

Final Year (L3/4)

Description

1. Introduction

1.01 Welcome to the University of Manchester and the School of Biological Sciences

1.02 The information in this handbook is accurate for the 2025-26 academic year.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18600â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Welcome from Head of School 25-26â?³]

1.04 Key contacts

Student Support Hub (Stopford Building; Email: sbs.hub@manchester.ac.uk phone: +44 (0)161 275 1487) opening times:

- 09:00 -17:00 Monday to Friday during term-time
- 10:00 â?? 16:00 outside of term-time

The Student Support Hub is your first stop for queries relating to your programme or courses and general student support including **career advice**, specific needs and **wellbeing support**. The list below outlines support available at the Student Support Hub:

- Mitigating circumstances for exams and assessments
- General course information
- Specific course enquiries
- Wellbeing support
- Requesting a letter
- Requesting a document
- Help with study skills
- Information on campus facilities
- Registering as a student
- Graduation information
- General enquiries

You can also find lots of information on the student SharePoint: [School of Biological Sciences Student Information â?? Home](#)

Director of Education

Professor Nicky High

Email: nicky.high@manchester.ac.uk

Deputy Directors of Studies

Professor Lisa Swanton â?? Programmes and Curriculum

Professor Donald Ward â?? Assessment and Progression

Dr Helen Graham â?? Digital and Flexible Learning

Dr Ingo Schiessl â?? Admissions and Recruitment

Dr Maria Canal â?? Inclusive Education

Dr Katherine Hinchliffe â?? Student Experience

Senior Advisors

Email: senioradvisors.sbs@manchester.ac.uk

Head of School â?? Biological Sciences

Professor Simon Hubbard

Programme Directors

The role of the Programme Director is to oversee the content of your Degree Programme, approve your choice of optional course units during Welcome Week and assist your Academic Advisor in giving you advice on academic matters.

Degree Programme	Programme Director	Programme Director Email
Biochemistry	Prof Andrew Doig	andrew.doig@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Gino Poulin	gino.poulin@manchester.ac.uk
Biology	Dr Thomas Nuhse	Thomas.Nuhse@manchester.ac.uk
Biology with Science & Society	Dr Robert Naylor	Robert.naylor@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Ruth Grady	ruth.grady@manchester.ac.uk
Biomedical Sciences	Dr Rebecca Dearman (L1)	rebecca.dearman@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Tristan Pocock (L2)	Tristan.pocock@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Michelle Keown (L3)	michelle.e.keown@manchester.ac.uk
Biotechnology	Dr Dennis Linton	James.D.Linton@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Samina Naseeb	Samina.naseeb@manchester.ac.uk
Genetics	Dr Kimberly Mace	kimberly.mace@manchester.ac.uk

Immunology	Dr Kathleen Nolan	kathleen.nolan@manchester.ac.uk
Medical Biochemistry	Dr Tom Millard	tom.millard@manchester.ac.uk
Medical Physiology	Prof Liz Sheader	elizabeth.a.sheader@manchester.ac.uk
Microbiology	Dr Jen Cavet	jennifer.s.cavet@manchester.ac.uk
Molecular Biology	Dr Susan Taylor	susan.h.taylor@manchester.ac.uk
MSci Programmes	Prof Lisa Swanton	lisa.swanton@manchester.ac.uk
Neuroscience	Dr Martin Pool	martin.r.pool@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Nicholas Glossop	Nicholas.glossop@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Harry Potter	Harry.potter@manchester.ac.uk
Pharmacology	Dr Stacey Lee	stacey.lee@manchester.ac.uk
Zoology	Dr Ben Chapman	ben.chapman-2@manchester.ac.uk

1.05 Key dates in the academic year

A summary of the key dates is given below and additional information can be found here:

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/key-dates/>

Examination Dates:

Semester 1: Thursday 15th January 2026 – Friday 30th January 2026

Semester 2: Monday 18th May 2026 – Wednesday 10th June 2026

Resits: Monday 24th August 2026 – Friday 4th September 2026

Examination Result publication dates:

Semester 1: w/c Monday 2nd March 2026

Semester 2: w/c Monday 20th July 2026

Release of the examination timetable:

Semester 1 exams: Friday 12th December 2025

Semester 2 exams: Friday 10th April 2026

Please note that these are the dates on which you will be informed of the exact dates and times of your exams; your personalised exam timetables (which will inform you of your exact room and seat number) will be updated in the following two weeks.

