

GRADING SYSTEMS
Academic Programme Assessment
Policy and Procedure
 (Reference document 3AS06)

Grade Point Average Calculations

TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus uses an alphabetic grading system, which incorporates a calculation of an overall grade point average (GPA). This alphabetic grading scheme uses a specified number of credits at specific levels per award as its basis. This scheme applies to students following courses on a full-time basis (taking modules simultaneously with credits valued typically at 30 per semester or 60 per year) and in Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Standards (ACCS) mode (studying modules without restriction on the number of credits taken at one time).

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING
INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS

A grade, representative of the quality of a student's performance in a particular module shall be awarded at the end of each module for which a student is registered. Table 1 lists the grades that can be awarded.

ASSESSMENT OF AGGREGATE
PERFORMANCE

The aggregate performance of an individual student is represented by the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) in the examination for each stage or semester of the course followed. In order to determine the GPA for a particular student, the

following calculation is carried out. A Grade Point Value is assigned to the alphabetic grade a student has gained for each subject. (See Table 1).

The Grade Point Value is multiplied by the Credits to arrive at a Grade Credit Score for each subject/module. The Grade Credit Scores are then added together and divided by the credits for the stage or semester to arrive at the GPA. Credits gained as a result of being awarded an exemption (X) in a subject/module are not included in the calculation of GPA.

TABLE 1: GRADES TO BE AWARDED TO EACH SUBJECT/MODULE

Grade	Percentage Band	Grade Point Value	Credits Awarded	Indicative Quality of Performance
A	80-100	4.00	Yes	Excellent
B+	70-79	3.50	Yes	Very good
B	60-69	3.00	Yes	Good
B-	55-59	2.75	Yes	Above average
C+	50-54	2.50	Yes	Strong pass
C	40-49	2.00	Yes	Pass
D	35-39	1.50	Yes	Compensatory pass
F	<35	0.00	No	Fail
PS	40+	-	Yes	Pass in pass/fail module (not used in GPA calculation)
FL	<40	-	No	Fail in pass/fail module (not used in GPA calculation)
I			No	Deferral of result/work submission delayed by agreement
X			Yes	Student exempted from the requirements of the module because of previous equivalent learning (not used in GPA calculation)
W				Withdraw
NP				Not present/work not submitted without agreement
WH				Withhold result

AWARD CLASSIFICATIONS

An inherent feature of all modern examination systems allows for minimally acceptable performance in individual

subjects/modules to be less than that required for the course as a whole provided that the weaker performance in those subjects/modules is compensated for by

superior performance in the remaining subjects/modules.

- Pass the final examination as a whole, by attaining a GPA of 2.0.

In the Alphabetic Grading Scheme while a "D" is the minimally acceptable performance in any individual subject/module an average performance at "C" level (GPA of 2.0) over the entire course is required to pass an examination as a whole. Therefore, in general, a "D" grade will need to be compensated for by sufficient grades higher than "C" in individual subjects/modules.

To be eligible for consideration for an award at Merit, Distinction or Honours classification a candidate must:

- Satisfy all examination requirements, credits and other requirements for the course specified in the Approved Course Schedule; and
- Pass the final examination by virtue of passing in each required examination subject or module of the award stage at **the first attempt**; and

To be eligible for consideration for an award at Pass classification, a candidate must:

- Satisfy all the examination requirements, credits and other requirements for the course as specified in the Approved Course Schedule; and

- Have attained a GPA in the award stage of the course in accordance with the requirements in Table 2.

TABLE 2: GPA REQUIRED FOR AWARD CLASSIFICATION

GPA Required	Award Classification for Higher Certificate (NQAI Level 6) and Ordinary Bachelor Degree (NQAI Level 7)	Award Classification for Honours Bachelor Degree (NQAI Level 8)	Award Classification for Master's Degree (Taught) (NQAI Level 9)
2.00	Pass	Pass	Pass
2.50	Merit Grade 2	Second Class Honours, grade 2	Pass
3.00	Merit Grade 1	Second Class Honours, grade 1	Second Class Honours
3.25	Distinction	First Class Honours	First Class Honours

Award Classification for Master's Degree (Research) (NQAI Level 9)

The Degree of Master (Research) is of Honours standard and is awarded without classification.

APPLICATION TO RETAIN HONOURS AWARD CLASSIFICATION

In exceptional circumstances, candidates may apply to have an honours (or merit/distinction) award classification retained under specific conditions (4FAS24). This application may be made where a learner obtains an appropriate GPA for an honours (or merit/distinction) award classification in the first sitting, but does not pass all modules, but meets all of the following criteria:

- Obtained the required GPA for honours (or merit/distinction) classification in the first sitting of all modules. AND
- Obtained an F grade in no more than one module, up to a maximum of 10 credits, in the first sitting of an award year. AND
- Obtained a grade D or better in the remaining module at the next available opportunity.

These arrangements are on a pilot basis.

BORDERLINE CASES

An examination board may consider as a borderline case, any candidate presenting for an award, whose performance is considered borderline. In general, a GPA may be considered borderline when it is within 0.10 of a pass classification, or 0.04 of a pass with merit, distinction, or honours classification. Such consideration may be given provided the candidate has achieved full credits in all the prescribed modules. Such a candidate may have their classification adjusted at the discretion

of the examination board. An individual module grade adjustment is required to accommodate the mathematical calculation of the award classification to the intended outcome. In semesterised courses, where students having obtained an F grade in a particular module show substantial improvement between semester 1 and semester 2 in modules in similar academic areas within a level, the board may, at their discretion, return a D grade as the semester 1 result.

Substantial improvement would generally be considered as improvement by at least three grades (F to C+) between semester 1 and semester 2.

EMBEDDED "EXIT" AWARD

Students wishing to terminate their studies prior to the completion of an entire course may, where a lesser award exists and having successfully completed the requisite number of NFQ level of credits apply for an exit award. For example, a student registered on a level 7 ordinary degree course having successfully completed years 1 and 2 and accumulated 120 credits may wish to apply for an exit award of a NFQ Level 6 Higher Certificate (if available). This is not an option for students who wish to temporarily withdraw from a course and return at a later date. Students who are awarded an exit award may not immediately register (within the next academic year) on any follow-on course to the course for which the exit award has been obtained.

EXAMPLES OF CALCULATION OF GPA

CALCULATION OF GPA FOR THE AWARD STAGE OF A COURSE STRUCTURED IN SEMESTERS

Subject/Module	(A) Credits	(B) Grade	(C) Grade Point Value	(D) Grade Credit Score (AxC=D)
Semester 1				
Financial Management 1	10	B	3.0	30
Management 1	5	C+	2.5	12.5
Accounting and Audit Control 1	5	D	1.5	7.5
Taxation 1	5	C	2.0	10
Company Law 1	5	A	4.0	20
Total	30			80
Candidate's GPA for Semester 1 = 80/30 = 2.67				
Semester 2				
Financial Management 2	10	A	4.0	40
Management 2	5	B+	3.5	17.5
Accounting and Audit Control 2	5	C	2.0	10
Taxation 2	5	B	3.0	15
Company Law 2	5	A	4.0	20
Total	30			102.5

Candidate's GPA for semester 2 = 102.5/30 = 3.42

Candidate's cumulative GPA for Award Stage = $(2.67+3.42)/2 = 3.05$ Pass with Merit Grade 1