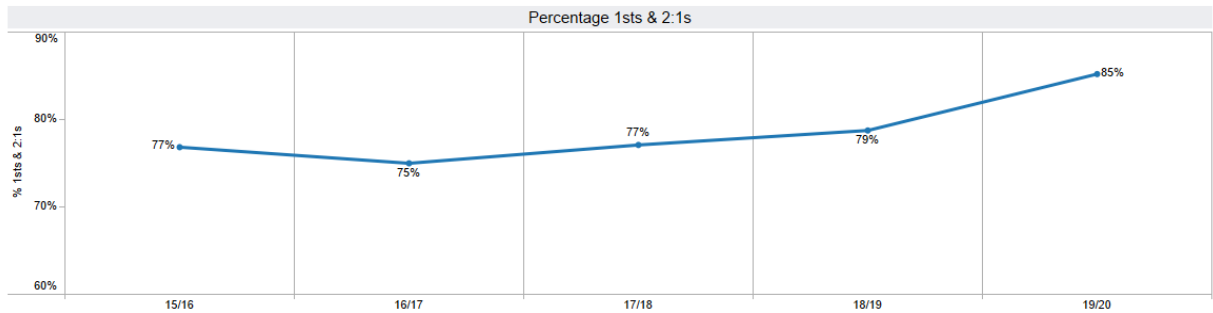


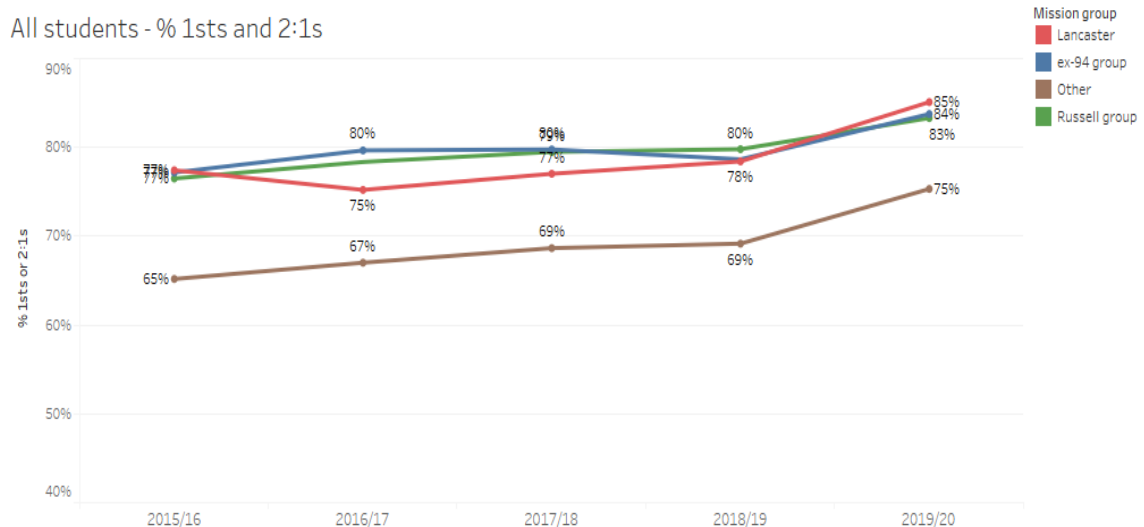
## DEGREE OUTCOMES STATEMENT

### 1. Degree classification profile

All students										
Degree	15/16		16/17		17/18		18/19		19/20	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%	Headcount	%	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
First class honours (1st)	701	25%	674	25%	848	29%	826	29%	1,011	35%
Upper Second class honours (2:1)	1,435	52%	1,350	50%	1,376	48%	1,434	50%	1,476	51%
Other honours degrees	637	23%	666	25%	657	23%	607	21%	431	15%
Unclassified degree award	7	0%	9	0%	4	0%	3	0%	1	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,780</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,699</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,885</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,870</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,919</b>	<b>100%</b>



- 1.1 The above table and chart show a full breakdown of the undergraduate degrees awarded to all students, 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 has remained broadly consistent, although there was an increase in the proportion of 1sts awarded from 25% in 2015/16 to 29% in 2018/19.
- 1.3 As a result of measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2019/20 saw a rise in the proportion of 1sts/2:1s to 85%, with the proportion of 1sts awarded rising to 35%. The chart below demonstrates that the sector as a whole saw an inflation in the proportion of 1sts/2:1s awarded, in line with the degree of inflation seen at Lancaster.