MSci Programmes Talk – To Be Confirmed, **Compulsory** for students currently on MSci programmes,

1.06 Responsibilities of staff and students

The University of Manchester believes that education is a partnership between the learner and the teacher, conducted within a context that provides properly for pastoral care and learner needs. In the School of Biological Sciences, we have created a list of responsibilities for staff and students. You can find it on the [Student SharePoint Site](#).

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=18617 snippet_title=SBS My Manchester 25-26]

1.09 Changes/Updates to your personal details recorded in the Student System

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Student System is kept up to date with changes to your recorded personal or programme details. Any change of personal details must be completed online via My Manchester. Incorrect information can lead to problems with your fees and funding, at Examination times and with other official processes.

Please read guidance available on the University of Manchester Student Support webpage for details on [Updating your bank details](#) and changes to your [personal information](#) (for example, your address or name). If you need any help, please contact the Student Support Hub.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18619â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? The Student Charter 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18621â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? The Digital Equity Charter 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18726â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Dignity at Work and Study 25-26â?³]

1.13 Health and Safety

While student life is exciting and fun, we know it can also be challenging. We take the health, wellbeing and safety of our students seriously and offer you the encouragement and support you need to stay happy and healthy. Weâ??ve put together an online module to help you to think about some things you might encounter, and resources to help you handle them. Further information is available on our [Health, Wellbeing and Safety webpages](#) including registering with a GP, vaccinations, mental health support, wellbeing, and our SafeZone app.

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1.15 Library

The [University of Manchester Library](#) is one of only five National Research Libraries. With more than 4 million printed books and manuscripts, over 41,000 electronic journals and 500,000 electronic books, as well as several hundred databases, the library is one of the best-resourced academic libraries in the country.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18633â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Computers 25-26â?³]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18635â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Developing Digital Skills 25-26â?³]

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2. About your programme

2.01 Programme overview of standard 3-year degree programmes

We offer a number of different degree programmes overseen by a dedicated Programme Director. Standard degree programmes are 3 years, and there are several 4-year pathways available. Programmes are built on a modular unit structure, and you will take a number of core (mandatory) and optional units each year. The course units available for each degree programme can be viewed online [Course Unit Information](#).

Before choosing your teaching units, it is important to understand that the University has a system of credit rating of all course units, which is intended to give you an indication of the proportion of your time that the work of a unit is expected to take. A full year's workload expected of you is 120 credits; this equates to 30 weeks work at 40 hours per week, hence a total of 1200 hours per academic year. Therefore, you can expect to spend ~100 hours on a typical 10- credit unit. This time includes all the work for that unit, such as reading, e-learning activities, assessments and revision, as well as direct contact hours.

It is extremely important and **your responsibility to ensure that you take the correct number of units** to meet the 120 credit requirement in each year of your studies. As specified in the University's [Manual of Academic Procedures](#), you should aim to take no more than 60 credits per semester; a maximum of 70 credits and minimum of 50 credits in one semester may be allowed, but only with the written consent of your Programme Director.

2.02 Aims and learning outcomes of the programme

The School's general aims are to offer undergraduate students a broad and thorough education in biological sciences within an institutional culture of high-quality research and scholarship. The School aims to:

- deliver a range of broad and specialist degrees, informed by current research, which will equip students for careers within and outside science;
- meet student requirements for diversity of provision and opportunity of transfer between disciplines within biological sciences by providing a structure of flexibility and choice within the undergraduate programmes;
- provide students with subject-specific knowledge and practical skills linked to generic transferable skills which are integrated within the curriculum;
- ensure students develop skills in independent learning;
- provide a variety of teaching methods and assessment strategies, student choice and constructive feedback that will enable all students to succeed;
- provide students with effective induction information, and ongoing academic and pastoral support and advice in order to enhance students' learning experience and empower them to take ownership of their education and successfully progress to further study or employment;
- focus skilled academic and professional services staff on student achievement, wellbeing and career readiness;
- operate a management structure which monitors the delivery and quality of teaching provision in order to ensure high standards across our wide range of programmes;
- endeavour to ensure wider access to all who may benefit from higher education;
- endeavour to ensure that students' progress through programmes and acquire qualifications, knowledge and skills appropriate to their academic abilities, leading to positive exit paths;

- endeavour to ensure that students enhance their employability by developing professional skills and competencies within the curriculum; provide inclusive learning spaces and welcome activities to contribute to an environment where students can thrive and achieve their aspirations;
- provide inclusive curricula and course materials that reflect diverse experiences, validate student identities and provide a space for positive challenge, debate and engagement;
- create learning spaces that encourage collaboration and informal interactions;
- provide inclusive teaching and learning practices to ensure that all students feel valued, included and a sense of belonging within the educational community.

