

University of Glasgow**Academic Standards Committee – Friday 19 February 2010****Assessment Weighting and Course Credits – Faculty Responses****Ms Helen Butcher, Clerk to the Committee**

Following discussion at the last meeting of ASC, Faculties were asked to identify all programmes where there are inconsistencies between course credit values and assessment weightings.

A summary of the responses received to date is provided below.

ASC is invited to review the cases presented in Section A below and confirm agreement or otherwise with the rationale provided for the inconsistencies between assessment weighting and credit.

The information provided will also be passed to SLP colleagues.

A Variance was reported by:**Faculty of Arts - Undergraduate**

It has been reported that there are no weighting variations between courses within the same year, however, in a couple of cases there is or will be differential weighting between Junior and Senior Honours:

Archaeology

The only situation in Archaeology where this arises is indeed with the differential weighting between Junior and Senior Honours, where the 120 credits of Junior Honours constitutes 40% rather than 50% of the final degree result. This seeks to recognise individual development through the two honours years and the 'exit velocity' etc. of the honours student. There is no variation between courses within the same year. Elements which have a higher weighting than the norm (e.g. dissertation, portfolio) accordingly have a higher credit value.

English Literature

As of level 3 in session 2009-10, and therefore for those students graduating at end of 2010-11, a weighting scheme will be introduced in English Literature. Level 3 modules will be weighted against level 4 modules at a 40/60 ratio. (All modules are 30 credit) The rationale behind this is to avoid discouragement and maintain motivation among students performing less well at level 3, and to give some measure of recognition to 'exit velocity'.

Faculty of BLS - Undergraduate

The following information on undergraduate programmes has been provided by Helen Reid.

In general, the credit rating and assessment weighting of component Honours courses are aligned for the undergraduate programmes awarded by FBLS, but with some caveats.

- 1) One BSc Single Honours programme, awarded by FBLs but taught by a department within the Faculty of Medicine, is not quite aligned. For the BSc Honours in Physiology, Sports Science & Nutrition, the four 20-credit option courses (assessed by means of examinations) contribute equally (16.25%) to the final Honours classification; the 40-credit Project & Advanced Studies 4 course (assessed by a project report, project talk and a 60-minute seen examination) contributes 35%, a slightly heavier weighting.

Rationale: The weighting of the assessment for the Project & Advanced Studies course has a slightly higher rating as the work involved in the project and advanced studies is of a higher intellectual standard and requires more independent thought than the more didactic options courses. It is in this course that students really demonstrate their high level critical skills and research skills. It involves more advanced independent study, literature searching and critique of the primary literature than the taught options courses, as well as substantial research projects in the laboratory or community. These activities require integration of the knowledge and skills learnt earlier. This is a key stage in student development and in demonstration of their potential in their future careers.

- 2) For most of our BSc Single Honours programmes (13), only courses taken in Level-4 contribute to the final Honours classification (6 x 20-credit courses each contributing 100/6 marks). Level-3 courses do not contribute.
- 3) For a few of our BSc Single Honours programmes (5), the final Honours classification includes a component of carry forward from Level-3. However, the Level-3 and Level-4 credits do not contribute equally (15% for L3, 85% for L4). In all of these cases, the marks that remain after the Level-3 carry forward is applied are divided equally between the component Honours courses (15% carry forward plus 85/6). We are likely to remove this carry forward from Level-3 to bring these 5 programmes into line with the other 13 programmes (with effect from session 2010).
- 4) Our MSci Honours programmes include a carry forward (20%) from the Work Placement Year; again, the marks that remain are split evenly between the six component Level-4 Honours courses (20% plus 80/6). In addition, 5 programmes still carry forward marks from Level-3, although these are reduced from 15% to 10% (20% plus 10% plus 70/6).
- 5) There are 24 one-year intercalating Honours programmes for professional students, which are awarded by other faculties (Medicine and Veterinary Medicine) but taught by FBLs. These programmes are not quite aligned. There is a 10-credit "Scientific Skills for the Modern Professional" course worth 10%; the marks that remain are divided equally between the six 20-credit component Honours courses (10% plus 90/6).

Rationale: Students taking our one-year intercalating Honours programmes will have completed three years of the medical, dental or veterinary programmes. However, the early years of these programmes have insufficient coverage of certain subject-specific skills such as scientific reading, ethics, experimental design, problem-solving and critical analysis. Since these skills underpin the one-year intercalating Honours programmes in biology, students must be able to demonstrate these, which is why the course is worth more with respect to its credit value than the other courses.

B No variance was reported by:

Faculty of Education
Faculty of IMS*
Faculty of Physical Sciences

*It was reported that one inconsistency in assessment weightings against credit had been identified in Psychology and that arrangements were being made for this to be rectified.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Undergraduate Medicine advised that as their programmes are not credit rated there was no issue of alignment to assessment weighting.

Nursing appeared unclear on the question being asked as they reported that they had no weighting of assessment as their students had to pass every course.

C Responses are awaited from:

Faculty of Arts (postgraduate)
Faculty of BLS (postgraduate)
Faculty of Engineering
Faculty of LBSS
Faculty of Medicine (postgraduate)