

Degree Outcomes Statement – 2023

Institutional Degree Classification Profile

As a large globally connected Russell Group institution, the University of Liverpool is committed to providing a consistently high-quality academic environment, enabling our students to succeed academically and personally as well-rounded, enquiring global citizens prepared for life beyond graduation. Through carefully designed programmes of study and rich extra-curricular opportunities students develop as knowledgeable, adaptable and skilled contributors to the local and global society. At the heart of our curricula is a focus on intellectual enquiry, rigour and challenge.

Over the past five years, 84% of students at the University of Liverpool have achieved good honours awards (Class I and II:1). The overall position and the distribution across classes remained largely stable until 2020-21 when there was a rise in the number of students awarded Class I and the proportion of good honours awards rose to 88% due to safety net provisions and changes to assessment instituted by the University in the Major Disruption Policy. This proportion of good honours dropped in 2022-23 to 82%, remaining slightly above the pre-pandemic levels of 2018-19 (79%).

Whilst the statement has aggregated data into one overall Racially Minoritised (RM) group (all non-White students with Not Known/Provided also removed), the University looks at disaggregated data that underpins this grouping and targets attention to discrete cohorts.

The breakdown of degree attainment across classes for the past five years is summarised as follows:

Class	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
Class I	28.8%	33.8%	41.7%	35.6%	31.9%	33.7%
Class Two Division One	50.0%	50.7%	46.4%	50.0%	50.2%	49.5%
Class Two Division Two	17.6%	13.7%	10.4%	12.2%	15.2%	14.2%
Class Three	2.0%	1.3%	0.8%	1.1%	1.7%	1.5%
Degree Non-Honours	1.7%	0.5%	0.7%	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%

Detailed analysis of the overall institutional position in relation to particular student cohorts has been undertaken and reviewed. These include, but are not limited to, analysis by ethnicity, age, sex, socioeconomic measures (including POLAR) and students with any registered disability. The following headlines are noted:

- Students with a disability achieve a high percentage of Class I and II:1 degrees - with a total of 84.4% over the last five years, above the 83.8% of students without a disability. Although the proportion of Class I degrees is higher amongst students without a recorded disability, the number of graduating students with a registered disability has increased year on year.
- A difference in the level of attainment between sexes is evident over the last five years, with a lower percentage of students identifying as males consistently achieving Class I and II:1 degrees. However, the gap closed by 0.8% from the latest year 2022-23 compared to the previous one.

- The upper POLAR groups (quintiles 4 and 5), outperform those in lower groups with regards to attainment of Class I and II:1 degrees. There is a consistent and significant gap between the highest and lowest groups, however this gap is monitored and activities to address it planned accordingly through our Access and Participation Plan.
- There is disparity in the percentage of Class I and II:1 degrees being awarded to RM students when compared to White students, and the gap has widened year on year since 2020-21. A range of interventions are in train to address this.

Institutional data are also interrogated at the more granular level of subject in relation to the key student groups. A Faculty level breakdown of main features is provided in later sections.