2.03 Summary of the programme structure

You must ensure that you take 120 credits for each year of study – this is most important and your responsibility. You should take no more than 60 credits per semester (maximum exception of 70 credits allowed, and only with Programme Director consent) and no less than 50 credits as specified in the University's [Manual of Academic Procedures](#).

The programmes are built on a unit (modular) structure. You will take:

- 6 Lecture-based units over the year (each worth 10 credits)
- A research project (40 credit project)
- A tutorial unit over the year (assessed through the two special programme problem/essay papers each worth 10 credits)

You must ensure that you take 120 credits for each year of study – this is most important and your responsibility. You should take no more than 60 credits per semester (maximum exception of 70 credits allowed, and only with Programme Director consent) and no less than 50 credits as specified in the University's [Manual of Academic Procedures](#).

For each programme there are core units that define your Degree Programme plus a range of optional units (Section Course unit profiles). You may choose your optional lecture-only units from those provided by the School of Biological Sciences (coded BIOL) and some units from outside the School. **No more than 20 credits of your units should be taken from units without a BIOL code** (this will differ for programmes such as Biology with Science and Society, and Cognitive Neuroscience & Psychology – in all cases please refer to your Programme Structure). You should carefully read the unit descriptions before deciding upon your optional units and also take account of potential timetable clashes between your chosen options. Guidance on your choice of units should be sought from your Academic advisor or Programme Director. Failure to balance your lecture units in this way could significantly increase your workload in one semester relative to the other. In Year 3, it is recommended that you take 4 lecture units in semester 1 and 2 lecture units in semester 2 to balance your workload. Note that units taken from outside the School may have coursework components that are unlike those offered by units from within the School.

All teaching including lectures, tutorials and practicals will be delivered on campus. Lectures will be captured by podcast and will be available for catch-up purposes and revision after the lecture has finished. There are a few units offered outside the School that are year-long and are examined in May/June.

The University has a system of credit rating of all course units. It is intended to give you an indication of the proportion of your time that all the work of a unit is expected to occupy and is based on a full year's work being 120 credits. This figure assumes 30 weeks' work at 40 hours per week. Therefore, you can expect to spend ~100 hours on a typical 10credit unit. This time includes, for example, reading, eLearning materials, writing and revision, as well as direct contact hours.

Tutorials are held in small groups of 10-12 students. These occur at times convenient to your Advisor and the students in the group, which may be 08.00-09.00 or 17:00-18:00.

Please be aware that the School reserves the right to withdraw or alter units should there be changes in academic staff or insufficient registrations. See our [student support website](#) for further information and guidance on using the course unit selection system. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact sbs.programmes@manchester.ac.uk.

Degrees with industrial/professional experience • placement

On this pathway you attend the standard BSc degree programme but 'intercalate' your studies after the second year with a placement of at least 9 months in an industrial or academic research environment. The placement is assessed via a project report and an oral viva examination at the start of your final year. Placement experience will help with later career decisions and significantly strengthen your success on future job or PhD applications.

Additional intended learning outcomes of the 'with industrial/professional experience' placement pathway are:

- gained experience in professional work environments including the required interpersonal and professional skills;
- high quality practical skills and specific knowledge relating to science in applied settings developed interpersonal skills within a workplace environment.

Students on this degree pathway will take the same units in year 1 and 2 as the students on standard BSc degree programmes (although your programme director may suggest certain optional units that better prepare you for a placement). You will apply for your placement during year 2, and the Placement Office will support you with information events and lists of available placements. However, be aware that placements are obtained competitively and cannot be guaranteed, often requiring a formal application including your *curriculum vitae*, reference letters (e.g. from your advisor) and potentially involving an interview. Following the placement year, you will continue with your university studies by completing the third year of your BSc degree programme. At the start of this Final Year, you will submit (and be 'viva'ed on) a written Placement year report worth approximately 9% of the overall degree mark.

Students who terminate their placement early and do not complete a minimum of 9 months, will not be eligible to graduate 'with Industrial/Professional Experience'. They will be transferred to the respective three-year BSc degree programme, and must apply for an interruption to cover for the disallowed placement year (for deadlines and procedures see the Year 2 handbook).

