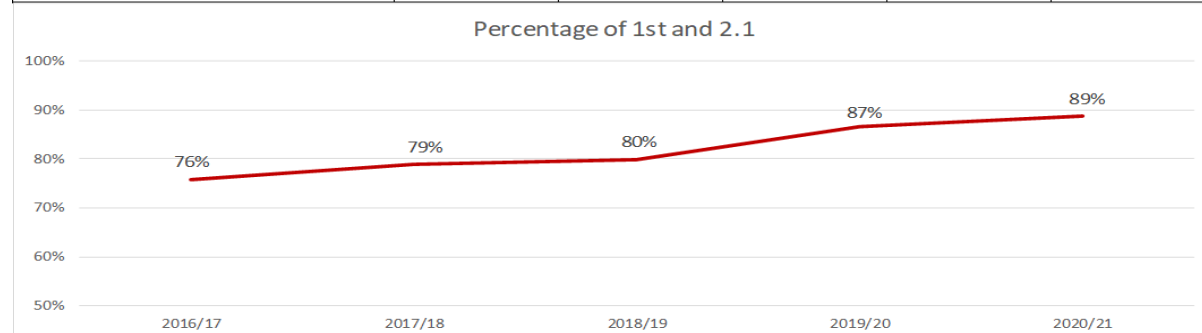


## Degree Outcomes Statement

### 1. Degree classification profile

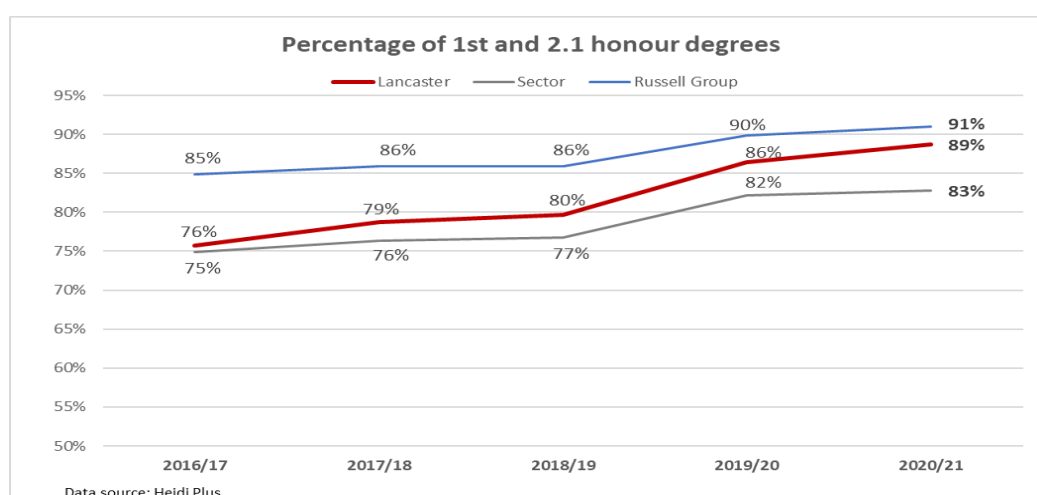
Honours degree classification	Academic year				
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
First class honours degree (1st)	25%	30%	29%	35%	40%
Upper second class (2.1)	51%	49%	51%	51%	48%
Lower second class (2.2)	20%	18%	18%	12%	11%
Thirds class honours/Pass	4%	3%	2%	2%	0%
Student numbers	2676	2823	2826	2882	3192



1.1 The above table and chart show a full breakdown of the undergraduate degrees awarded to all students who completed their degree at Bailrigg, and the proportion of 1sts/2:1s, awarded over a five-year period.

1.2 Until 2019/20, the total proportion of 1sts/2.1s awarded had remained broadly consistent. For the two following academic years, the proportion of first class degrees awarded increased from 29% in academic year (AY) 2018/19, to 35% in AY 2019/20 and 40% in AY 2020/21.

1.3 The rise in the proportion of 1sts/2:1s may be explained, in part, by measures put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The sector as a whole saw an increase in the proportion of 1sts/2:1s awarded in line with the increase in good degrees seen at Lancaster.



1.4 With respect to variation by student characteristics, the University has identified the following significant patterns (irrespective of COVID-19).

