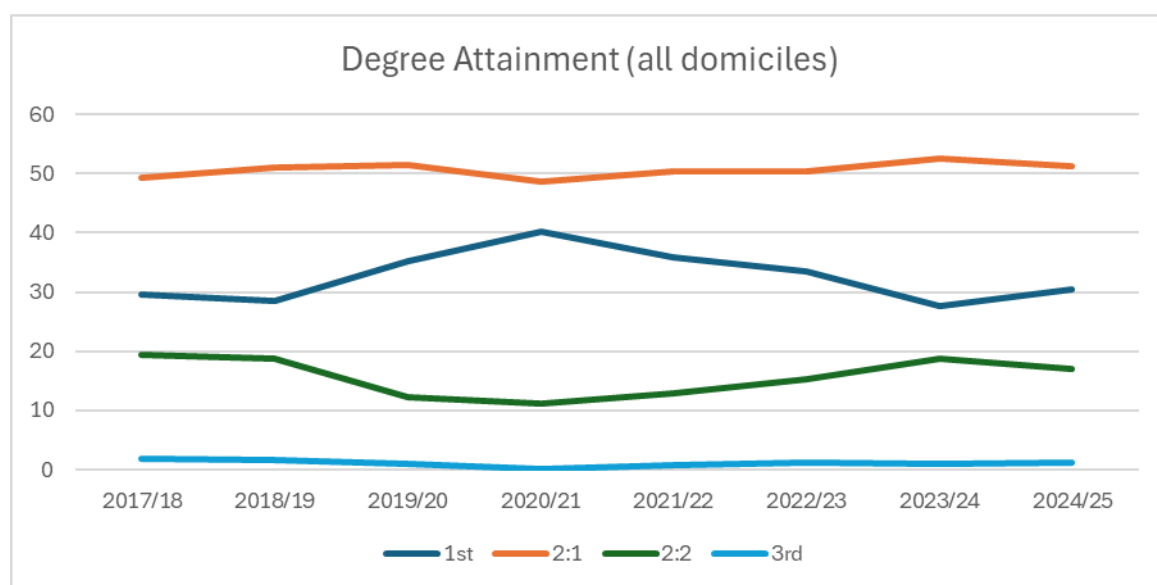


Figure 3 presents degree attainment for UK-domiciled qualifiers by selected characteristics. The percentage shown is the proportion of the student population that achieved either a first- or upper-second-class degree. It should be noted that there may be minor discrepancies between the data submitted for any given year and the overall Access and Participation Plan statistics published by the Office for Students.

It can be seen that this year there is a 3 percentage-point (pp) gap between students with a declared disability and those with no known disability. This follows a number of years when students with a declared disability performed better than those with no known disability. The total number of students with a known disability is small, which can explain the volatility of the gap. It should also be noted that the figures relate only to those who have declared a disability, and some students will choose not to declare their disability, or indeed to have it diagnosed. The University supports students with disabilities by creating Individual Learning Support Plans. These help guide departments in making relevant reasonable adjustments. A new curriculum is being introduced from 2026/27, underpinned by the Lancaster University Education

Framework. This reinforces that assessments should be inclusive by design, and we believe that this will help address this gap.

Figure 3: Honours degree classification (UK domiciles only)

		2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25
Disability *	Disability declared	86%	83%	89%	96%	93%	91%	85%	82%
	No known disability	85%	84%	92%	91%	88%	86%	83%	85%
	Gap	-1 p.p.	0 p.p.	3 p.p.	-5 p.p.	-5 p.p.	-5 p.p.	-2 p.p.	3 p.p.
Ethnicity *	Asian	73%	76%	81%	83%	84%	82%	70%	77%
	Black	60%	68%	80%	72%	77%	65%	72%	70%
	Mixed	88%	82%	79%	94%	89%	79%	82%	82%
	Other	75%	80%	79%	82%	84%	79%	76%	75%
	White	87%	85%	93%	93%	90%	89%	85%	86%
	ABMO	74%	76%	80%	84%	85%	78%	74%	77%
	Gap ABMO vs White	13 p.p.	9 p.p.	12 p.p.	9 p.p.	6 p.p.	11 p.p.	12 p.p.	9 p.p.
	Gap Black vs White	27 p.p.	17 p.p.	13 p.p.	21 p.p.	13 p.p.	24 p.p.	14 p.p.	16 p.p.
IMD**	IMDQ1	88%	88%	83%	97%	91%	75%	75%	74%
	IMDQ2	86%	87%	92%	85%	89%	85%	78%	80%
	IMDQ3	81%	84%	91%	96%	93%	88%	82%	89%
	IMDQ4	89%	87%	97%	93%	92%	90%	91%	88%
	IMDQ5	90%	85%	90%	92%	93%	92%	89%	91%
	GAP Q5 Q1	1 p.p.	-3 p.p.	7 p.p.	-5 p.p.	2 p.p.	17 p.p.	13 p.p.	17 p.p.

