

1.4 With respect to variation by student characteristics, the University has identified the following significant patterns (irrespective of COVID-19).

- x International students (non-EU) have consistently been awarded a lower proportion of 1sts/2:1s than Home students. This gap has been reducing and continues to reduce with the difference being 25% in 2016/17, 18% in 2019/20, and 14% in 2020/21.
- x UK-domiciled ABMO¹ students were awarded a lower proportion of 1st/2:1 degrees compared to UK white students. In 2020/21 84% of UK ABMO students received good degrees, compared to 93% of UK white students. In 2016/17, 65% of ABMO students were awarded good degrees compared to 84% of UK white students.
- x The proportion of English students gaining good degrees whose permanent residences are in areas of the most deprivation – as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation Quintile 1 (IMDQ1) – has increased from 72% in 2016/17 to 87% in 2020/21.
- x POLAR designations provide a measure of the proportion of young people from a particular area who participate in higher education. The percentage of students who are under 21 and come from a POLAR Q1 (Participation Of Local Areas Quintile 1 – indicating low participation) and attain a good degree compared to those from POLAR Q5 (high participation) was -5% in 2020/21.

1.5 These data indicate that:

- (a) the awarding gap has been reducing at Lancaster over the last 5 years; and
- (b) students from low participation neighborhoods, or areas of England known to be areas of multiple deprivation, have successful outcomes when they complete their studies at Lancaster University.

2. Assessment and Marking Practices

2.1 Assessment and marking practices are underpinned by the University's Undergraduate Assessment Regulations,² which set out the reference points for judgement of the quality of academic work. Mapping processes ensure that intended learning outcomes are appropriately assessed across modules and programmes.

2.2 Academic Year 2020/21 saw Lancaster University continue to adapt our teaching and assessment practices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the national restrictions imposed by UK and other governments.

- 4.2 Where the aggregation score falls within one of the borderline classification ranges, the exam board applies a rubric specified in MARP for deciding the degree class to be awarded.
- 4.3 In response to the pandemic, Senate approved temporary changes to the academic regulations in 2019/20 and again in 2020/21 that provided additional opportunity for students to be awarded the higher degree classification where their aggregation score fell into a boundary range.
- 4.4 Provision was also made to set aside, at cohort level, certain elements of assessment delivered in formats not previously experienced by students and in which students had clearly under-performed.
5. Good teaching practices, and learning resources
 - 5.1 In 2019/20, in response to the pandemic, Lancaster developed a website entitled 'Embrace Digital' to support academic staff in the delivery of online teaching. The Embrace Digital website provides a single point of access to information and guidance, supporting:
 - x academic staff to use digital technologies effectively in teaching and learning, such as providing guidance for teaching using Teams, dual-mode teaching, digital assessment, and digital accessibility;
 - x all staff to improve their digital skills, harness the power of digital technology, and look after their digital wellbeing; and
 - x students to use digital effectively in their work and learning, and look after their digital wellbeing.
 - 5.2 In March 2022, Lancaster's Embrace Digital website won the UCISA22 'Supporting Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Research' award.
6. Risks and challenges
 - 6.1