

Progress

Progress within the degree programme is subject to meeting the requirements set out in the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations.

Unsatisfactory Progress

Student attendance at lectures, seminars, tutorials and laboratory classes for stages 1 and 2 is monitored and overseen by the Degree Programme Director (DPD). Attendance is only one aspect of monitoring and ensuring satisfactory progress. In Chemistry satisfactory progress is also monitored by assessments during stage 1 and by the submission of practical reports for appropriate stage 1, 2 and 3 modules. The DPD may ask other Schools/subjects to notify him of the progress being made by chemistry students in modules taken outside Chemistry.

A student whose progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory will be notified in writing and invited to see the DPD, Director of Teaching and Learning or Head of School to explain their situation. Following this, the DPD may request closer monitoring of the student for a period of two weeks and / or will request the student to produce some written work. During the two week period where the student is 'on report' he/she must obtain signatures from staff to confirm attendance at scheduled teaching sessions. If the student's performance has not improved to the satisfaction of the DPD further action may be taken, including the recommendation that the student's programme of study should be terminated. The student may apply for a review of the DPD's decision (see the University Regulations).

Progression from one stage to another

At stages 1 and 2 for BSc degrees and stages 1, 2 and 3 for MChem degrees, Honours students must pass all modules registered for, at least on resit, before they may return for the next stage of the course, except that up to 20 credits of failed module(s) may be carried, to be assessed as an extra burden at the next normal occasion of assessment, provided the student has not already exhausted all these attempts.

BSc programmes with a year in industry

Students wishing to take a year in industry as part of the BSc programmes should normally have passed Inorganic, Organic, Physical and Structural Chemistry stage 2 modules.

BSc in Chemistry with European Studies

Students wishing to take a year in Europe as part of the BSc programmes should normally achieve an average mark of at least 50.0 in stage 1 chemistry and should have passed Inorganic, Organic, Physical and Structural Chemistry stage 2 modules, and normally with an overall mark of at least 55.0

MChem Chemistry and MChem Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry (F103 and F123)

Students who fail to achieve an average of 55.0 in their stage 2 examinations will normally be transferred from the MChem to the BSc Honours programme. The same criteria will be used for students who wish to transfer from BSc to MChem.

MChem Chemistry with Industrial Training and MChem Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry and Industrial Training (F106 and F124)

Students who fail to achieve an average mark of 55.0 in their stage 2 examinations will normally be transferred from the MChem to the BSc with Industrial Training.

MChem Chemistry with Study in North America (F105)

Students on this programme need to apply to North American universities before the semester 1 examination period, consequently a provisional decision on the basis of their stage 1 marks will be made. Students who fail to achieve an average mark of 60.0 in stage 1 examinations will not be permitted to apply. The final decision on whether this student can take up the placement will be taken after the stage 2 semester 1 examinations. Students will need to achieve an average mark of 55.0 to be allowed to go to North America.

MChem in Chemistry with Study in Europe

Students who fail to achieve an average mark of 55.0 (with no resits) in their stage 2 examinations will normally be transferred from the MChem to the BSc Honours programme in Chemistry (F100).

Progression with the MChem

The MChem programmes are of the 3 + 1 type, ie the first three years of study are common to both the BSc and corresponding MChem. MChem Students who fail modules in the first semester examinations at stage 3, or who are deemed to have made insufficient progress in module CHY3001 by the end of the first semester at stage 3, may be transferred to the BSc programme.

The rules governing the examining procedure are given in the University's Undergraduate Examination Conventions.