- International students (non-EU) have consistently been awarded a lower proportion of 1sts/2:1s than Home students. This gap has been reducing and continues to reduce with the difference being 25% in 2016/17, 18% in 2019/20, and 14% in 2020/21.
- UK-domiciled ABMO<sup>1</sup> students were awarded a lower proportion of 1<sup>st</sup>/2:1 degrees compared to UK white students. In 2020/21 84% of UK ABMO students received good degrees, compared to 93% of UK white students. In 2016/17, 65% of ABMO students were awarded good degrees compared to 84% of UK white students.
- The proportion of English students gaining good degrees whose permanent residences are in areas of the most deprivation – as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation Quintile 1 (IMDQ1) – has increased from 72% in 2016/17 to 87% in 2020/21.
- POLAR designations provide a measure of the proportion of young people from a particular area who participate in higher education. The percentage of students who are under 21 and come from a POLAR Q1 (Participation Of Local Areas Quintile 1 – indicating low participation) and attain a good degree compared to those from POLAR Q5 (high participation) was -5% in 2020/21.

1.5 These data indicate that:

- (a) the awarding gap has been reducing at Lancaster over the last 5 years; and
- (b) students from low participation neighborhoods, or areas of England known to be areas of multiple deprivation, have successful outcomes when they complete their studies at Lancaster University.

## 2. Assessment and Marking Practices

2.1 Assessment and marking practices are underpinned by the University's Undergraduate Assessment Regulations,<sup>2</sup> which set out the reference points for judgement of the quality of academic work. Mapping processes ensure that intended learning outcomes are appropriately assessed across modules and programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> Asian, Black, Mixed, Other

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/student-based-services/asq/marp/UG-Assess-Regs.pdf>

2.2 Academic Year 2020/21 saw Lancaster University continue to adapt our teaching and assessment practices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the national restrictions imposed by UK and other governments. We continued to use our Senate approved 'Guiding Principles for Assessment' to maintain academic standards and take account of the likely impact of COVID-19 on students and staff.

2.3 Students took end of year assessments online through a mixture of restricted time (23-hour, open-book) or timed single sitting (limited time of 3 to 5 hours, open-book) assessments that were designed to be inclusive. Appropriate additional measures were put in place for those students with an Inclusive Learning and Support Plan (ILSP).

### **3. Academic Governance**

3.1 As detailed in the University's Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures<sup>3</sup> (MARP) Lancaster has well-established governance for consideration and assurance of matters of academic quality and standards. This includes internal and external moderation of assessment setting and marking, defined procedures for the constitution and operation of Exceptional Circumstances Committees and Examination Boards, regulations on the powers afforded to Exam Boards and the instances in which referral of a case to the Classification and Assessment Review Board is required. These requirements continued under COVID-19, with external examiners being consulted on the changes implemented by Lancaster University.

3.2 The University has a variety of domestic and international partnerships with public sector and private institutions, ranging from single programmes to full-scale inter-institutional relationships. Where deviation from the University's MARP is required to satisfy the regulatory framework of the relevant country in which the partnership is based, such variation must be approved by the University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee. In line with the approach taken at Lancaster University, but paying due regard to the local circumstances, we continued to work with our international partners to ensure the impact of COVID-19 was considered in determining student outcomes.

### **4. Classification Algorithms**

4.1 MARP sets out details of the degree classification process. Duly constituted Exam Boards determine whether a student has met the final award criteria, taking account of decisions reached by the Exceptional Circumstances Committees. The overall mean score for the programme is calculated from the module aggregation scores achieved in Level 5 and above of the degree, in proportion with the credit weightings for each module.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/academic-standards-and-quality/regulations-policies-and-committees/manual-of-academic-regulations-and-procedures/>

- 4.2 Where the aggregation score falls within one of the borderline classification ranges, the exam board applies a rubric specified in MARP for deciding the degree class to be awarded.
- 4.3 In response to the pandemic, Senate approved temporary changes to the academic regulations in 2019/20 and again in 2020/21 that provided additional opportunity for students to be awarded the higher degree classification where their aggregation score fell into a boundary range.
- 4.4 Provision was also made to set aside, at cohort level, certain elements of assessment delivered in formats not previously experienced by students and in which students had clearly under-performed.

## **5. Good teaching practices, and learning resources**

- 5.1 In 2019/20, in response to the pandemic, Lancaster developed a website entitled 'Embrace Digital' to support academic staff in the delivery of online teaching. The Embrace Digital website provides a single point of access to information and guidance, supporting:
- academic staff to use digital technologies effectively in teaching and learning, such as providing guidance for teaching using Teams, dual-mode teaching, digital assessment, and digital accessibility;
  - all staff to improve their digital skills, harness the power of digital technology, and look after their digital wellbeing; and
  - students to use digital effectively in their work and learning, and look after their digital wellbeing.
- 5.2 In March 2022, Lancaster's Embrace Digital website won the UCISA22 'Supporting Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Research' award.

## **6. Risks and challenges**

- 6.1 The University's Access and Participation Plan, approved by the Office for Students, sets out specific challenges with respect to the performance gap between ABMO/white UK students and LPN/non-LPN students (see section 1) along with actions to address them.

23 May 2022