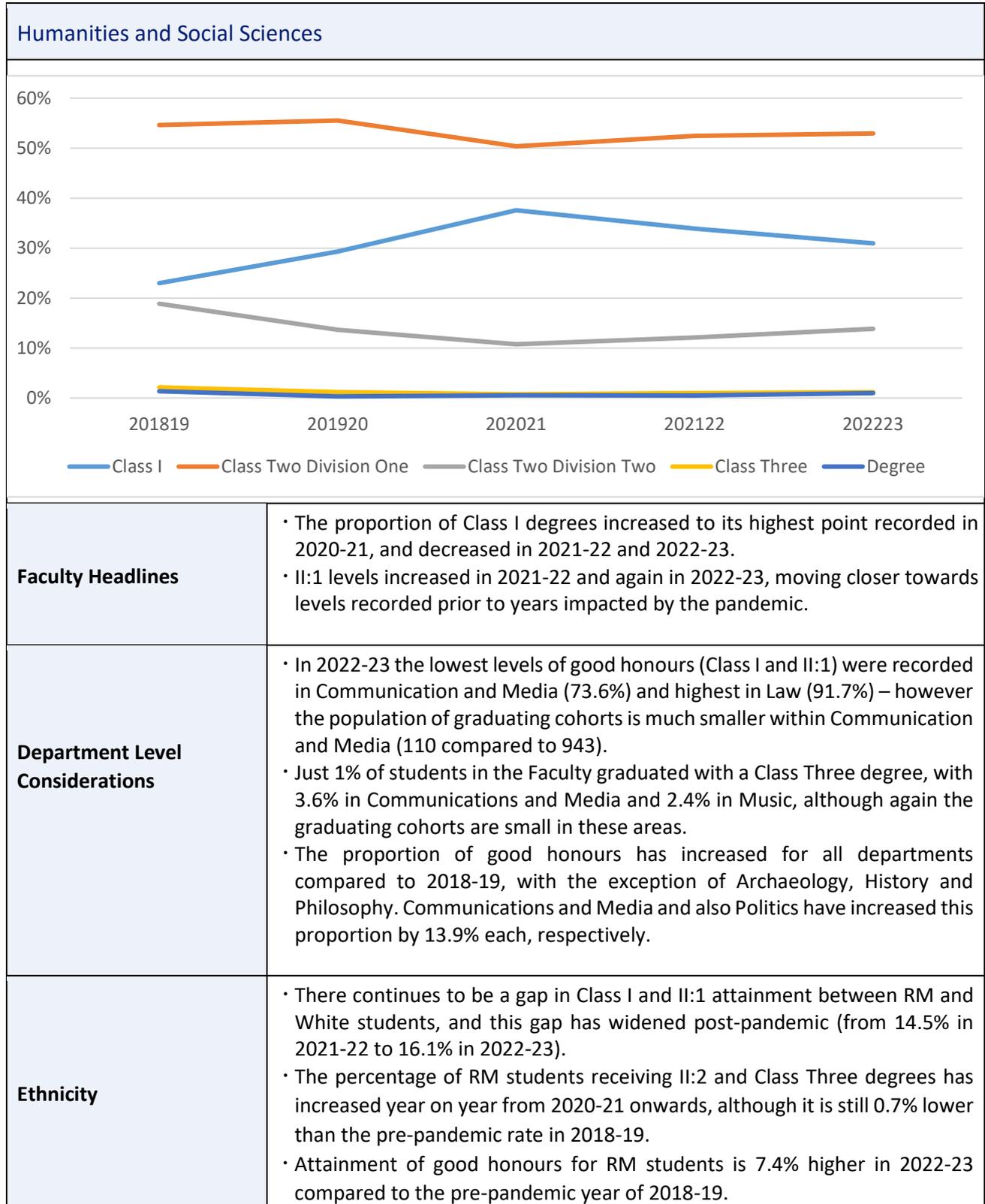
The University has introduced a learner data dashboard and scorecard at discipline level which prompts programme and department teams to analyse their student cohorts by main characteristics (such as domicile, ethnicity, age and gender). This dashboard also enables detailed consideration of combinations of characteristics and features such as entry qualifications, partner entry route and specific disability type. Action planning at subject level based on these data then addresses priorities in relation to the performance of our student groups. Annual subject-level action planning is undertaken as part of our regular quality assurance activity, with Faculty and institutional oversight through Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Senate.

Identified sustained attainment gaps are being addressed through activity underpinning our Student Success Framework and via targeted work linked to our Access and Participation Plan. Using granular data, trend analysis and comparisons to externally benchmarked metrics, the University is able to better understand where targeted activity is required to address gaps and ensure maximum levels of support for student attainment.

Please note, the summary table and headlines noted above exclude non-classified degrees in Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science, (MBChB, BDS, BVSc). However, all areas of the University consider and report on the performance of their students with respect to continuation and achievement through the standard quality assurance process.