Assessment

Knowledge, initiative, understanding and performance are assessed through a combination of written examinations, open-book examinations, in-course assessment, written reports and oral examinations, as appropriate. The form of the assessment is indicated in the module descriptions in this Handbook. There are strict rules governing conduct in **all types of assessment**, which must be adhered to. Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, copying or fabrication of results will be treated severely in accordance with University procedures. The University procedures on irregularities can be found at:

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/assets/documents/Assess_Irreg_Supp_Guidance.pdf

Examinations

University examinations are held at the end of Semesters 1 and 2 for each stage of the course. These examinations cover the modules studied during the semester in which a particular examination is held. The papers are up to 3 hours duration and there is normally a choice of questions. It is university policy that the papers are marked 'blind', ie the names of candidates are only revealed after the marking is complete. The marking of all of the papers for stages 2, 3 and 4 is validated by a second marker and is scrutinised by external examiners. The three external examiners are senior academics from other universities with expertise across a range of chemistry topics (see also Marks).

Examination timetables will be posted on the examination notice board near lecture theatre 3. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they are registered for, and know the time and place of, the exams that they should sit. Students should note that a provisional timetable may be published before the final one and that times and places of examinations frequently change between provisional and final versions. Missed exams should be notified to tutors or other staff as soon as possible (see '**Absence from Examinations**'). The examination timetable is available at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/examinations/timetable>

Open-book examinations

Books, notes etc are not usually permitted in exams. Open-book examinations however do allow this. Further information about such exams will be provided by lecturers as appropriate.

In-course assessment

Practical work is assessed continually throughout the laboratory course subject to written reports being received by the laboratory organiser or designated staff. Laboratory reports must be produced by the individual student even if the experiment is done by two or more students together. Copying of another student's report will be regarded as cheating and treated accordingly. Strict deadlines for submission of laboratory reports must be adhered to. Requirements vary, but are given in the individual practical course manuals. Problems resulting in delay of submissions should be reported to the laboratory class organiser at the earliest opportunity. Some modules require written tests on one or more occasions during the semester, the details of which will be posted on the appropriate Stage notice board. Further information is included in the Handbook for Laboratory Organisers which is appended to this handbook.

Non-submission and late-submission of assessed work

Non-submission of assessed work will usually result in a mark of zero for that work. Exceptions to this are the same as those described under 'Absence from examinations'. Students are notified of deadlines for in-course assignments, practical reports etc and these should be adhered to (the Degree Programme Director or Director of Teaching and Learning have the authority to vary the deadline if he/she deems this to be justified). Penalties will be incurred for late submission; exceptions to this are the same as those described under '**Absence from examinations**' (see '**Late Submission of Assessed Work**')

Written reports

Where required, written reports should be word-processed and bound. Details about length and content will be provided as appropriate. The work of others, where this is included, must be acknowledged. As with other forms of in-course assessment, specified deadlines must be adhered to.

Oral examinations

Oral examinations, or vivas, are used to assess the candidate's ability to discuss, recall and interpret information attained and, in addition, give the student practice at being assessed in this way.

Marks

Examination marks are considered by the Board of Examiners before being released to students; in-course assessment marks will be returned to students before consideration by the Board. **All marks remain provisional** until they have been considered by the Board of Examiners in June. Students will be notified (see notice boards) of the dates when examination results are available. They should see their personal tutor, or telephone him/her by arrangement, to obtain the results. Formal notification of examination marks is sent to students following the Board of Examiners meeting in June.

The common scale

Marks are devised as integers on the following scale to represent attainment for each activity which yields marks (examinations, practicals and assessed coursework).

FACULTY OF SCIENCE, AGRICULTURE AND ENGINEERING
MARKING CRITERIA AND DEGREE CLASS DESCRIPTORS FOR
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES
(Revised July 2009)

The descriptive equivalents are intended as a guideline only and criteria will not necessarily apply equally to all pieces of assessed work (for example, presentational issues are likely to be less important for an answer to an examination question than for a project dissertation), and what is expected of a First Class performance will inevitably be different at Certificate level to that expected at Honours level. The Faculty expects that examiners will use the whole of the marking scale and to interpret these criteria in the context of the specific aims and objectives of the module, as indicated in the Module Outline Form, or piece of assessed work. Where deemed appropriate, other marking criteria may be used and in such cases they should be made available to students in advance of the assignment. It is important to ensure that comments made on assessed work justify the final mark awarded based on these descriptors and clear explanations for any deviations should be given