* UK-domiciled only

** English IMD only

In terms of ethnicity, Lancaster University, like the rest of the sector, sees a gap in award rates. This year, the gap between ABMO (Asian, Black, Mixed and other) and White has narrowed by 3pp. The gap for Asian students has reduced by 7pp, but the gap for Black students has widened by 2pp, reversing the narrowing seen last year.

Lancaster University has recently appointed a new Dean for Culture and Inclusion, who will lead a comprehensive piece of work to analyse why these gaps exist and what we can do to narrow them. Lancaster University is committed to ensuring that all students can excel and achieve their full potential.

Regarding the Index of Multiple Deprivations, we have seen an increase in the gap between Q1 and Q5 students of 4pp. This is largely a result of Q5 students performing better than last year. Students in Q2 and Q3 have improved their performance, with the latter showing a significant increase (7pp).

The University has prepared an [Access and Participation Plan](#), which is formally monitored and approved by the Office for Students, the sector regulator. The APP is a strategic document that outlines how the University intends to improve equality of opportunity for disadvantaged students. Our latest plan (2025/26 – 2028/29) reaffirms our commitment to equality of opportunity.

It is recognised that not all students experience the same equality of opportunity, although there are many reasons for this, including the student journey that led to a student joining the University. Lancaster has a strong tradition of encouraging members of disadvantaged communities to participate in higher education, and it remains a strategic priority to increase participation by both Q1 IMD students and students of UK Asian and UK black heritage.

Lancaster has long held the belief that social mobility is not achieved once a student reaches higher education. Inequalities exist at every stage of the life cycle. Ensuring that students not only access higher education but are also supported to thrive and succeed once there is essential to levelling the playing field. Lancaster is proud of the work it does in this area and is committed to building on this in the future.

3. Assessment and Marking Practices

The University's [Undergraduate Assessment Regulations](#) underpin assessment and marking practices and set out the reference points for judging the quality of academic work. Our standards align with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, which sets out national standards for degrees and other awards. Subject benchmarks published by the QAA are also carefully considered, and the curriculum and expectations for programme-level assessment are pegged to the benchmark by the relevant academic department. Some programmes align with the standards set out by Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). In this instance, the relevant programme team will ensure that expectations are linked to these standards.

Assessments are set by those teaching on the module and are internally reviewed by another academic member of staff. This ensures they are appropriate for the subject and for the level of study. Summative assessments are then sent to the external examiner, who also assesses their suitability and confirms that they accord with sector standards. Most written work, including all invigilator assessments, is marked anonymously. The assessment regulations require that workers are calibrated and moderated using one of the approved approaches set out in the regulations. A sample of work is then sent to an external examiner, who carefully considers the marking, ensures its fairness, and confirms that it has been marked in a way that is comparable to the sector. External examiners are a vital part of our quality assurance process, and,

alongside raising issues with the departments, they have the right to raise any concerns directly with the Vice-Chancellor. All external examiners are provided with an induction to understand their duties, and we encourage participation in the Advance HE development courses that are specifically targeted at external examiners.

4. Academic Governance

The Vice-Chancellor is ultimately responsible for the University's academic standards and is accountable to the University's Council. The Council, under the University's Royal Charter, is its governing body. Under the HE Code of Governance, the governing body is accountable for all institutional activities and receives reports on all relevant matters. Each year, the Council receives an Annual Teaching Quality Assurance Report. This summarises how the University maintains its quality and standards and reassures the Council that the University is meeting its conditions of registration set out by the Office for Students.

The Senate of the University is established under the Royal Charter and is responsible for the University's academic work. It agrees all matters of institutional policy and holds the senior officers to account for the discharge of academic matters. Senate ultimately has the power to decide what awards will be made and on what basis. It receives assurance via its subcommittees and receives regular reports. Senate must discuss and approve the Annual Teaching Quality Assurance Report before it is sent to Council.

The Education Committee and its subcommittee, the Academic Standards and Quality Committee, have day-to-day responsibility for overseeing the education portfolio. The Education Committee develops and oversees the University's education strategy and oversees policies relating to learning, teaching and assessment for all taught programmes. Both committees are responsible for ensuring that the University monitors all relevant internal and external developments in education and responds to them.

Examination boards are held at the end of each level of study to decide on progression and to classify those qualified to graduate. An external examiner is present at each board and invited to comment on the work and the fairness of the board. The examination boards are advised by exceptional circumstances committees, which consider cases where the personal circumstances of the student may have affected their performance. Where a board believes that additional scrutiny of a case is required, it can refer the case to the Classification and Assessment Review Board. This board acts on behalf of Senate to ratify the results of examination boards and to consider non-standard cases.