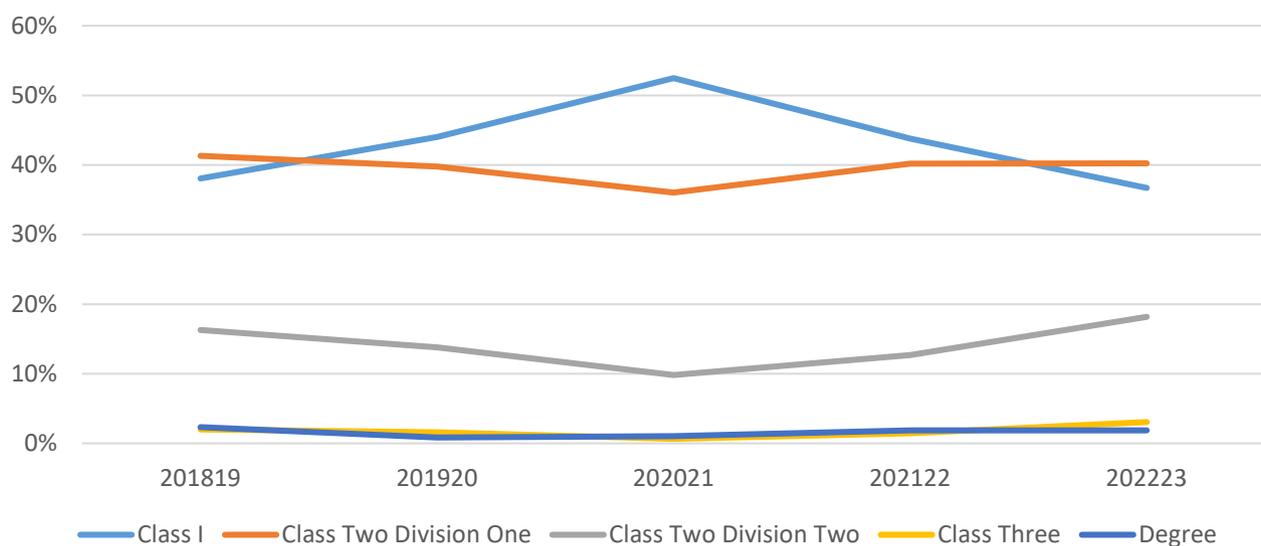
Faculty and Department Profiles

Trends in degree classifications over time across Faculty and department areas are detailed below. Headlines are raised in the context of relevant features of the student population, including changes in the volume of students and relevant characteristics.



<p>Domicile</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88.0% of home students recorded a Class I or II:1 degree, compared to 83.9% of overseas students. • The level of Class Three degrees recorded by overseas students in 2022-23 was 1.2%, compared with 0.5% for home students. • POLAR4 Quintile 1 students are 5.4% more likely to attain good honours in 2022-23 compared to 2018-19.
<p>Gender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85.4% of females obtained Class I and II:1 degrees in 2022-23 compared to 78.1% of male students, however, the gap between male and female attainment has reduced by 0.6% compared to the previous year. • 78.1 % of males obtained this higher class of degree, which is higher than the 2018-19 pre-pandemic level of 75.0%. • This is reflective of the overall institutional profile.
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate of attainment of Class I and II:1 degrees for students with a disability is no longer higher compared to those without, and now has a 2.0% gap for 2022-23. • 82.2% of students with disabilities obtained a Class I or II:1 degree in 2021-22, which is in line with the institutional profile.
<p>Considerations</p>	<p>The data for HSS reflects the institutional picture of the number of good honours degrees awarded beginning to return to pre-pandemic levels. Work is ongoing across the Faculty to provide enhanced academic, mental health and wellbeing support as well as Year in Industry and Study Abroad opportunities to enhance learning and potential for self-development towards attainment.</p> <p>The gap between the attainment of Racially Minoritised and White students is being addressed in the Faculty by a focused Education Project Lead who is working with the Student Success Board.</p> <p>We are also particularly focused on the experience and attainment of international students and especially those joining the University from Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University and University of Liverpool International College. More students with registered disabilities graduated in 2022-23 than any other year however the proportion of these students attaining a good honours degree has fallen for the first time over the same period. Learning and Teaching Support Officers employed across the Faculty continue to provide targeted and sustained support to students and this will be further reviewed over the coming year.</p>

Science and Engineering



Faculty Headlines

- The proportion of Class I degrees increased to 88.5% in 2020-21, the highest point recorded over the five year period, but has since reduced by 11.6% to 76.9% in 2022-23, which is lower than pre-pandemic levels.
- Classification profiles over the last two years are broadly reflective of the institutional picture. This Faculty used to be the only one where Class I degrees were the most common, but II:1s are now the majority as per the other two Faculties.