Mark Range	Descriptive Equivalent
70% – 100%	<p>University Common Scale description: First Class (modules used for degree classification), Excellent (other modules)</p> <p>A First Class/Excellent performance is distinguished by both breadth and depth of knowledge about the subject material, showing comprehensive awareness, and detailed understanding, interpretation and evaluation. There will be substantial evidence of critical analysis and the ability to apply knowledge to unseen situations. Material will be presented within a clear logical/systematic framework throughout and will demonstrate reading beyond the course material and the ability to employ critical reflection. At Honours and Masters level there will be evidence of the ability to think reflectively and creatively. Assignments such as an individual project report will be well-structured and well-referenced.</p> <p>The deciles within this class may be categorised as</p> <p>Outstanding: professional standard (90% – 100%) It should be rare for a mark to be awarded within this range, but it should certainly be achievable for an individual component of assessment (e.g. a piece of coursework, or an examination question). It should be awarded for work demonstrating outstanding and comprehensive understanding, with critical analysis and evaluation. In an examination situation the student will have presented a complete answer in a fully cogent manner, with no substantive errors or omissions. In individual project work there will be material which may be publishable.</p> <p>Exceptional: significantly above normal student expectations (80% – 89%) Evidenced by clear indications of comprehensive/detailed understanding and creative thought, and although there will be no substantive errors or omissions, the presentation or arguments will fall short of perfection.</p> <p>Excellent (70% – 79%) Evidenced by a comprehensive understanding, well-structured arguments and insight.</p>
60% – 69%	<p>University Common Scale description: Second Class, First Division (modules used for degree classification), Very Good (other modules)</p> <p>A Second Class, First Division/Very Good performance is one that demonstrates a sound/thorough understanding of material beyond that presented in the course, with breadth of knowledge but lacking in some depth, or vice versa. Critical analysis and the ability to apply knowledge to unfamiliar situations will be present, and work submitted will be relevant to the module/topic aims and objectives but not give a full treatment, relying to some extent on course material and likely to contain a few errors or omissions. Individual project work will be well presented and structured but with some limitations as to insight and critical evaluation.</p>
50% – 59%	<p>University Common Scale description: Second Class, Second Division (modules used for degree classification), Good (other modules):</p> <p>A Second Class, Second Division/Good performance is one that relies substantially on course material only and demonstrates breadth of knowledge but lacking depth. Critical analysis will be</p>

	<p>limited and there will also be only limited evidence of being able to apply knowledge to unfamiliar situations. Work presented will be relevant to the module/topic aims and objectives but rely largely on course material and contain some errors of understanding and of fact. An individual project will demonstrate competence but with only limited evidence of flair.</p>
40% – 49%	<p>University Common Scale description: Third Class (modules used for degree classification), Basic (other modules)</p> <p>A Third Class/Basic performance is one that demonstrates that a student has achieved the minimum level of performance to indicate that they have broadly achieved the intended learning outcomes but at a basic level only. It is evidenced by an understanding of material that lacks depth. There may be omission of some relevant material and/or partial use of irrelevant material. It is likely to contain errors of understanding and fact. An individual project will be adequately structured and presented but unbalanced/ with some components poorly constructed, e.g. inadequate/poor referencing.</p>
0% – 39%	<p>University Common Scale description: Fail (modules used for degree classification), Failing (other modules)</p> <p>A Fail/Failing performance indicates that the student has failed to achieve the intended learning outcomes. This is evidenced by a weak attempt that demonstrates lack of overall knowledge of the subject area, and inability to develop a cogent argument in any aspect. Much of the material presented will be sketchy and/or irrelevant. A failing individual project will be one in which the student has failed to apply themselves to the task in hand and has presented a superficial view of it.</p> <p>A Fail/Failing performance may be further classified as</p> <p>Borderline (compensatable) fail: limited understanding (35% – 39%) Evidenced by the demonstration of a threshold understanding in some, though not all, areas. There will be many factual errors and omissions. A mark in this range may be awarded where there is evidence that the intended learning outcomes have been achieved but the evidence has been poorly presented, or that there are some omissions in that evidence. A compensatable pass mark for an individual project suggests that the situation is potentially recoverable with some rewriting but little or no additional development.</p> <p>Fail: inadequate understanding (25% – 34%) Evidenced by some material of relevance, but generally the approach is shallow and there is a lack of understanding of the basic requirements of the subject area. There are likely to be significant factual errors and omissions. An individual project is likely to be difficult to read and contain serious errors in understanding.</p> <p>Clear fail: little or no attempt (0% – 24%) Evidenced by very little material presented to support evidence of having addressed the topic. What material there is is likely to be incomplete and/or confused. An individual project is likely to have very little that is relevant.</p>

