Department of Statistics

General Assessment Criteria for Undergraduate Degrees

The Department has the following general guidelines on assessment criteria, which provide broad descriptions of the meaning of marks awarded on our examinations. The characteristics of the different classifications (First, 2:1 etc) reflect the extent to which the following knowledge, understanding and skills are demonstrated:

- Knowledge and understanding of basic concepts and principles
- Ability to apply knowledge to formulate a problem mathematically or statistically
- Ability to apply core concepts to solve a problem, selecting and applying appropriate methods and techniques
- Accurate use of mathematical notation
- Ability to make logical arguments
- Ability to interpret results and set them in context

Mark (%)	Grade Descriptor	Characteristics
70-100	First	• Thorough wide-ranging knowledge and understanding of subject • Deft application of knowledge to formulate and solve problems using appropriate methods and techniques • Consistently high level of accuracy • Arguments consistently expressed in a clear and logical way • Appropriate and in-depth interpretation of results • Significant capacity to solve more demanding questions requiring non-standard application of knowledge
60-69	2:1	• Clear knowledge and understanding of subject • Competent application of knowledge to formulate and solve problems using appropriate methods and techniques • High level of accuracy • Arguments are largely clear and logical • Appropriate interpretation of results • Some capacity to solve more demanding questions requiring non-standard application of knowledge
50-59	2:2	• Sound knowledge and understanding of subject • Application of knowledge to formulate and solve standard problems using appropriate methods and techniques • Largely accurate work • Arguments are in general clear and logical • Largely appropriate but sometimes cursory interpretation of results • Limited capacity to solve more demanding questions requiring non-standard application of knowledge
40-49	Third	• Acceptable knowledge of subject, but gaps in understanding • Basic competency in application of knowledge to formulate and solve standard problems using appropriate methods and techniques • A number of slips in accuracy • Arguments are sometimes poorly expressed

		• Cursory interpretation of results • Little capacity to solve more demanding questions
0-39	Fail	• Little evidence of knowledge or understanding of subject • Little evidence of ability to apply knowledge to formulate and solve problems using appropriate methods and techniques • A large number of errors • Arguments poorly expressed • Little attempt to interpret results or inappropriate interpretation

Undergraduate courses and degrees in the Department conform to the description in the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Mathematics, Statistics and Operational Research. This sets out the expectations for any undergraduate degree course in the UK in these subjects. In particular, paragraph 5.4 sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills that should be demonstrated to achieve a "threshold standard" (i.e. pass an honours degree).

Please note that most Statistics examinations involve short questions, to which the answers can be relatively unambiguously coded as (fully or partially) correct or incorrect. In the marking, these questions may be further broken down into smaller steps and marked step by step. The final mark is then a function of the proportion of parts of the questions which have been answered correctly. In such marking, the principle of partial credit is observed as far as feasible. This means that an answer to a part of a question will be treated as correct when it is correct conditional on answers to other parts of the question, even if those other parts have been answered incorrectly.