Department Level Considerations

- All subject areas with the exception of Chemistry have seen a reduction in the proportion of Class I or II:1 degrees for 2022-23 compared to the previous year.
- The lowest levels of Class I or II:1s degrees is in Electrical Engineering and Electronics (65.6%) compared to the highest in Geography and Planning (93.0%).
- 1.6% of students in the Faculty graduated with a Class Three degree, however, this does increase to 3.8% for Electrical Engineering and Electronics and 3.1% for Mechanical, Materials and Aerospace Engineering. These cohorts are also smaller in this most recent year and robust conclusions cannot be drawn at the more granular department level.

Ethnicity

- RM students no longer outperform their White peers at Class I and the gap has reversed to -2.4% within the Faculty.
- 47.0% of White students obtain II:1s, compared to 35.0% of RM students and the gap in attainment between these two groups is increasing towards pre-pandemic levels.
- 6.6% of RM students achieved a Class Three or Degree qualification, compared to 2.9% of White students.

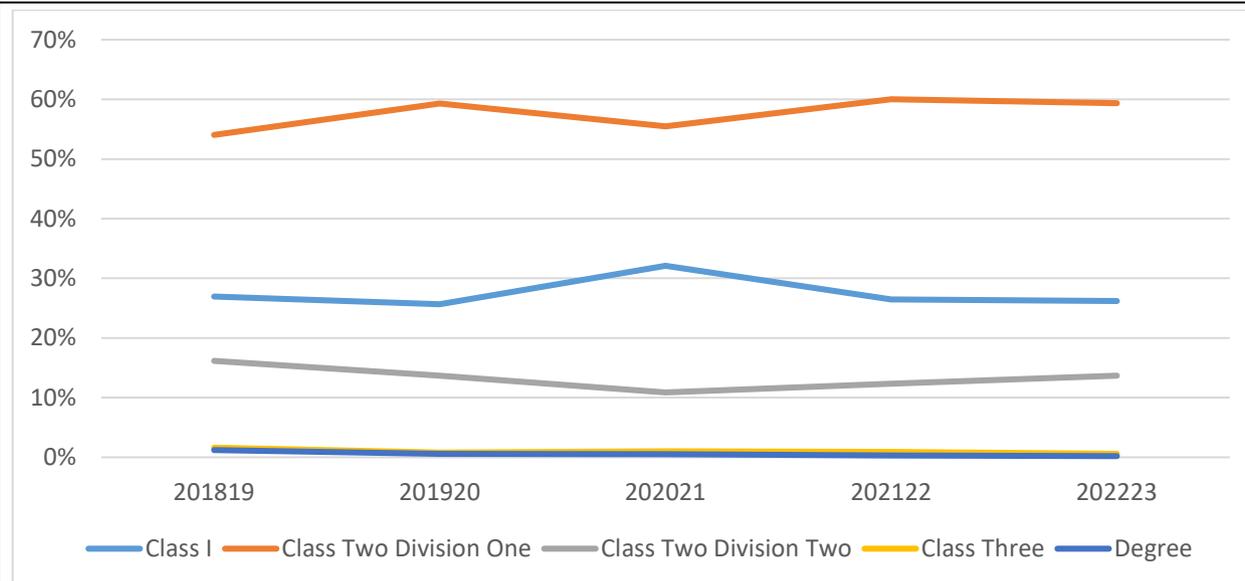
Domicile

- 82.3% of home students attained a Class I or II:1 degree, compared to 71.3% of overseas students.
- The level of Class Three degrees recorded by overseas students in 2022-23 was 3.9%, compared with 2.1% for home students.