Marking processes are revised, where necessary, for each item of assessment so that the marking team is convinced that the resultant marks do represent attainment on the above scale. There is not necessarily a linear relationship between the number of correct items presented by a candidate and the resultant mark on the common scale.

Reassessment

Failed examinations may be retaken on up to three occasions in each stage except for the final one, subject to the Regulations. Examinations are retaken during the August/September resit period. Students who do not pass on resit may make their third and final attempt (as an external candidate) on the next normal occasion of assessment (January for semester 1 modules, May/June for semester 2 modules). Students must consult their tutor or DPD to discuss reassessment following failed examinations. The Examinations office will notify students of the dates and times of their resit papers. In certain circumstances tutors may apply for a Concession for a tutee's requirements to be considered separately; for example for a resit to count as a first attempt, or for the timing of a resit to be varied. Further advice on this should be sought from tutors as appropriate.

Students should note that where a module is passed by compensation (see Marks: the common scale) or in a resit which does not count as the first attempt, then the mark carried forward at stages 2 or 3 (MChem) is increased to 40 (compensation) or decreased to 40 (resit).

Honours students must pass all modules registered for, at least on resit, before they may return for the next stage of the course, except that up to 20 credits of failed module(s) may be carried, to be assessed as an extra burden at the next normal occasion of assessment, provided the student has not already exhausted all these attempts.

Absence from examinations or underperformance in examinations

When a student is absent from an examination because they have misread the timetable or failed to find the place of examination etc this counts as an attempt at the examination and a zero mark will be given.

Acceptable reasons for missing or underperforming in an examination (or practical etc) include severe illness and severe family or personal problems. For these to be taken into account, documentary evidence (see below) covering the examination period, or a letter from a professional counsellor etc must be provided. Students who have a valid reason for missing a formal examination should submit a PCAP form to the School Office, along with the appropriate evidence (see the section on "If things go wrong").

In cases where a student believes that illness (or any other factor) has affected academic performance, for example in examinations, they should inform their tutor (or DPD if the former is not available) of the circumstances and should submit a PCAP form to the School Office. In such cases, they should, in addition to providing a medical certificate from their General Practitioner (or other supporting documentation), provide a statement explaining how they believe their circumstances have affected their studies. If a student is unsure at any stage about the possible consequences of their personal circumstances on academic progress, they should consult their tutor for advice. More information may be found in the section entitled "If things go wrong".

Concessions

Examinations missed for good reason may be excused by a Concession obtained from University Concessions Committee. Applications should be channelled through the student's tutor or the Secretary or Chairman of the Board of Examiners: in either case

the Degree Programme Director (DPD) will be required to approve the application. If the concession is granted then one less of the allowed three attempts at the examination will have been used. More importantly at levels 2 and 3 (MChem), a subsequent pass in the examination will yield the full mark obtained towards the student's degree rather than 40 (see Reassessment).