Degrees with modern language • placement

Description: This degree pathway is organised as the 'with industrial/professional experience' pathway, with two key differences: (1) in all three academic years, you replace 20 credits per year of your optional degree units with language courses (listed on the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures website; 40 credits in the case of with-Japanese or Mandarin); (2) language placements are restricted to universities in countries that match your chosen language and with whom the School of Biological Sciences has a student exchange agreement. Language placements are for 9 months (in Europe) or 10 months (in Japan and China). On completing the four-year joint degrees with a language, students will have:

- acquired a sound working knowledge of the target language including its use in the context of the biological sciences;
- acquired an appreciation of the culture and institutions of an appropriate country;
- gained experience of research work in an overseas institution.

Timetabling may be challenging so you must check carefully that your core units do not clash (tell the staff in the Student Support Hub immediately if they do). You may only choose optional units that do not clash with your language schedule.

To begin discussions about potential placements, you will be contacted by the Language Placement Coordinator (Patrick Gallois) at the beginning of Year 2, who remains an important point of contact in addition to the Placement Office. It will be your responsibility to visit the websites of candidate universities and identify and contact the local student exchange coordinator (the Placement Office can provide details) as well as potential project supervisors during the first semester of your second year. You are guaranteed a placement under the exchange agreement, but you may have to approach various supervisors before you are accepted into a research group. Following the placement year, you will continue with your university studies by completing the third year of your BSc degree programme. At the start of this Final Year, you will submit (and be viva'd on) a written Placement year report worth approximately 9% of the overall degree mark.

Degrees 'with Entrepreneurship' placement

Description: You will choose a standard BSc degree programme where you will take units worth **100** credits in each of the three years. The remaining **20** credits per year are entrepreneurship units that replace optional units on your standard degree and are chosen from a list on the Alliance Manchester Business School's Masood (Manchester Entrepreneurship Centre ([MEC](#))). Timetabling may be challenging so you must check carefully that your core units do not clash (otherwise inform the staff in the [Student Support Hub](#) without delay). You may only choose optional units that do not clash with your business units. Following year 2, you will intercalate by performing an industry placement (120 credits). On completing the four-year 'with Entrepreneurship' programme, you will have:

- acquired knowledge of business skills including research & development, financial planning, exploring the market potential of products and processes and creating business plans;
- acquired skills in applying entrepreneurial knowledge to turn scientific discoveries and research into applications

During Year 2, you will be helped by the Placement Office to apply for placements in industry settings. However, placements are obtained competitively, and a place cannot be guaranteed; it will require a formal application including your *curriculum vitae*, reference letters (e.g. from your advisor) and

potentially involving an interview. Following the placement year, you will continue with your university studies by completing the third year of your BSc degree programme. At the start of this Final Year, you will submit (and be viva^{ed} on) a written Placement year report worth approximately 9% of the overall degree mark.

Degree programmes with integrated master^s (MSci)

Description: In Year 3, you will take the degree-specific five lecture units including their exams and attend the standard tutorial sessions which will prepare you for problem and essay papers in the final exams. You will not engage in any 'final year project' units that would normally form part of your degree programme. Instead, you will be assigned to one of your chosen MSci projects in a Manchester research group at start of semester 5, and participate in the following units:

- BIOL33000 MSci Research Project Proposal (10 credits) – writing a literature review and outline of your future MSci project (overseen by your future project supervisor)
- BIOL33012 MSci Experimental Skills Module (20 credits) – a two-week group practical in the subject area of your degree programme

- Up to two of the following (as determined by your Programme Director):
 - BIOL33011 MSci Bioinformatics Tools and Resources (10 credits)
 - BIOL33021 Computational Approaches to Biology (10 credits)
 - BIOL33031 Reproducible Data Science (10 credits)

During Year 4, you will complete a seven-month research project which includes the marked completion of an oral presentation, poster presentation and project report. On completing the four-year MSci programmes, students will have:

- gained experience in the planning and design of cutting-edge research;
- developed high quality experimental, data analysis and data management
- skills; acquired skills in the different forms of science communication.

2.04 Modes of Study

The programmes covered in this handbook are full-time in-person programmes.

2.05 Programme specifications

All our programme specifications are kept internally within the School.