<p>Gender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82.7% of females obtained Class I or II:1 degrees in 2022-23, representing the lowest level recorded since 2018-19. • 73.8% of males obtained good honours in 2022-23, which is the lowest level recorded over this time period and a 7.4% decrease compared to the year before.
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate of attainment of Class I and II:1 degrees is 2.2% higher in 2022-23 for students with a disability compared to those without, however when looking solely at Class I, students without a registered disability have a 5.7% higher proportion of this degree classification. • 78.9% of students with disabilities obtained a Class I or II:1 degree in 2021-22, which is 3.2% lower than the institutional profile.
<p>Considerations</p>	<p>Over the period analysed, entrance requirements have been altered, with Computer Science and Engineering increasing their required grades. The requirement for an A grade in A-level Mathematics to enter mathematics programmes was added in 2019, and Chemistry have implemented a maths test for all students who lack A-level Mathematics. We have conducted a Student Success Innovation Project: An investigation into ethnicity awarding gaps within the School of Physical Sciences, the recommendations and findings of which have been presented to the Academic Success Board. Mandatory modules have been introduced in Chemistry, all programmes in the Schools of Environmental Sciences and Engineering with significant EDI components. In the pandemic-affected two years of the period analysed, the implementation of online, non-proctored assessments and open book examinations with longer-than-usual time periods for completion necessitated by the pandemic is thought to account for the uptick in first class outcomes, in line with reports from other Russell Group STEM subject leaders. In-class tests and proctored examinations were re-implemented in AY 2022-23 and outcomes have returned to 2018-19 levels.</p>

Health and Life Sciences

Note this data does not include clinical subjects with classifications of Pass or Pass with Honours/ Commendations/Distinction



<p>Faculty Headlines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85.5% of graduates obtained Class I and II:1 degrees in 2022-23, higher than the institutional profile in the same year. • It must be considered that this is not reflective of all student awards within Faculty, as the clinical subject classifications are not included.
<p>Department Level Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82.9% of students in the School of Health Sciences obtained a Class I or II:1, with 93.9% obtaining these levels in the School of Psychology. The lowest levels were recorded in the School of Life Sciences, at 80.1%, a 9.8% decrease from the year before. • The proportion of good honours for all departments is higher in 2022-23 than it was pre-pandemic in 2018-19, and Psychology has seen a 7.6% increase which is the highest of all departments in the Faculty. • The lowest levels of Class I were recorded in Psychology (15.5%) and highest in the School of Health Sciences (39.7%). • Just 0.7% of students in the Faculty graduated with a Class Three degree, with low levels across each of the department areas.
<p>Ethnicity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15.3% of RM students recorded a Class I degree, an increase of 3.5% compared to the previous year and higher than pre-pandemic levels. • The proportion of good honours for RM students has increased by 4.9% from 2018-19 to 2022-23. • The actual numbers of RM students in the graduating cohort is higher than pre-pandemic levels.
<p>Domicile</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 87.7% of home students recorded a Class I or II:1 degree, compared to 67.2% of overseas students, however, it must be noted that much smaller cohorts of overseas students in this area make further analysis and conclusions unreliable. • 85.5% of POLAR4 Quintile 1 students attained good honours in 2022-23, which is an increase of 10.1% compared to 2018-19, and this is a higher rate of growth compared to that of Quintile 5 students.

