

University of Surrey Degree Outcomes Statement 2024

1. Degree Classification Profile

Trends in Degree Outcomes

- 1.1 The University's degree outcomes for undergraduate programmes for the period 2018/19 to 2022/23 are summarised in Table 1 (FHEQ level 6 awards only, excluding Integrated Masters). The 5-year data analysis shows that the proportion of 1sts and 2:1s (known as Good Honours) at FHEQ level 6 has fluctuated from **79.9%** in 2018/9 to **73.5%** in 2022/23. The University's response to the coronavirus pandemic contributed to a small upward movement in the proportion of Good Honours in 2019/20 and 2020/21 by **2%-3%** higher in comparison to 2018/19. These degree outcomes were verified by external examiners, who provided positive feedback on the integrity and rigour of assessment practices and the quality and standards of Surrey degree awards in relation to the national standards and frameworks.
- 1.2 In the past two years (2021/22 and 2022/23), Boards of Examiners were using the PowerBI-generated data analysis of student results to highlight potential risks for student progression and attainment. Safety net policies that University implemented in 2019/20 and 2020/21 to support students during the pandemic were no longer applicable in 2021/22, which resulted in a **4.8%** dip in Good Honours in comparison to the previous year. The number of 1st class degree awards has also declined in 2021/22 (**at 26.5%**). This downward trend continued in 2022/23: although the number of 1st class degree awards was similar to the previous year (**at 26.9%**), but the overall number of Good Honours has dropped further to the lowest level over the past 5 years, at **73.5%**. The factors influencing the outcomes shown below are discussed within the rest of the statement.

Table 1: Summary of the University of Surrey degree outcomes 2018/19 to 2022/23

Award Year	2018/9		2019/0		2020/1		2021/2		2022/3	
1st	812	29.7%	927	31.8%	1168	33.2%	814	26.5%	690	26.9%
2:1	1345	49.2%	1430	49.1%	1727	49.1%	1561	50.8%	1193	46.6%
Good Honours	2157	78.9%	2357	80.9%	2895	82.2%	2375	77.4%	1883	73.5%
2:2	484	17.7%	469	16.1%	554	15.7%	579	18.9%	551	21.5%
3rd	43	1.6%	36	1.2%	27	0.8%	50	1.6%	48	1.9%
Ordinary	49	1.8%	51	1.8%	44	1.3%	66	2.1%	80	3.1%
Total	2733		2913		3520		3070		2562	

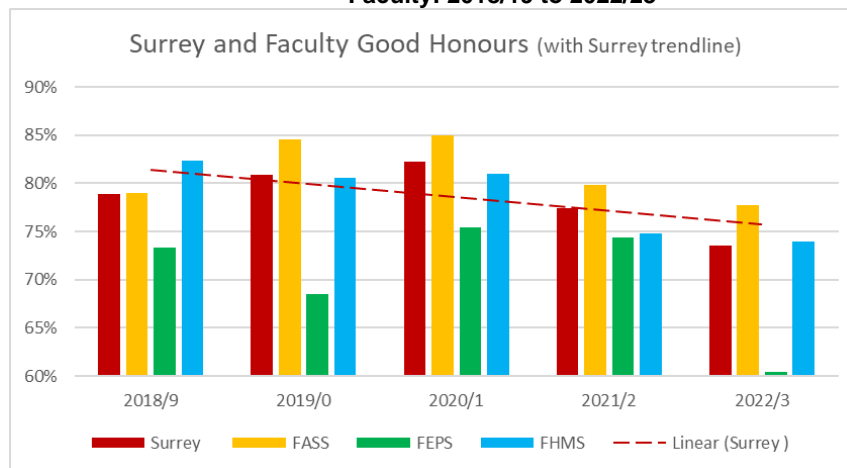
Subject Level

- 1.3 Figure 1 provides data relating to Good Honours degree outcomes for each of the three Faculties in the last five years (2018/19 – 2022/23). This data is also compared against the University's trendline that shows downward movement over the past three years, particularly in the following Faculties:
- The Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (FEPS) has the smallest number of students graduating at FHEQ level 6 as this Faculty offers substantial Integrated Master's provision and the option to transfer from Bachelor's to the Integrated Master's programmes was made much easier for students. This creates an element of natural variation in the data when making comparisons between years and across

the FHEQ level 6 University awards. The outcomes at level 6 are often influenced by the extent to which students choose to continue to Master's level or to graduate with the Bachelor's degree. When outcomes from FHEQ level 7 Integrated Master's programmes are also taken into consideration, the variation in degree outcomes between all three Faculties is much reduced, however for the purposes of this report only level 6 awards are being considered.

