

**LTC13D066**

**Title:** *Introduction of the Bachelors and Integrated Masters Regulations:  
Criteria for starred Firsts*

**Author:** Caroline Sauverin, Head LTS (Systems)

**Date:** For LTC meeting of 14 May 2014

**Circulation:** *LTC membership*

**Agenda:**

**Version:** Final

**Status:** Open

---

### **Issue**

Regarding the approval of the BIM regulations by LTC for implementation from 2013/4, it was agreed by LTC on 20 March 2014 Minute 56 that the criteria for award of starred firsts would be formally approved by LTC before publishing to students.

### **Recommendation**

The committee is asked to approve these criteria

### **Resource Implications**

None

### **Risk Implications**

None

### **Equality and Diversity**

It is not envisaged that the recommendations contained in the report will impact on groups with protected characteristics.

### **Timing of decisions**

The recommendation, if approved, would come into force immediately, to be applied to the first students graduating from the BIM in 2015/6.

### **Further Information**

Contact: Caroline Sauverin, [c.sauverin@uea.ac.uk](mailto:c.sauverin@uea.ac.uk)

## **Background and Discussion**

On the subject of starred firsts, the BIM regulations state:

16.3.5 For **Starred Firsts**, the Board of Examiners shall consider the performance of all Honours degree students recommended for a first class honours degree. At its discretion, the Board may indicate with a **star** those Bachelors degree and Integrated Masters degree students whose performance displays exceptional merit, in line with the Board's published criteria.

The summary of Schools' criteria for considering Starred Firsts is attached.

FMH

School	Criteria
MED	N/A
NSC	80% and above for all elements of the modules including both theory and practice , aiming for excellence in the student's performance throughout his/her programme
RSC	Award mark $\geq 80\%$ AND Ascending profile in years 2 and 3 AND Dissertation mark $\geq 80\%$

HUM

School	Criteria
AMS	No set conventions as such, but examiners look for nearly all first class credit in the counting years. In particular, they look for the obviously excellent candidates where there is a clear gap between those and the following group.
ART	The Board of Examiners shall consider for a starred first-class degree all BA finalists with an average exit mark of 70% or above. Starred firsts are awarded on the basis of unusually high mark averages (currently 73% or above) or a very high number of modules at first class level (currently 220 credits). Starred firsts cannot be awarded without the approval of all external examiners. The mark averages and credit levels given here will be reviewed annually and may be changed at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. Any such changes must be communicated to all undergraduates in the School.
FTM	Award mark $\geq 72\%$ plus majority of counting credits in first class range
HIS	The Board will be guided by the following: Award mark $\geq 72\%$ and at least 200 credits obtained in the First Class classification range.
LCS	No set conventions as such, but usually looking for nearly all first class credit in the counting years. The Board look for the obvious excellent candidates where there is a clear gap between those and the following group.
LDC	No set conventions as such, but usually looking for nearly all first class credit in the counting years. The examiners don't tend to like to award too many starred firsts so may look for the obvious excellent candidates where there is a clear gap between those and the following group.
PHI	The Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, indicate with a star those Honours Degree students whose performance displays exceptional merit. 'Exceptional merit' is treated by the Board as an essentially subjective designation except insofar as 'exceptionality' must imply genuine rarity. The Board will be guided by the following: award mark $\geq 75\%$
PSI	No set conventions as such, but usually looking for nearly all first class credit in the counting years. The Board look for the obvious excellent candidates where there is a clear gap between those and the following group.

SCI

School	Criteria
BIO	The Board of Examiners shall be guided by the following criteria: Award mark $\geq 80\%$ with a first class mark in all counting modules
CHE	<b>The Board shall be guided by the following: an overall award mark of 78% or above, and 1st class marks achieved in all final year modules</b>
CMP	Overall aggregate of 80.00% or above but is largely algorithmic based on third year project first and exit velocity second. The chairman makes a recommendation to ensure consistency each year. Chair of Examiners wishes to emphasise the importance of having board discretion at the boundaries in the NAM, the system we have (algorithmic chairmans recommendation followed by board discussion) seems to work well and the externals often comment that this is a good way of ensuring fairness.
CMP Actuarial Sciences	Award mark $\geq 80\%$ with a first class mark in all counting modules
ENV	Award mark $\geq 75\%$ AND 200 credits of first class counting modules (for 3 year-degrees) / 300 credits (for 4 year-degrees) NB, students who fulfil only one of the two criteria may be awarded a starred first at the discretion of the exam board
MTH	Candidates for BSc and MMath with an aggregate mark $\geq 90\%$ will receive a starred first
NATSCI	Award mark $\geq 75\%$ AND 200 credits of first class modules (for 3 year-degrees) / 300 credits (for 4 year-degrees) NB, students who fulfil only one of the two criteria may be awarded a starred first at the discretion of the exam board
PHA	Award mark $\geq 80\%$ OR Award mark of 78.00% -79.99% PLUS 160 credits $\geq 80\%$ achieved during the 3 counting years (levels 5, 6 and 7(M-level))

SSF

School	Criteria
DEV	<p>In recommending a starred first award, the board will seek to recognise outstanding performance which will normally be expected to fulfil at least one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Award mark <math>\geq</math> 78%</li> <li>2. Award mark <math>\geq</math> 75% and at least 200 credits at first class</li> <li>3. Award mark <math>\geq</math> 70% and at least 220 credits at first class including 120 credits in Year 3</li> </ol>
ECO	<p>The Board of Examiners for the School of Economics (ECO) considers the performance of all Honours Degree students recommended for a first class degree and, at its discretion, indicates with a star those Honours Degree students whose performance displays exceptional merit.</p> <p>‘Exceptional merit’ is treated by the ECO Board as an essentially subjective designation except insofar as ‘exceptionality’ must imply genuine rarity. For guidance, the Board uses the following principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A student of ‘exceptional merit’ will have a mark profile, typically comprising nearly all first-class marks, which though it may or may not have been judged the most distinguished performance in the final assessment of the present year, might reasonably be expected to have been so judged in a ‘typical’ year.</li> <li>2. There may be some years in which no student is designated to have displayed ‘exceptional merit’.</li> <li>3. If more than one student is designated to have displayed ‘exceptional merit’, it will be only a very small number, and there will normally be a clear, discernible difference between the mark/performance profiles of the students so designated and the profiles of the remaining first-class students.</li> </ol>
EDU	<p>The board will consider awarding a starred 1<sup>st</sup> to students who achieve 200 credits at 1<sup>st</sup> class across counting years in addition to receiving a final mark above 80% OR a final mark above 75% obtained in documented severe circumstances OR a final mark above 75% with an exceptional (mark above 80%) dissertation.</p>
LAW	<p>The Board may, at its discretion, indicate with a star those Honours Degree students whose performance displays exceptional merit. ‘Exceptional merit’ is treated by the Board as an essentially subjective designation except insofar as ‘exceptionality’ must imply genuine rarity. To that end, the Board will be guided by the following criteria as a minimum: Award mark of 73% and at least 180 credits obtained in the First Class classification range during 2nd and final year.</p>
NBS	<p>Award mark <math>\geq</math> 75% and at least 200 credits obtained in the First Class classification range.</p>
PSY	<p>A consistently excellent performance across the honours years as evidenced by a minimum of 210 credits at 1st classification  AND  A mark of at least 75% for the final year empirical project  AND  Award mark <math>\geq</math> 75%</p>
SWK	<p>Award mark <math>\geq</math> 75%  AND Commendation in the final placement report</p>