<p>Gender</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86.7% of females obtained Class I and II:1 degrees in 2022-23, continuing to surpass pre-pandemic levels. • The gap compared to male students has reduced to its lowest point ever at 5.7%, a decrease of 6.6% compared to the previous year. • 81.0% of males obtained this higher class of degree, which is the highest level since 2018-19.
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate of attainment of Class I and II:1 degrees is 7.6% lower for students with a disability compared to those without, and this gap has grown by 6.8% compared to the previous year. • 79.8% of students with disabilities obtained a Class I or II:1 degree in 2021-22, which is 1.0% lower than the institutional profile. • Since 2018-19, the proportion of good honours for disabled students has increased by 8.9%.
<p>Considerations</p>	<p>The Faculty data only covers 3 of our 6 Schools as clinical classifications are not included here.</p> <p>The spread of awards between Class I and Class II: 1 has increased in Health Sciences with 82.9% of students obtaining a Class I or II:1. This demonstrates the impact of the comprehensive review conducted in 2020-21 of the assessment processes in Health Sciences across all 6 programmes. The impact of this is clear and there is an overall increase in the higher-grade awards.</p> <p>Psychology remains consistent with 93.9% students obtaining Class I and Class II:1.</p> <p>The lowest levels of Class I or II:1, were recorded in the School of Life Sciences, at 80.1%, a 9.8% decrease from the year before. We think there are some residual issues related to students not used to sitting exams and expect this decline moving forward. We will, however, continue to monitor it.</p> <p>The proportion of good honours for the departments is higher in 2022-23 than it was pre-pandemic in 2018-19, and Psychology has seen a 7.6% increase which is the highest of all departments in the Faculty.</p> <p>Only 0.7% of students in the Faculty graduated with a Class Three degree, with low levels across each of the department areas.</p> <p>Last year we noted that the awarding gap was too wide between Black and White students but also for other cohorts and more investigation was needed to understand this. During the last academic year, the Faculty introduced an Education Theme Project focusing on Closing Awarding Gaps, across cohorts where we had concerns about degree attainment. This project has explored what Faculty and Subject areas are doing to close the gaps and what initiatives have been put in place to achieve this. It is therefore pleasing to note that 15.3% of RM students achieved a Class I degree, which represents an increase of 3.5% compared to the previous year and actual numbers of RM students in the graduating cohort is still higher than pre-pandemic levels. The proportion of good honours for RM students has increased by 4.9% from 2018-19 to 2022-23. There is still work to do on this and the Education Theme Project continues in this academic year to monitor actions and initiatives.</p> <p>The outcomes of female students remains high with 86.7% of females obtaining Class I and II:1 degrees in 2022-23, and continues to surpass pre-pandemic</p>

	<p>levels. 81.0% of males achieved higher classes of degree, the highest level since 2018-19.</p> <p>The gap between male and female students continues to narrow and is at its lowest ever point at 5.7%. We will continue to support recruitment teams in more targeted initiatives to attract male applicants onto our health programmes as there is still a high proportion of female students.</p> <p>Disabled students had a slightly lower proportion achieving the higher grades compared to the institutional profile. We will monitor this as part of the Education Theme Project to ensure it does not become a pattern.</p> <p>All Schools within the Faculty will be required to comment specifically on the awarding gaps for their cohorts in their Annual Subject Action Plans (ASAP) and Faculty continue to monitor their actions and initiatives to reduce gaps.</p>
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Action planning at subject level based on these data then addresses priorities in relation to the performance of our student groups. Through the process described in 'Identifying good practice and actions' below, annual subject-level action planning is undertaken as part of our regular quality assurance activity, with Faculty and institutional oversight through Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Senate.

Assessment and Marking Practices

The University assures itself that assessment criteria meet sector reference points through the key processes outlined below.

The University has an agreed process for [programme approval](#) which is published as part of the wider Framework for Quality and Standards. Consideration of external reference points is part of this process, e.g. Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and OfS Sector Recognised Standards.

During the design phase of programme approval, programme teams work with colleagues from the [Centre for Innovation in Education \(CIE\)](#) who support the development of the curriculum using the principles of the Liverpool Curriculum Framework ([LCF](#)) which includes the hallmark of Authentic Assessment. The curriculum design process is underpinned by a constructive alignment approach.