- The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FAHS) saw a gradual decrease in the proportion of Good Honours over the past two years **77.7%**, which is still above the average Surrey's figure of **73.5%** for Good Honours and is just below the 2018/19 results.

Figure 1. Breakdown of Good Honours degree outcomes data by University (average) and Faculty: 2018/19 to 2022/23

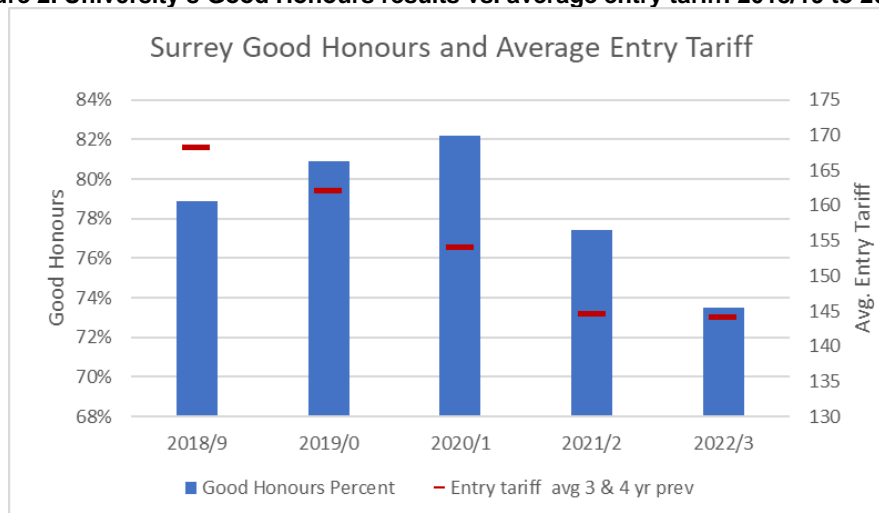


Student Characteristics

UCAS Tariff on Entry

- 1.4 Over the review period the average entry tariff of students graduating from Surrey has reduced as shown in Figure 2 but remains generally strong. The degree outcomes for Surrey students are set against this strong previous academic performance as measured by UCAS Tariff. In Figure 2 UCAS Tariff figures have been normalised against the new UCAS tariff introduced in 2017/18.

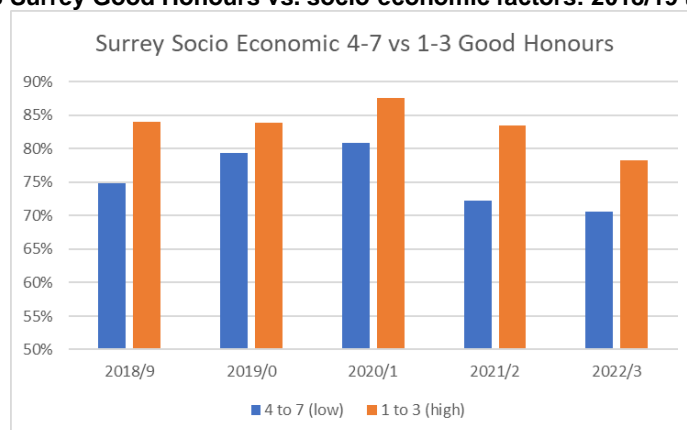
Figure 2. University's Good Honours results vs. average entry tariff: 2018/19 to 2022/23



Combined socio-economic (Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN) and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)) and ethnicity factors

1.5 Figure 3 shows the difference in Good Honours degree outcomes between students from low socio-economic backgrounds (combination of LPN and IMD factors, with 1 is high and 7 is low). The numbers show a degree of volatility between years, which will be kept under review as part of the University's approach to supporting access and participation. However, broadly speaking, outcomes for 2022/23 are **4%-6%** lower to the pre-pandemic level in 2018/19.