2.06 Outlines of units

Outlines of all our units can be found here: [Course unit information | MyManchester](#)

2.07 Information on the way in which a student can progress through the programme

Upon completion of the final year of your programme, you will be awarded a degree and will be able to view your final overall degree mark and classification in the student system.

Please note that in the third year, there is no opportunity to complete resits under any circumstances, nor is it possible to repeat the year, or repeat a semester. Neither of these are possible under any circumstances.

2.08 Consequences of unsatisfactory progress

please see section 2.13

2.09 Programme specific regulations

Not relevant

2.10 Professional and statutory body requirements

Royal Society of Biology accreditation

All four-year pathways including integrated masters and the three pathways with placements have been accredited by the Society of Biology. Degree accreditations by the Royal Society of Biology recognise academic excellence in the biosciences, and highlights degrees that educate the research and development leaders and innovators of the future. The accreditation criteria require evidence that graduates from the programmes meet defined sets of learning outcomes, including gaining a substantial period of research experience. Our School has been successful in demonstrating that our programmes meet these criteria. In recognition of your time spent on the programme, and as a graduate of an accredited programme, you can apply for membership of the Society of Biology at Member (MRSB) level after just one year of practice, rather than the usual three years. This will allow you to attain the qualifications of Chartered Biologist or Chartered Scientist two years sooner than graduates from other Degree Programmes. Further information is available from the [Royal Society of Biology](#).

2.11 Fieldwork and placements or study abroad

Not relevant to final year of programme.

2.12 Additional costs

All students must normally be able to complete their programme of study without having to pay additional study costs over and above the tuition fee for that programme. **Any unavoidable additional compulsory costs totalling more than 1% of the annual home undergraduate fee per annum must be made clear at the point of application and in the programme handbooks, with details of what these costs are.**

Optional costs must be made clear at the point of application and in the programme handbooks. Where costs are unknown or uncertain, information about how these will be calculated must be set out.

2.13 Degree classification algorithm

The Taught Degree Regulations for students can be found on the University website [here](#)

During your degree programme, you will complete 360 credits across 3 years (480 across 4 years for MSci). Each course unit you complete carries a weighting in credits and an average is calculated at the end of each year of the marks you have achieved, and these year averages are then in turn used to calculate your final degree mark out of 100. Course units are counted in to your degree mark based on their weighting in credits, so a 20-credit course unit would be counted in to the year average twice, whilst a 10-credit course unit would be counted in to the average once.

Your year average is calculated as an average of all your marks across the full academic year. Please note that in cases where students have approved mitigating circumstances for some of their marks, the final mark may be calculated differently, at the discretion of the exam board, for example a 10-credit unit where the student has under-performed may be excluded from the final calculation.

Note that units graded as Pass/Fail only (i.e. the Tutorial Units) are **not** included in the year average mark calculation, but the credits are still awarded for these units for progression purposes.

At the final examination board, your final degree mark is calculated by weighting the years of your degree programme to calculate a final overall degree mark, which would then be used to determine your classification. The weightings of each year depend on whether you are registered on a 3-year or 4-year degree programme; the weightings are shown in the table below:

UG Programme type	Year 1 %	Year 2 %	Placement Year %	Year 3 %	Year 4 %
BSc (Hons) (standard 3 year degree)	10%	30%	N/A	60%	N/A
Integrated Masters (MSci)	6%	19%	N/A	37.5%	37.5%
With Industrial Experience	10%	30%	10% *	60%	N/A
With Entrepreneurship	10%	30%	10%*	60%	N/A
With Modern Language	10%	30%	10% *	60%	N/A

*For programmes where a placement year is completed (Industrial Experience, Modern Language, Entrepreneurship), your placement year (assessed by your placement report), is counted in to your final degree mark as an additional 10%, giving you a total degree mark out of 110. This is then re-weighted to a mark out of 100 and this stands as your final degree mark.

All degree marks are rounded to 1 decimal place. Year averages are rounded to 3 decimal places.