The University has a published [Code of Practice on Assessment](#) and a number of associated appendices. The Code and appendices are reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure appropriateness and alignment and due consideration of any internal and external requirements:

- [Appendix A](#) - University Marks Scale, Marking Descriptors and Qualification Descriptor
- [Appendix F](#) - Assessment Appeals Procedure for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes
- [Appendix H](#) - External Examiner System for Taught Provision
- [Appendix K](#) - Policy on Adjustments and Assessment to Examination Arrangements for Disabled Students including [Annex 1](#): Guidelines for marking and feedback for students with specific learning difficulties (SpLDs)
- [Appendix M](#) - Policy on Extenuating Circumstances in Relation to Performance in Assessments and Examinations.

The University has a published [Framework for Quality and Standards](#)

Assurance that quality management processes are effective is built into oversight at all levels within the University. Oversight of standards in relation to assessment is maintained at local level by Module Review Boards and Boards of Examiners, Faculty oversight is at Faculty Quality Committees (or equivalent) and institutional oversight is undertaken by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. In addition, quality and standards at programme level are overseen via subject reporting, which is received at Faculty and University level. The delegation of activities to various levels within the University ensures that activities remain effective.

The Module Review Board has oversight of any changes to marking practices and any impact this might have on grade profiles with external examiner approval. Boards of Examiners are also made aware of any module level changes to marking practices in order to be able to consider the overall impact on student grades. Finally, the University's process of [Internal Periodic Review](#) provides opportunities for additional assurance in this area and highlights any departmental changes to marking practices and associated impacts on grades.

Academic Governance

The University has both a robust governance structure and [effective quality assurance processes](#) in place to ensure that the value of qualifications awarded over time is protected. [Senate](#) is the University's senior academic committee and has responsibility for the University's awards, the quality and standards of the academic programmes and approving any changes to the regulatory Code of Practice on Assessment. Academic Quality and Standards Committee has delegated authority from Senate to approve operational matters in relation to quality and standards. Ongoing oversight and evaluation of assessment procedures is maintained by the Assessment and Feedback Working Group. This group regularly (five meetings per year) reviews policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose and that sector wide best practice is used to inform any changes and developments.

The University has a fair, accessible and timely appeals process for handling academic appeals. The OIA Annual Statements routinely confirm that we have a below median number of cases subsequently found justified or partially justified by the OIA so we retain confidence in the appropriateness of our appeal procedures and decision-making.

Externality is incorporated into the processes outlined above by the use of external input into monitoring, review and via External Examiners.

Classification Algorithms

The University's classification algorithms are contained within the documents below:

- [System for the Classification of Three-Year Non-Clinical Undergraduate Degrees](#)
- [Classification of Four-year and Five-year Non-Clinical Undergraduate Degrees](#)

The University has a single algorithm for all 3 year undergraduate non clinical programmes and a single algorithm for all 4 year undergraduate non clinical programmes that include a year in industry or a year abroad. Profiling (automatic uplift) is detailed in the documents above. Information regarding resits is also within these documents.

The philosophy and rationale for the algorithms is contained in the following document: [Code of Practice on Assessment](#). All regulatory information is published on the Academic Quality and Standards Division web site with full public access. All students are provided with a [University Handbook](#). This provides a summary of the requirements for achieving a degree.

Other stakeholders (e.g. academic and professional services staff involved in marking or servicing Boards of Examiners) are made aware of the relevant regulations through staff inductions, general training and annual updates. External Examiners receive the relevant information via appointment documentation and induction activity. Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies also have access as relevant and are consulted appropriately during any review activity.

The University does not plan on any immediate change to its algorithms, but regularly reviews appropriate evidence to ensure they remain fit for purpose. There have been no changes to the algorithms since 2010.

Teaching Practices and Learning Resources

The University of Liverpool has established a dedicated unit to promote and enable teaching excellence through the strategic development of the staff at the University. [The Academy](#) provides opportunities for colleagues to develop their teaching practice at all stages of their academic career.

The Academy has a fully accredited Advance HE, UKPSF scheme (ULTRA) which has seen the University increase its fellowship numbers over the past few years, The Academy works closely with the Centre for Innovation in Education (CIE) in supporting staff to develop teaching practice and support curriculum design aligned to our [Curriculum Framework](#).