Figure 3 Surrey Good Honours vs. socio-economic factors: 2018/19 to 2022/23



1.6 Reducing the awarding gap is one of the top priorities for the University and a key target of the University's [Access and Participation Plan](#). Data analysis of the awarding gap between BME students (including Black, Asian, Mixed and other ethnic minorities) and Black only student cohorts in comparison to White students is included in the Table 3 below. This data shows that the awarding gap between Black and White students has slightly decreased in 2022/23 at **19.4%**, but it was slightly higher than in the Covid-19 pandemic results (2019/20 and 2020/21).

Table 2: Good Honours comparison between student ethnic groups (UK-domiciled students)

Award Year	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
BME	1046	68.6%	1136	72.8%	1455	76.1%	1378	71.4%	1024	62.7%
Black	178	60.1%	164	69.3%	184	68.5%	215	62.3%	154	61.7%
White	1751	85.6%	1836	86.4%	2152	87.1%	1752	82.8%	1453	81.1%
Black vs White	-25.5%		-17.1%		-18.6%		-20.5%		-19.4%	

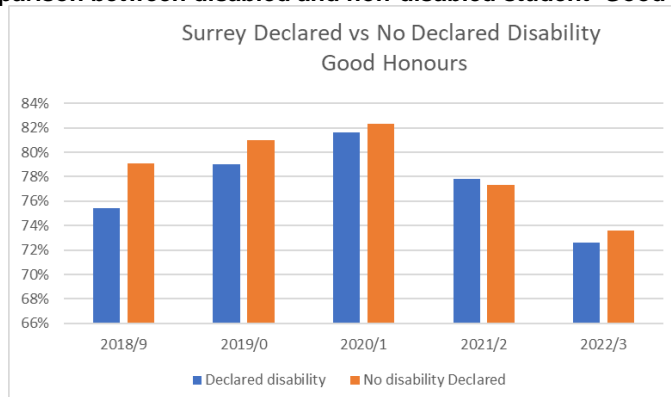
1.7 There was a downward trend for the BME students' Good Honours data results over the recent years. In 2022/23, these results were **5.9%** below the 2018/19 pre-pandemic results and were at the lowest level in the past five years, **at 62.7%**. Based on the internal data analysis of our FHEQ level 6 Good Honours student cohort, a larger proportion of BME students come from lower socio-economic backgrounds in comparison to White students, at a ratio of **40% vs 25%**. Consequently, such factors as the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis impacted upon Black, Asian, Mixed and other ethnic minority students even more than upon White students, which contributed to the increased awarding gap in 2022/23.

Disability

1.8 Although the overall number of disabled students remains relatively small, this cohort of the undergraduate student population is gradually increasing with every year. The Good

Honours awarding gap between disabled and non-disabled students has slightly widened in 2022/23, with declared disability achieved a lower proportion of Good Honours by **1.0%**.

Figure 4. Comparison between disabled and non-disabled student' Good Honours results



Assessment and Marking Practices

2.1 The University [Quality Framework](#) is designed to deliver a high-quality student learning experience. In order to ensure that all Surrey's academic programmes are well aligned to sector recognised standards, the University's quality assurance mechanism includes regular monitoring, review and reporting. Oversight is provided through the academic governance structures at Faculty and University levels, reporting ultimately to the University Senate and Council.

2.2 The University [Quality Framework](#) includes a set of mandatory policies and procedures relating to assessment and marking practices, confirming expectations for both staff and students:

- The [Code of practice for assessment and feedback](#) defines processes for marking student work and internal moderation of marks. Where necessary, an adjustment of student marks may be considered by the Boards of Examiners for recommendation to Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE). Methods and algorithms for mark adjustment are included in the *Code of practice*. In 2022/23, appendix 7 - *Guiding principles supporting learning-focused assessment and student feedback* to this Code of practice was revised to support the roll-out of the 'Assessment and Feedback Focus' programme, which was trialled successfully during 2022/23. The 'Assessment and Feedback Focus' programme is based on the following four strands of work: learning from success; working in partnership with students; informing practice; developing practice.
- Other changes to the *Code of practice for assessment and feedback* introduced in 2022/23 include amended definition of "formative assessment and feedback" and other minor amendments.

2.3 A student can appeal the decisions and outcomes on the grounds that are defined in the *Regulations for Academic Appeals* and *Regulations for Academic Integrity*.