External examiners submit an annual report. These reports are considered at both departmental and university levels. An annual summary of the comments is considered by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee, and this summary is also referenced in the Annual Teaching Quality Assurance Review, which is considered by both Senate and Council.

5. Classification Algorithms

A classification algorithm is the formula used to calculate the classification of a degree to be awarded. Lancaster University's algorithm is set out in our Undergraduate Assessment Regulations, which form part of the University's Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures.

Lancaster uses a 24-point aggregate scale. Instead of traditional percentages, assessments are assigned a letter grade (A+ to D- as passing grades, and F1 to F4 for failing grades), each of which corresponds to a point on the 24-point scale. This ensures a more consistent and nuanced evaluation of performance. A score of 9.0 represents a bare pass (D-), and 18.0 reflects a first-class mark for an individual assessment (A-).

Only modules taken at Levels 5 and 6 (years two and three) are classified in undergraduate programmes Level 7 marks are also included for Integrated Masters' degrees). For a traditional three-year programme, all marks at Levels 5 and 6 contribute to a single point on the aggregation scale. The following are the classification grades:

17.5 and above	first-class
14.5 – 17.4	second class (upper division)
11.5 – 14.4	second class (lower division)
9.0 – 11.4	third class

If a student's aggregate mark falls within a borderline band (17.1–17.4, 14.1–14.4 or 11.1–11.4), a further rule applies. In these instances, a student is awarded the higher class if:

- (a) half or more of the credits obtained are in the higher band, or
- (b) the final year averages in the higher class.

If a student is on the borderline but either of these rules does not apply, they will be awarded the lower classification.

Where a student fails a module, they are entitled to resit the assessment. To maintain academic standards, the resulting mark, if a pass, will be capped at 9.0 (a bare pass). This applies to the classification above. Where a student fails up to 30 credits with an aggregate score of 7.0 or above, this can be condoned. This means they remain eligible to graduate with an award, but the aggregate score will apply to the classification algorithm described above. Where a student fails more than 30 credits, or any module with a score less than 7.0 after resit, they cannot graduate with an honours degree, and an appropriate exit award will be made.

It is best practice to keep the assessment algorithm under review. During the 2024/25 academic year, Senate considered whether to change the algorithm. After considering several alternatives, it agreed that the current algorithm was most appropriate and resolved to continue using it.

6. Teaching Practices and Learning

Lancaster University prides itself on the quality of its teaching. It holds a gold award in the Teaching Excellence Framework, operated by the Office for Students, which confirms that we deliver an outstanding student experience. Lancaster prides itself on being a research-intensive university, with its world-leading research incorporated into its teaching. In the last Research Excellence Framework, it was confirmed that 91% of its research was classed as either world-leading or internationally excellent.

Lancaster University's Curriculum and Education Development Academy (CEDA) helps prepare academics to innovate and provides continuing professional development to enhance their skills. CEDA offers pathways for academics to become Fellows or Senior Fellows of the Higher Education Academy, and it has mentored several colleagues to achieve principal fellowship. Lancaster University has a Senior Fellows Network that brings together senior education leaders to discuss opportunities to enhance our teaching and learning.

Lancaster University has invested significantly in our learning resources. At the heart of the University is its award-winning library, which provides physical and electronic resources and learning and research support. The library is an open and inclusive place and is open 24 hours a day during term time. In 2022, the library's learning development team won a prestigious national Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence from Advance HE.

7. Actions

Lancaster University recently adopted a new Education Framework as part of our commitment to the transformative potential of education. It commits the University to an inclusive approach to learning, teaching and assessment and embeds employability and graduate attributes across all our programmes. This will strengthen our educational offer and enable students to demonstrate their full potential.

The University is committed to addressing our gaps and improving student outcomes. Our Access and Participation Plan for 2025/26 – 2028/29, agreed by the Office for Students, commits us to:

- Improve the attainment outcomes of students from UK Asian, Black, Mixed, and other heritage backgrounds when compared to UK White students. We aim to reduce the gap between these two groups to 7 pp by 2029.
- Improve the attainment outcomes of students from a UK Black background. We aim to reduce the gap between UK White and Black students by at least 3pp by 2029.

We will do this by continuing our reverse mentoring scheme, which matches students from the UK with Asian, Black, or other ethnic backgrounds with senior academics. This provides these academics with insight into the lived experiences of our students, which can help them address issues in the design and implementation of policies and practices.

The University Dean for Culture and Inclusion will lead an award gap task and finish group that will scrutinise the data and consider the experiences of UK Asian, Black, or other ethnic backgrounds to understand our award gaps and identify strategies to address them. Regular reports on this will be provided to both Senate and Council.