- 1.4 With respect to variation by student characteristics, the University has identified the following significant patterns (discounting COVID-19).
- Overseas students (excluding EU) have consistently been awarded a lower proportion of 1sts/2:1s than Home-EU students. However, the gap has been reducing, with the difference being 24% in 2015/16 compared to 18% in 2019/20.
  - UK BAME students at Lancaster have consistently been awarded a lower proportion of 1sts/2:1s than UK white students (in 2019/20 76% of UK BAME students were awarded 1sts/2:1s compared to 91% of UK white students).
  - In common with the sector, Lancaster's UK female students have consistently performed more strongly than male students, although the gap in the proportion of 1sts/2:1s awarded fell from 11% in 2018/19 to 8% in 2019/20.
  - In 2018/19 there was no material difference between the proportion of UK students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods awarded a 1st/2:1, but 2019/20 saw the re-emergence of an attainment gap between those awarded 1sts/2:1s (89%) compared to those from low participation neighbourhoods (83%).

## **2. Assessment and Marking Practices**

- 2.1 Assessment and marking practices are underpinned by the University's Undergraduate Assessment Regulations<sup>1</sup> which set out the reference points for how judgement of the quality of academic work is made. Mapping processes ensure that intended learning outcomes are appropriately assessed across programmes.
- 2.2 March 2020 saw Lancaster University move to primarily online learning in response to the national restrictions imposed by Government. The University developed 'Guiding Principles for Assessment' that aimed to maintain academic standards whilst minimising disruption and anxiety to students, and taking account of the likely impact of Coronavirus infections on students and staff. These principles, and a revised approach to assessment, were approved by University Senate.
- 2.3 Departments were asked to review programme learning outcomes (PLOs) and to assess their attainment by the end of March 2020. Where PLOs were met, no further assessment (e.g. exams) was required, although students were given the option to take further assessment if they so wished. This meant the majority of students were not required to take the usual end-of-year assessments. Where PLOs were not met, or where there was a need for Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements, or students requested the opportunity to do so, 24-hour, open-book online examinations were undertaken.

## **3. Academic Governance**

- 3.1 As detailed in the University's Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/student-based-services/asq/marp/UG-Assess-Regs.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/academic-standards-and-quality/regulations-policies-and-committees/manual-of-academic-regulations-and-procedures/>

- 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 where 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 worked with our international partners to ensure that the impact of COVID-19 was considered in determining the classification of awards.

#### **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. In a typical 3-year degree, the classification algorithm gives equal weighting to module scores across the second and third years of study.
- 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. In response to COVID-19, the borderline classification rules were relaxed for 2019/20.
- 4.3 As a change in practice in response to COVID-19, departments were required to compare module results to the previous three academic years, to ensure students were not unreasonably disadvantaged by the revised assessment regime.
- 4.4 In addition, where a student failed a module that included assessment submitted after March 2020, an uncapped resit was awarded. A subsequent capped resit was applied where necessary.

#### **5. Teaching practices and learning resources**

- 5.1 Lancaster has introduced specific activities to support students' transition to University, and to provide a strong basis for successful study. This includes a 'Ready for University' online course available pre-registration, and a dedicated Transitions Team supporting students adjusting to Higher Education.

#### **6. Identifying good practice and action**

- 6.1 The transition to online learning in March 2020 required staff and students to adjust to new ways of learning and teaching. A dedicated website ('Embrace Digital') was produced to provide staff with materials, resources and training in the delivery of online learning. Technology was also issued to staff and students to support learning and teaching remotely.