Please see below some example degree mark calculations:

3 Year BSc:

Year 1 Mark: 67.332

Year 2 Mark: 71.226

Year 3 Mark: 80.331

The calculation would be:

$$(67.332 \times 0.1) + (71.226 \times 0.3) + (80.331 \times 0.6) = \mathbf{76.3}$$

3 Year BSc with Placement Year (Industrial Experience, Modern Language, Entrepreneurship):

Year 1 Mark: 67.332

Year 2 Mark: 71.226

Placement Year Mark: 68

Year 3 Mark: 80.331

The calculation would be:

$$(67.332 \times 0.1) + (71.226 \times 0.3) + (68 \times 0.1) + (80.331 \times 0.6) = 83.0996 / 110 \times 100 = \mathbf{75.5}$$

4 Year Integrated Masters (MSci):

Year 1 Mark: 67.332

Year 2 Mark: 71.226

Year 3 Mark: 80.331

Year 4 Mark: 75

The calculation would be:

$$(67.332 \times 0.06) + (71.226 \times 0.19) + (80.331 \times 0.375) + (75 \times 0.375) = \mathbf{75.8}$$

Degree Classification

For Undergraduate Programmes, students must achieve an overall degree average of at least 40% to be eligible for a BSc award. If you achieve an average below 40%, you will not be awarded a BSc award, but may be eligible for a lower exit award of an Ordinary Degree, Diploma in Higher Education or a Certificate in Higher Education.

In the third year of your degree programme, you must achieve at least 80 credits with marks of 40% or higher to be eligible for a BSc degree award of a 2.2 or higher (60 credits for an award of a Third). Where this requirement has been met; for credits below 40%, 'Special Compensation' can be applied which still permits you to gain credit for these units, however they will still be counted in to your overall degree average.

Degree Classifications are awarded as follows:

Bachelors Degree classification weighted to 120 credits	Classification thresholds: weighted average (0 to 100 mark range)	Boundary zone average
First class	70.0	68.0 to 69.9
Upper Second class	60.0	58.0 to 59.9
Lower Second class	50.0	48.0 to 49.9
Third class	40.0	37.0 to 39.9

Please note that unlike the BSc degrees, it is not possible to attain a 3rd class for an MSci degree. Consequently, MSci students who obtain a final mark of less than 50% will fail the MSci degree. However, you will be able to graduate with BSc (Hons) degree based on your performance during your first three years.

Classification Review:

For final degree marks which fall within the boundary zone; 2 marks of the higher classification (68 to 69.9% for a First or 58 to 59.9% for a 2.1 etc.), the examination board will consider whether there is a case for the student to be awarded the higher classification and in some cases students will be awarded the higher classification where their final degree mark falls in the boundary zone.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no guarantee if your final degree mark falls in the boundary zone that you will be awarded the higher degree classification. This will only be awarded automatically if you have achieved a degree mark above the degree classification boundary (e.g. 70 for a First).

If your mark falls in the boundary zone; you will only be awarded the higher degree classification if two thirds or more of the credits you have completed during the final year of your degree programme (80 credits or more) are marks at the higher degree classification, you will be automatically promoted to the higher degree classification (so 80 credits with marks of 70 and above would be needed to be promoted to a First)

There is no classification review available for the classification of a Third; any degree mark below 40 cannot be awarded a BSc degree under any circumstances.

Integrated Masters (MSci) only: Further to the classification review outlined above, if your final degree mark falls in the boundary zone and you are still not eligible to be promoted to the higher classification, you will be given the opportunity to complete a Viva Voce examination with the external examiner who will then make a recommendation to the exam board as to whether they feel the student should be awarded the higher classification or not, and the board will then make a final decision. **This is available only in the fourth year of the MSci programme, and is not available on any of the 3-year BSc programmes.**

3. Assessment and academic standards

3.01 Assessment

Criteria for marking answers on theory examination papers can be found here: [Marking Schemes](#)

Examination feedback

Students have a right to receive feedback on their examination performance from Unit Coordinators. This may be done in a number of ways:

Unit Coordinator may publish a general feedback document outlining how questions were answered, addressing general strengths and weaknesses of students and giving a general indication of how well the questions were answered.

For handwritten (paper) exams, script viewing sessions will be organised following the release of examination results where students will be able to view **handwritten feedback** provided by markers in their exam scripts. Students will be notified in advance when the session is due to take place and will be able to request specifically which scripts they want to view in advance. Students will be able to view all exam scripts in the same session.

HOWEVER, PLEASE NOTE that for **MCQ Examinations**, there is **no opportunity to view the answer sheets**, exam paper or solutions. However, following the release of semester 2 results, students will have the opportunity to receive a feedback email for each unit they are resitting which will inform them of which topics they lost marks on to help them better prepare for the resit examinations. Students who are eligible to receive this feedback will be contacted following the release of semester 2 results.

that a student **DOES NOT** have the right to **challenge any academic judgements** on the quality of the answer. This means there is **NO** opportunity for papers to be re-marked.