2.4 All taught programmes have one or more [external examiners](#) whose main function is to provide independent external verification that the University of Surrey's system of assessment is fair and is fairly operated in the determination of awards made to students. External examiners are also asked to confirm in their annual reports the appropriateness of assessment methods, the application of marking criteria and the adherence to regulations and the [Code of practice for assessment and feedback](#). Reports are considered by Boards of Studies, at which student representatives are present. Students have full access to the external examiner reports relevant to their programme via the

virtual learning environment. An overview of main themes, matters arising from external examiners' annual reports and examples of best practice is then considered by the Quality Enhancement Subcommittee and the University Education Committee. A formal response from the University is provided to external examiners to address any recommendations raised within their annual reports.

Academic Governance

- 3.1 The University of Surrey has a clearly defined [Code of practice for academic governance \(renamed in 2022/23 to Senate Governance\)](#) that defines the structures, policies and processes that the University has put in place to assure the setting and maintaining of academic standards and the quality of the student experience.
- 3.2 The University Council is the ultimate governing body with Senate the governing body for all academic matters. Senate is assisted in its task by various key committees, which include the University Education Committee (UEC), the University Research and Innovation Committee (URIC) and their sub-committees. UEC's primary responsibility is to maintain and improve the University's academic standards and support the delivery of a positive student experience. This includes reviewing and monitoring the quality of academic standards against key performance indicators and determining any necessary interventions.
- 3.3 The Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) is a sub-committee of Senate. All degrees and other awards are conferred by SPACE acting on delegated authority from Senate. SPACE reviews the recommendations made from Boards of Examiners for consistency and reasonableness before ratification and conferment of awards. SPACE has the authority to make appropriate changes to overall marks and degree classifications on behalf of Senate where required and in line with the [Code of practice for assessment and feedback](#).
- 3.4 Decisions regarding the award of academic credit are made by Boards of Examiners which review assessment outcomes and the underlying marking and moderation processes underpinning the University's academic standards. Boards of Examiners routinely include input from external examiners to ensure appropriate external verification of assessment outcomes.
- 3.5 Working within the framework described above, the University has an established and clearly articulated academic governance structure for the approval and management of collaborative provision, as set out within the [Code of practice for collaborative provision](#). The University's collaborative partner, Farnborough College of Technology (FCoT) is an Accredited Institution (AI) and manages the validation, annual and periodic enhancement review processes for programmes they deliver in the University's name. The University's oversight is maintained through regular meetings with FCoT's Academic Registry, attendance at FCoT's Quality and Standards Committee, etc. An Annual Review Report from FCoT is considered through the University's academic governance structure. All Surrey-validated programmes delivered by FCoT are expected to follow the University's [Quality Framework](#). Types of other collaborative activity offered by the University can be found within the [collaborative provision register](#).

Classification Algorithms

- 4.1 The University's degree classification algorithm is communicated transparently through the [academic regulations](#) which are typically applicable from the year a student enters their programme of study. The University's core classification algorithm for undergraduate degrees has remained unchanged since 2010/2011, with a 35% : 65% split between

FHEQ level 5 and FHEQ level 6 for Bachelor's programmes. These weightings reflect the University's view that a student's degree classification should primarily be determined by their performance at the later and higher levels within their award while recognising achievements earlier in the programme of study.

- 4.2 For classifying undergraduate honours degrees, the University considers the overall weighted aggregate mark as the best indicator of student achievement. This is derived from aggregating module marks, weighted in accordance with their credit value and then using the level average marks to determine the final class in accordance with the 35%:65% split degree classification algorithm (see p. 4.1 above). No other methods for calculating the final degree classification, for example a 'borderline range' (also known as a 'zone of consideration'), or discounting of credit in calculating the final degree classification to enable the award of a higher classification, etc. are permitted. Awards are classified according to the following ranges:

First Class	70% and above
Second Class, Upper Division	60-69%
Second Class, Lower Division	50-59%
Third Class	40-49%

- 4.2 Compensation is available following a failure at the first or subsequent assessment attempts for units of assessment in modules with a value up to, and including, 30 credits at FHEQ level 4. From FHEQ level 5 and above, compensation is available for modules with a value up to, and including, 15 credits. For compensation to be applied in a normal undergraduate programme, students must have achieved at least 30% module mark in the failed module and have a weighted average for the level of at least 40%. To support academic progression during the pandemic years, the University also introduced a trailing credit facility (one 15-credit module) to allow students an additional attempt to pass a module during the next academic year. This facility was retained on a permanent basis from 2020/21 onwards.

Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and Good Practice

- 5.1 Much of the University's enhancement activity at undergraduate level was focused through the NSS 85 plan which was first introduced in 2020 and is being developed through the [Continuous Enhancement Review process](#). Programme teams with low NSS satisfaction scores were engaged with the NSS Enhancement Support programme, which was facilitated by the Surrey Institute of Education (SloE) amongst others. Improved assessment and feedback for students is a key priority for the University, which in turn underpins the improved student performance. The SloE are leading the work in this area through the development of key resources, such as an assessment and enhancement toolkit, inclusive education, etc. In August 2022, SloE designed a programme of enhancement work entitled 'Assessment and Feedback Focus' as part of an annual programme of enhancement activities. This enhancement programme was trialled in 2022/23 and involved a series of masterclasses, the development of new resources, and working in partnership with students.
- 5.3 In 2022/23, the University has successfully implemented the additional Enhancement Support programme for Schools/Departments with low student continuation rates. This initiative was focused on providing more support for students who struggle to complete their programme of study.
- 5.4 A distinctive feature of Surrey's approach to developing excellence in Learning and Teaching is the emphasis on pedagogical research. In 2021/22, SloE's first assessment to the REF under the Education Unit of Assessment led to excellent outcomes. Overall,

SloE's research quality was ranked 20 out of 83 submissions to the Education UoA. In terms of outputs, 43% of SloE's outputs were considered world-leading (4*), placing Surrey 11th out of the 83 submissions. For impact, Surrey ranked 20th with 100% of impact case studies judged to have outstanding or very considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance.

- 5.6 A new online resource, EduHub, was launched for the University academic community as a hub for all educational resources and to highlight the latest academic developmental opportunities available for colleagues through the SloE to support practice and education across the University.
- 5.7 A current strategic initiative, which is due to complete at the end of the 2023/24 academic year, is the Curriculum Design Review (CDR). The review provides an opportunity for academic colleagues to pause, critically reflect and enhance each foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate taught programme that we offer at the University of Surrey. The process involves drawing programme teams and other key stakeholders together to look at current and future provision in a series of workshops. The teams will then create a plan and work collaboratively to support implementation. As part of the CDR, student partners are recruited to work alongside staff to undertake a curriculum project that supports the curriculum review process. The outcome of the work forms a reflection for the curriculum design review exercise for action and implementation into appropriate programmes.
- 5.8 During the pandemic years, student transitioning into remote/online learning was proactively supported by the University via a range of 'mini-guide' resources and captured videos, including featuring prominently on a dedicated 'Studying Online' website and highlighted in key University student communications. These resources were developed in collaboration with Surrey students and were fully aligned with the pedagogical guidance for academic staff on transferring their programmes and assessment to the online context. This successful work to transform the University's online learning provision was continued in 2021/22 through various initiatives aimed at embedding online learning as common practice and was a popular option for students. In 2022/23 and onwards the University is looking to take this work further through the development of a suite of online programmes and modules.
- 5.9 Students are integrally involved in reviewing and shaping their educational experience and learning environment, with the University and Students' Union (SU) working collaboratively to ensure that students contribute to key quality assurance and enhancement processes. Students who are experiencing challenges with their academic engagement as identified through Learning Analytics will be signposted to appropriate support, notably by their Personal Tutor and the Student Success team. Having clearer expectations regarding student engagement with their programme also supports consistent application of the academic regulations concerning 'failure to make academic progress'. This is where a student appears to have disengaged with their programme and is at risk of having their registration terminated. For international students subject to Home Office requirements, disengagement with the academic programme of study can lead to a termination of sponsorship for a visa. In 2021/22, the University created a new [Code of practice for Student Learning Analytics](#) to provide transparency on the approaches that would be used by the UKVI Compliance team, and where data may be used for investigations undertaken by OSCAR, e.g. student complaints.

Assurance of the Degree Outcomes Statement

- 6.1 Surrey monitors degree outcomes routinely through its annual monitoring and reporting processes. The University Council is responsible for the approval of the Degree Outcomes

Statement and reviews a revised version on an annual basis, on the recommendation of Senate. The format has remained consistent since to aid comparability between years.