



MARKS & STANDARDS

The following describes the Marks and Standards for the undergraduate modular degree programmes at NUI Maynooth, other than the BA Local and Community Studies, BSc (Rural Development), the Electronics Engineering and Product Design Degrees and the BA (Distance Education). NUI Maynooth uses the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System). In this system, each year of full time undergraduate study is accorded 60 ECTS. These credits are apportioned pro-rata to the subjects and modules that make up the various programmes.

These Marks and Standards should be read in conjunction with the Departmental Handbook for details of deadlines and penalties, entry criteria for modules with restricted entry, module clashes and other such matters.

DIRECTORY OF TERMS

Programme

The course of study leading to an award of the University. The programme description will include the subjects to be studied in each year, the modules which may be chosen as part of the subject, and the number of credits required in each subject and module.

Subject

These are the subjects, as listed in the University prospectus, which may be studied as part of a programme. Some programmes (such as CSSE and Electronic Engineering) are single subject programmes. Each subject is divided into subcomponents called modules and the mark obtained in the subject is compiled from an aggregate of the marks obtained in the modules of that discipline.

Module

A module is a subcomponent of a curriculum in a particular subject. The description of the module will include the mode of instruction, the number of contact and other hours involved, the content of the module, the mode of assessment and the credit weighting in ECTS. Each module has a name and a code. The code consists of two or three letters (indicating the responsible department) followed by three digits (with possibly a final letter). The first of the digits indicate the level of the module. An example is HY207, which indicates a History module at level 2.

Level

The level of the module is indicative only. Typically it represents the year of study for fulltime students. Therefore, a typical second year full-time student would take all (or nearly all) Level 2 modules. However, some modules are aimed at more than one year of study. Therefore some students may be taking a mixture of modules at different nominal levels at the one time.

Compulsory Module

A compulsory module in a programme is one which is obligatory for all students taking that programme.

Optional Module

An optional module in a programme is one which may be chosen from a number of available modules but which is not compulsory.

Required Module

A required module is a compulsory module in a programme which must be passed without compensation (i.e. a mark of 40% achieved) in order to progress in that programme.

Rules for Progression and Passing

Each programme is divided into years of study.

The pass mark in a module is 40%. The pass mark in a subject is 40%. The subject mark is the weighted average of the most recent marks of the modules (other than industrial work placement modules on CSSE, EE, Venture and Equine Business) that constitute the programme of study for that subject in the year in question.

The pass mark in a year of study is 40%. The year mark is the weighted average of the most recent marks of the subjects involved.

In order to progress to the next year of study a student must achieve the pass mark and fulfill all the requirements of their current year of study.

In order to pass a year of study and progress to the next year (or graduate) a student must pass each subject that forms part of that year of study. There are a small number of exceptions to this rule:

The first three exceptions refer to programmes in Science, excluding the years 2-4 BSc (Computer Science and Software Engineering), BSc (Theoretical Physics and Mathematics) and the BSc (Finance and Venture Management).

In First-Year Science, students may pass the year by compensation by passing three of their subjects, obtaining at least 30% in their fourth subject and obtaining at least 40% on aggregate in the four subjects. Such student may not continue with the failed subject in second year unless they obtained at least 35% in that subject. Therefore if the failed subject has below 35% and is a requirement in the second year of the programme (such as Biology or Chemistry in the Biotechnology programme, Experimental Physics in the Astrophysics programme, or Mathematics in programmes involving Computer Science, etc) students must either repeat the failed subject in order to meet the requirements or seek to switch to another programme (if any) for which they are qualified.

In Second-Year Science, students may pass the year by compensation by passing two of their subjects, obtaining at least 30% in their third subject and obtaining at least 40% on aggregate in the three subjects. Students may only continue in Third-Year with subjects in which they obtained at least 40%.

Students in Third-Year Science need to pass the third year examination in science and achieve 45% in each subject that they wish to continue with in Fourth-Year. Students passing third science but failing to achieve the standard for entry to fourth year will be awarded the BSc(Pass). Students may Pass Third-Year Science by compensation if they achieve at least 45% in one subject and between 35% and 39% in the second subject.

In First-Year Arts, students may pass by compensation by passing two of their subjects, obtaining at least 35% in their third subject and obtaining at least 40% on aggregate, provided that the two passed subjects are compatible in 2nd year. Such students may only continue in 2nd year with subjects in which they have obtained at least 40%, hence students cannot pass by compensation in a subject that is a requirement for the second-year of the programme.

Students of Double Mathematics in First-Year Arts or Science need to obtain 50% in Summer in order to continue with Mathematics in Second-Year. Students who pass but fail to reach 50% may continue in Second-Year with Mathematical Studies and their second subject. Students who fail in summer may take special examinations in autumn to allow them to pass and to proceed to Mathematical Studies in Second-Year Arts.