In exceptional cases, concessions may be given for resits to be counted as first attempts, when a student has attended but has underperformed for the kind of acceptable reasons mentioned above. Students should note that marks are given only for attainment actually demonstrated, eg by a resit examination. While staff may have sympathy for missing items of the course for good reason, marks cannot be given unless the attainment is demonstrated. For example, if a student seriously underperforms in stage 2 for good reason, but then lacks the knowledge and abilities which should have accrued, their total marks over stages 2 and 3 must necessarily be lower, and a lower class of degree may be obtained.

Concessions are required for certain other circumstances: students should seek advice from their tutor or DPD where necessary (see also '**Academic Concessions**').

Higher Education Certificate and Higher Education Diploma

Students who are eligible to continue to stage 2 or to stage 3 as Honours candidates are also eligible to leave the University with a Higher Education Certificate or Higher Education Diploma, respectively. Besides catering for students who for personal reasons wish to leave without a degree, these qualifications are also available for those who fail during or at the end of the stage for which they were eligible.

Weighting of Stages

Each stage of a degree programme does not contribute equally to the final degree classification.

Stage 1 is a qualifying year: marks are not carried forward. Successful completion of this year allows students to proceed to Stage 2.

For BSc degrees Stages 2 and 3 are weighted in the ratio 1:2.

For MChem degrees Stages 2, 3 and 4 are weighted in the ratio 1:2:2.

Note that for the BSc degree programmes involving placements the year in industry does not contribute towards the degree classification.

Failure of Modules in the Final Stage

Students are allowed to fail (mark <40) in a maximum of only 20 credits in the final stage of their degree, otherwise they may not be awarded an Honours degree even though their average mark may be well above 40, except by special discretion of the Board of Examiners.

Clearly, it will be very important for students with mitigating circumstances to reveal them to Scrutiny Committee, as described above, at least by immediately after the examinations concerned.

Honours candidates who fail to attain Honours may be offered a Pass Degree or at least a Higher Education Diploma, depending on how well they have done. Before the final meeting of the Board of Examiners, such students will be told what is on offer, and asked to make a quick (overnight) decision as to whether to accept what is offered, or whether to opt for a resit in the failed module(s). Only one resit attempt is allowed to be done in the August examination period, and if the module is passed, the

best class of degree which can be awarded is Third Class Honours, however good the student's other marks may be. If the student's performance goes down on resit, very poorly performing students could lose the right to a Pass Degree.

The following prizes are awarded at the end of the academic year.

Neil Hughes Prize	Contributions to the School
Tony Gibbs Memorial Prize	Awarded annually to a Chemistry student for the best project in which analytical chemistry makes a significant and critical contribution

Stage 4

Freire–Marreco Medal & Prize	Top MChem student
Glaxo Wellcome Stage 4 Prize	Meritorious Performance at Stage 4
Astra Zeneca Hayley Whitfield Prize	Top MChem Medicinal Chemistry student

Stage 3

Wynne–Jones Prize	Top BSc (Hons) student
Johnston Book Prize	Meritorious performances at Stage 3
Levin Book Prize	Meritorious performances at Stage 3
T G Pearson Prize	Meritorious performances at Stage 3
Glaxo Wellcome Stage 3 Prize	Meritorious performances at Stage 3
John Muse Memorial Prize	Most improved performance between Stages 2 & 3

Stage 2

RSC Prize	Meritorious performances at stage 2
SCI Prizes (x3)	Meritorious performances at stage 2

Stage 1

SCI Prize	Meritorious performance in CHY1101, CHY1201, CHY1301
Henry Croucher Memorial Prizes (x3)	Meritorious performances at stage 1

In addition to the above Faculty Prizes for stage 1 and stage 2 students have recently been introduced. The awards of the prizes will be considered by a panel who will make their recommendations to the Head of School.

