

University of Surrey: Degree Outcomes Statement 2025

1. Degree Classification Profile - Trends in Degree Outcome

- 1.1. The University's degree outcomes for undergraduate programmes for the period 2018/19 to 2023/24 are summarised in Table 1 (FHEQ level 6 awards only, excluding Integrated Master's). The 5-year data analysis shows that the proportion of combined Firsts and 2:1s (known as Good Honours) at FHEQ level 6 has dropped from 80.9% in 2019/20 to 71.7% in 2023/24; the proportion of Firsts class degrees dropped from 31.8% in 2019/20 to 2023/24 to 23.0%. The 5-year comparative analysis of this trend against the sector is attached in Table 2 below.
- 1.2. Both figures are now considerably lower than the peak in 2020/21 during the height of the coronavirus pandemic and the application of the Safety Net policy (Good Honours – at 83.6% and Firsts – at 34.6%) and lower than pre-pandemic. The factors influencing these outcomes are analysed in this statement.

Table 1: Summary of the University of Surrey degree outcomes 2019/20 to 2023/24 (internal data sets):

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
firsts	31.8%	927	34.6%	1145	27.7%	798	28.2%	678	23.0%	512
2:1s	49.1%	1430	47.9%	1587	50.1%	1445	46.3%	1114	46.7%	1039
good	80.9%	2357	83.6%	2732	79.6%	2243	76.8%	1792	71.7%	1551
2:2s	16.1%	469	15.4%	510	18.2%	524	20.5%	494	24.4%	544
3rd+ Pass	3.0%	87	2.1%	70	4.1%	118	5.0%	120	5.8%	130
total		2913		3312		2885		2406		2225

Table 2: The University of Surrey's First Class and Good Honours (internal data set) vs HESA sector data:

Academic year	Surrey First class	HESA Sector First class	Surrey Good Honours	HESA Sector Good
2019/20	31.8%	35%	80.90%	82%
2020/21	34.6%	36%	83.6%	82%
2021/22	27.7%	32%	79.6%	79%
2022/23	28.2%	30%	76.8%	78%
2023/24	23.0%	29%	71.7%	77%

Figure 1: The University of Surrey's First Class and Good Honours (internal data set) vs HESA sector data



2. Student Characteristics

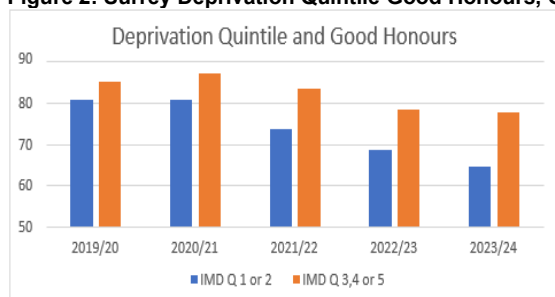
UCAS Tariff on Entry (corresponding years)

- 2.1. Over the review period, the average entry tariff across the University has dropped from a peak in 2017/18 of 158 to 144 in 2021/22. The lowest level was in 2019/20 (during the pandemic) of 139. There is a clear correlation in the decline in both tariff and student outcomes (corresponding years).

Table 3: UCAS Entry tariff average

year	entry tariff
17/18	158
18/19	150
19/20	139
20/21	144
21/22	144

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and ethnicity factors

Figure 2: Surrey Deprivation Quintile Good Honours, Q1&2 - most deprived. (UK-domiciled students – APP data set):

- 2.2. Figure 2 shows the difference in Good Honours degree outcomes between students from low socio-economic backgrounds. The gap has grown from 4.5-6.6% during the pandemic to 13.3% in 2023/24. This will be kept under review as part of the University's approach to supporting access and participation. The APP OfS data sets also indicate that the gap between IMD Quintiles 1&2 compared to Quintiles 3, 4, & 5 has consistently been more pronounced for BME (including Black, Asian, Mixed, and other ethnic minorities) compared to White students.

Table 3: Good Honours comparison between student ethnic groups

Award Year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Asian	76.8	83.3	79.5	63	62.2
Black	79.5	80.2	70	60.4	62.2
Mixed	88.3	83.7	82.4	72.2	73.1
White	90.4	91.3	88.2	83.4	81.8
Asian vs White	-13.6	-8	-8.7	-20.4	-19.6
Black vs White	-10.9	-11.1	-18.2	-23	-19.6

(UK-domiciled students - APP data set)

- 2.3. Reducing the awarding gap is one of the top priorities for the University. Table 3 above includes a breakdown of the Good Honours award data for all ethnic groups and the awarding gap comparing Asian and Black only student cohorts to White students.
- 2.4. The proportion of Good Honours awards has dropped across all ethnic groups. Whilst the gap to White students narrowed as degree outcomes became more concentrated in the first two years and the pandemic safety net application, in the last three years, the gaps have grown considerably. In 2023/24, the gap to White students had grown for Asian and Black Students to 19.6% (the Black gap narrowed 3.4% from the previous year's data).
- 2.5. 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 circa 40% vs 25%.
- 2.6. Consequently, such factors as the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis impacted Black, Asian, Mixed, and other ethnic minority students even more than White students. Students from the most deprived socioeconomic group were struggling to achieve Good Honours at comparable rates, which contributed to the increased awarding gap. However, whilst this will account for a couple of percentage points, it does not explain the remainder of the gap.