There are a number of programmes in second-/third-year for which entry is competitive or otherwise restricted. Consult the relevant department for details. These include:

Psychology for MH101 students.

Single Honours in Economics, Geography, Mathematics, Mathematical Studies, Music, Statistics.



In order to pass a subject a student must:

- Pass all required modules.
- Obtain 40% on aggregate in the subject.
- Pass modules to a credit value of at least half the credit value of the subject.
- Not fall below 25% in any module.

A student who fails to fulfill all the above requirements but whose average mark in the subject is above 38% will be assigned a technical fail grade of 38% or incomplete as appropriate. A subject mark will not be allocated to a student who has insufficient credits - either by not being registered or by not attending the relevant examination or by submitting no continuous assessment for a module.

In order to pass a module a student must fulfill all the requirements of the module, as stated in the module description in the calendar, and in addition obtain 40% in the module. Such conditions may require that a student achieve a certain minimum in continuous assessment, and/or in an oral/practical exam and/or in the written exam, or such other conditions as are appropriate. A student who fails to fulfill any of the above requirements will have their module mark capped at 23%. A module once passed is passed in perpetuity. However if a module has been passed more than 5 years previously, then a Head of Department may require supplementary work of a student in order that the student may progress.

Registration and Withdrawal

Students must register for each subject and all modules that they are taking during the year at the registration period at the beginning of the academic year. Restrictions may apply for enrolment in optional/elective modules that have restricted entry. First-Year students may change a subject choice up to the end of the fourth week of the first semester. No changes are permitted after this date.

Second and higher year students may change their module choices, with the written permission of the Head of Department, in each semester up to the end of the second week of that semester. No changes are permitted after this date.

Full-time students must register for 60 credits per year and no more than 35 in any one semester. The only exceptions are in those programmes whose structure explicitly requires an unequal distribution of the credit load, such as programmes with industrial work placement in one or other semester.

Full-time students may withdraw from a module up to 6 weeks after the start of first semester, and register for a replacement module in second semester (with permission of the Head of Department) provided that their credits remains above 25 and that there are extra appropriate credits available in the second semester. After this date withdrawal is not allowed. In all cases, students are entered for the examination in the modules for which they are registered. Failure to attend for examination constitutes an attempt at the examination. Where a student fails to present for a Spring/Summer Examination in a module, a judgment of "Absent" is recorded for that module. "Absent" is counted as an attempt at an examination. Where a module is assessed wholly by Continuous Assessment, and the student presents no work, no mark is recorded.

Repeating

Students who fail to pass a year of a programme must repeat all of the modules that they failed, or suitable substitute modules, in the subjects that they failed. These may be repeated at the autumn supplemental examinations if there is a provision for repeat exams in those failed modules, or in a subsequent year if the module is still on offer. The University may discontinue or alter modules in subsequent years. A student with the permission of the Head of Department may elect to take another optional module in place of a failed optional module. Some modules which are

assessed by means of laboratory assignments, continuous assessment or project work may not have supplemental examinations in the autumn, but may be repeated in a subsequent year. Where appropriate modules that are examined substantially by means of an essay or equivalent may allow (re-)submission, for the Autumn supplementary exam, of that essay by a deadline determined by the Department and the mark allowed for such an essay may be capped at 40%. Where a student repeats the examination component of a module, the continuous assessment component will be carried forward from the previous attempt at the module. In all cases of repeating, students will be examined on the content of the module of the current academic year, but the department will attempt to accommodate 'exam only' students by the provision of alternative questions where the content of the module may have altered significantly. Where a module has been discontinued, an examination paper will be prepared for repeat 'exam-only' students for the year immediately following the offering of the module, unless the module was examined entirely by continuous assessment. In no circumstances will examination papers be prepared based on content more than one year out of date. Where the method of assessment of a module changes significantly (e.g. examination-based to continuous assessment) there may be a requirement for students to re-register and re-attend the module in a subsequent year. For the purposes of compensation, the most recent mark in a subject or module is used.

Honours Standards

For students repeating modules the rules for obtaining honours awards are listed in the section 'Repeating for Honours'.

Honours in Subjects

In each subject, other than the minor subject in a Major-Minor programme, in each year, honours are awarded according to the following criteria:

First Class Honours	70-100%
Second Class Honours Grade I	60-69%
Second Class Honours Grade II	50-59%
Third Class Honours	45-49%
Pass	40-44%

In each year the marks are the weighted average of the module marks of that year in the subject, provided the conditions for passing the subject have been fulfilled.