The Academy has also been at the forefront of external involvement with Advance HE regarding the training of external examiners. Following participation in the pilot in 2017, the Advance HE Professional Development Course (PDC) for External Examiners has been delivered at the University of Liverpool by The Academy. Participants who complete the PDC go on to the Advance HE register which qualifies them to be External Examiners for other universities.

Developments in the curriculum have been underpinned by significant investment in the digital infrastructure and estate, including state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces, such as new music practice rooms, architecture studios, language laboratories and specialist PC hubs.

In addition to investing in the physical estate the University has continued to invest in digital infrastructure and resources to support learning and teaching, such as an in-house [lecture capture system](#) and e-portfolio systems.

Students are supported at all stages of their journey with the University of Liverpool and we continue to invest in this, such as increased mental health support as well as a sector-leading careers and employability service which puts students at the heart of this support model with the [Career Studio](#).

Our library provision shows consistently high student satisfaction and we continue to invest in this provision. The library hosts the University's central academic support unit, [KnowHow](#), which offers a range of face to face and on-line opportunities including student workshops and one-to-one writing development tutorials, and a suite of on-line interactive resources developed in-house for Liverpool students.

Since the launch of *KnowHow* activity on-line in 2017, engagement with *KnowHow* has dramatically increased across the student body. Access to the *KnowHow* on-line module via the University's VLE ensures that students can engage whenever they need with academic support on topics as diverse as academic integrity, dissertation preparation, group work, presentation skills and preparing for examinations.

Identifying Good Practice and Actions

Our approach to monitoring programme data and progress against targets has been significantly enhanced by the availability of datasets and scorecards for subject-level analysis and action planning. Oversight of our

performance with respect to continuation, year averages and overall degree attainment and related subject level action planning is maintained through our Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Education Committee. Developments in access to data has enabled more detailed interrogation of gaps in relation to the overall student body, by discipline and by student characteristic group and has enhanced our capability to evaluate the impact of actions and dissemination of effective practice.

Actions in response to performance over the period of this statement include the development of transition support for mature learners and those with non-standard entry qualifications, targeted in course skills development activity, peer-based academic and social learning initiatives and the developments in the inclusive curriculum. An example of action to address transition is our work to align curricula with partner institutions. With respect to one local college, continuation among articulating students has increased to 91%, closing a gap relative to the cohort as a whole. A specialist transition programme of support put in place for the BTEC students in year 1, covering additional study skills, exam preparation and workshops on underpinning subject theory resulted in bringing down the first-year attainment gap compared to A level students to 5%. The pilot has now been rolled out to other subjects with students with BTECs and NTQs and an attainment gap. In support of our under-represented groups, including mature students, those with disabilities, and with mental health issues, we have introduced a number of initiatives to support continuation and attainment, including funding for assistive technologies and transcribing services for disabled students, running KnowHow workshops to support the use of these technologies, and promoting positive approaches to mental health such as through our well-attended Wellbeing Week activities.

The implementation of the Liverpool Curriculum Framework has delivered considerable change in the student learning experience, in particular through the focus on active learning, digital fluency and authentic assessment. This has led to the diversification of task types and outputs, a rebalancing of formative and summative assessment and broadening of student digital skills. Assessment redesign has been supported by the TESTA methodology (testa.ac.uk) particularly in Humanities and Social Sciences programmes, where significant enhancements have been made to the clarity and student understanding of rubrics, assessment formats and improvements to feedback. Dentistry developed an award-winning initiative called LIFTUPP, a competence-based learning- tracking/management system used by academic and clinical staff to provide individualised and timely feedback to students and report on their learning. LIFTUPP is now commercially available and is being used at other universities across the UK.

Our approach to the student experience and our overall student outcomes has been rated as Gold under the Teaching Excellence Framework, which is defined as the student experience and outcomes are typically outstanding.

The Degree Outcomes Statement will be reviewed and refreshed annually and formally approved by Council.

Risks and Challenges

Regular review of our data, action planning and progress through our committees at University, Faculty and subject level provides relevant opportunities to review our risks and challenges.