3. Assessment and Marking Practices

- 3.1. The [University Quality Framework](#) ensures Surrey's programmes align with sector standards through regular monitoring and governance oversight up to Senate and Council. It includes mandatory academic regulations and the [Code of practice for assessment and feedback](#), which

define processes for marking, internal and external moderation, etc. The Code of practice also includes strict quality control processes for mark adjustment. To further enhance student learning experience, in 2024/25 the University introduced additional guidance on assessment load, strategy and marking, including [Provision of Examination Solutions](#). In March 2025, the University Education Committee (UEC) approved a new [Assessment Load Guidance](#), which is intended to assist staff in designing assessments for their programmes and modules, aiming for an appropriate level of consistency in the workload and experience of students.

- 3.2. [External examiners](#) provide independent verification of fairness and standards, reporting annually on assessment methods and adherence to the Code. External examiners' reports are reviewed by Boards of Studies, at which student representatives are present, with summaries (including areas for enhancement, best practice and recommendations) considered and approved by the Quality Enhancement Subcommittee and the University Education Committee. External examiners' comments and recommendations are also a key element of the Continuous Enhancement Review process. Students can access relevant reports via the VLE. In 2024/25, the University introduced a change to the external examiners' annual report mechanism, moving to an online form, with the revised content focused on the Office for Students' B Conditions of Registration. The online annual reporting process also helps to support timely programme enhancements.

4. Academic Governance

- 4.1. The University has a defined [Senate governance framework](#) to assure academic standards and the student experience. The University Council is the ultimate governing body, with Senate overseeing academic matters, supported by committees such as UEC and URIC. UEC monitors standards and student experience against KPIs and recommends interventions.
- 4.2. The Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) confers awards on Senate's behalf, reviewing Board of Examiners' recommendations for consistency and applying adjustments under the [Code of practice for assessment and feedback](#). 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.
- 4.3. Collaborative provision, both in the UK and abroad, is managed under the [Code of practice for academic partnerships](#). The University has one UK-based accredited collaborative partner, the University Centre Farnborough (UCF), which has been an Accredited Institution since 2002. The University's oversight is maintained through regular meetings with UCF's Academic Registry, attendance at UCF's Quality and Standards Committee, etc. An Annual Review Report from UCF is considered through the University's academic governance structure. All Surrey-validated programmes, delivered by UCF, follow the University's [Quality Framework](#). Surrey maintains oversight through governance processes and annual reviews. A 2024/25 institutional review confirmed strong academic quality, positive student experience, and relevant programmes, with conditions and recommendations for further discussion in 2025. Types of other academic partnership/collaborative activity offered by the University can be found within the [collaborative provision register](#).

5. Classification Algorithms

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. For classifying undergraduate honours degrees, the University uses the overall weighted aggregate mark, which 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 degree classification algorithm (see p. 4.1 above). The final classification/grade mark is rounded to the nearest integer. During the reviewed period, 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. were permitted. Awards are classified according to the following ranges:

Table 4: Award classification ranges

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

- 5.3. Compensation is available for failed module attempts: up to 30 credits at FHEQ Level 4, and up to 15 credits from Level 5 onward. Eligibility requires a minimum module mark of 30%, and an overall level average of at least 40%.
- 5.4. To support academic progression during the pandemic years and beyond, the University introduced a trailing credit facility (one 15-credit module) to allow students an additional, third attempt to pass a module during the following academic year, alongside the next level of study. From 2023/24, students are allowed an additional, third assessment attempt at one module worth a maximum of 30 credits, but only a maximum of one 15-credit module can be trailed into the next year.

6. Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and Good Practice

- 6.1. Much of Surrey's undergraduate enhancement work has focused on the NSS 85 plan (introduced 2020/21) and 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. 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 first trialled in 2022/23 and implemented successfully across the University in subsequent years. The programme involves a series of masterclasses, the development of new resources, and working in partnership with students.
- 6.2. As part of the University's strategy, a comprehensive institutional Curriculum Design Review (CDR) was run in 2021- 2024. The process involved drawing programme teams and other key stakeholders together to look at current and future provision in a series of workshops. The teams created a plan and worked collaboratively to support its implementation. As part of the CDR, student partners were recruited to work alongside staff to undertake a curriculum project that supported 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.
- 6.3. Students are integrally involved in reviewing and shaping their educational experience, working with the University and Students' Union (SU) to ensure involvement in quality assurance and enhancement. If academic challenges are identified through Learning Analytics, students will be directed to support by their Personal Tutor or the Student Success team. Clear expectations of student engagement promote consistent application of academic progress regulations, which may result in registration termination if a student disengages. For international students, lack of engagement could end visa sponsorship. In 2024/25, the University updated the [Code of practice for Student Learning Analytics](#) to clarify new methods used by the UKVI Compliance team, including possible data use for OSCAR investigations such as student complaints.

7. Assurance of the Degree Outcomes Statement

- 7.1. 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 over the past few years to ensure comparability.