The final year subject mark will incorporate, where relevant, the penultimate year mark weighted at 30%, applied only to the student's advantage. For students whose penultimate year is spent abroad on one of the BA International programmes, the Second-Year mark is used. Where students are pursuing a joint honours programme in the penultimate year and progress to a single honours programme in final year the penultimate mark of the relevant subject is used.

Honours in the Qualification

Honours are awarded in the overall degree examination, according to the marks criteria:

First Class Honours	70-100%
Second Class Honours Grade I	60-69%
Second Class Honours Grade II	50-59%
Third Class Honours	45-49%
Pass	40-44%

In order to qualify for honours, students must obtain the results in question on the aggregate of the ordinary semester examinations of the year in question.



Repeating for Honours

Honours are not normally awarded in repeat examinations. The following rules apply to **final year**. Students may repeat modules (once only) up to 15 credits (of the 60 available) in the autumn supplemental examination or in the examinations in the subsequent year and still retain the entitlement to an honours award, which includes the contribution from the repeated modules. A student who chooses to repeat a passed module, or to take a new module in lieu of a passed module, in order to try and improve a result must relinquish the mark first obtained and accept either 40% or the mark obtained at the second sitting, thus obtaining a lower result on such a module may result in a lower class of Honours being awarded in both the subject and/or the overall qualification than was originally offered.

This provision of repeating and still having the right to obtain honours is being introduced on a pilot basis to allow flexibility in the system to cope with students who due to certified or uncertified illness, trauma, stress or other factors may have been absent for, or have under-performed in, some components of their examinations.

Students may reject their degree result and elect to repeat their entire degree examination (once only) in a subsequent year. Honours may be awarded in such cases.

Students pursuing joint honours programmes may retain their result in one subject and repeat the other subject (once only) in its entirety, in a subsequent year, to try to improve their grade in the second subject. Similarly students may repeat the Major component of a major-minor programme (once only) in its entirety, in a subsequent year, to try to improve their grade in that subject. In such cases honours will also be classified in the Degree qualification.

Other than the above, students who repeat modules worth more than 15 credits lose the entitlement to obtain honours in the subjects they are repeating, and in the overall qualification, but may retain any honours award already obtained in their other subjects. Honours will not then be awarded in the subjects in the autumn supplemental or subsequent repeat examinations. Exceptions to this rule will be made only in the gravest of circumstances.

Transfer Students

Students transferring from other recognised universities or third level institutions may receive credit for work done in the other institution, in accordance with the credit value of the work done and its relevance to the programme they wish to pursue at NUI Maynooth. However, they will only be awarded honours in a subject if they are examined on the full subject for that year at NUI Maynooth. For the purposes of compensation, the mark of modules completed elsewhere and allowed for credit, will be notionally calculated at 40%. For degree students, honours are only awarded in the overall qualification if the full final year programme is taken at NUI Maynooth, and the provision for incorporating the penultimate year's mark only applies if the full relevant course was pursued at NUI Maynooth.

Discretion of the Board of Examination

The Board of Examiners reserve the right to adjust the marks of any student, taking into account the advice of the relevant departments, the advice of the relevant external examiners and the overall performance of the student. This is particularly relevant in borderline cases. In addition, the departmental examiner, in consultation with the external examiner, may make adjustments to marks of students, based on medical or other personal circumstances that in their professional opinion have resulted in the examination marks not being a fair result for the student. In the case of the degree examination the Board of Examiners may award to BA candidates, including BA(Finance), BA(Music) etc., the degree of:

- BA Pass by compensation, where the student has achieved an overall average mark of 40% and has achieved at least 35% in each subject.
- BA (Pass), where the student has and has achieved an overall average mark of 40% with at least 30% in each subject.

Scholarships and Awards

Scholarships and awards are typically decided after the summer examination board meetings and before the autumn board meetings. It is not intended that the provision for repeating in autumn should create a pressure to repeat unnecessarily in order to compete for a prize or award. The award of scholarships and prizes will therefore be determined for those students who have completed their programme of study for the year at the summer sitting of the examinations.

Optional Modules from Other Subjects

Second- or Third-Year Arts students or Third- or Fourth-Year Science or Engineering students may, with the permission of the heads of both relevant departments, take a suitable module in another subject in lieu of an optional module in their own subject. This permission is subject to:

- The student being qualified to take the module;
- The module being available at a suitable time, there being space in the class for the student, and the receiving department having the capacity to cope with any such extra students;
- The credit weight of such module(s) is no greater than 5 ECTS for double honours programmes or 10 ECTS for single honours programmes;
- The integrity of the programme of study of the student not being compromised.