Guidelines on feedback to students during the teaching period

Feedback is a broad term, which can be interpreted in different ways. The purpose of this section is to define the activities associated with feedback mechanisms, as they relate to lecture-based BIOL units so that you are aware of the feedback available for any unit which you decide to take.

Lecturers are expected to provide general guidance to students on appropriate reading material and other learning resources for the unit in advance of the start of the unit.

We encourage you to ask questions through any appropriate medium. If you ask questions, for example by email, please make sure you include your own interpretation of the answer, including the literature sources that you used, and ask whether your interpretation or understanding are correct. For example:

Wrong format: *Can you tell me the primary role of voltage-gated sodium channels?*

Correct format: *It is my understanding that voltage-gated sodium channels are primarily responsible for the depolarising phase of the action potential. I used Kandel's Principles of Neuroscience to obtain this information. Is this correct?*

NB: The School does not publish marking schemes or answers to examination questions – you are expected to deduce these yourself using textbooks, peers, and PASS sessions.

In addition to providing the mandatory level of feedback, Unit Coordinators may provide more detailed feedback on your work. You should consult the feedback entry within the unit description in this handbook for further details on the additional feedback provided.

Please note that the comments on examination papers are intended primarily to allow the first marker to communicate the rationale for their marking to the moderator and external examiner. These comments are not written with the [primary] aim of providing feedback to the student, although the student may find that the comments do provide them with beneficial insights into their performance.

Deadlines, penalties and document limits

Deadlines: Items of coursework, such as essays and write-ups, have strict deadlines. Submission dates and times are in UK local time, and it is the responsibility of students to ensure that they check the **relevant time zone**. Any work that has been submitted at least **1 minute past the deadline** or later is classed as late, except in cases where **an extension has already been agreed** via DASS, the extensions process or mitigating circumstances.

[Assessed Coursework Extension Request Form.](#)

All submission deadlines for summative coursework assessments are at 2pm. You may see in Canvas that your submission deadline is showing as 14:01 rather than 14:00. Your submission deadline is still 2pm, however the system will display this as 14:01 to ensure that any work submitted up to 14:00:59 is not incorrectly flagged as late and incorrectly penalised. Please keep in mind that all, submission times are 14:00 and whilst deadlines will show as 14:01 in Canvas, any submission from 14:01:00 onwards will be penalised.

If you have an extension to a piece of work, either due to a DASS auto extension or an extension approved through the School Extensions Request process, you may also see your deadline update in Canvas to the new deadline you have been assigned; this is so that your work is not incorrectly penalised for being late. The deadline you see in Canvas will be the correct final deadline inclusive of any extensions, and does not mean that the extension can be used on top of the deadline displayed in Canvas. It is a student's own responsibility to ensure that they know what the original deadline is and what their new, extended deadline is.

Late submission will be subject to a **penalty** consisting in a reduction of 10 marks per each 24 hours or part thereof past the deadline until a mark of zero is reached. At 10 days late submission, the work is considered as not submitted and the school reserves the right to not mark the work or provide feedback. **Students who submit referral assignments after the deadline will be automatically subject to a mark of zero.** The full university guidance on late submission can be found [here](#).

Page/word limit: Coursework will normally have a specified content limit. This will normally be a maximum page number or word count (usually with a 10% margin). It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand exactly what the limits are and how they are to be achieved. Exceeding the specified page limit will result in a deduction of 20 marks per page or part thereof.

Format: A typical School of Biological Sciences instruction for coursework including essays, reports and write-ups is worded along the lines of: *“The [submission] must not exceed [x] pages of text **excluding the list of references**. Text must be in Arial, 10 point, one and a half line spacing, with margins of at least 2.5 cm all around the text. ALL supporting material, such as figures, tables, text boxes etc. must be included in the page limit, and you are advised to ensure that any such items are sufficiently large to be read and understood with ease.”*• You should conform to the format that has been specified. If the work needs to be converted to a PDF for submission you must check very carefully

that the conversion is accurate and conforms to the guidelines well in advance of the submission deadline. A **penalty of 20 marks (out of 100) will be applied to all SBS coursework or exams that are incorrectly formatted** (i.e. does not follow the specified guidelines on line spacing, margins, figure position, sections etc). Existing penalties for lateness (10 marks per day or part thereof) and length (20 marks per page or part thereof) will continue to be applied as noted above. Where an assignment is incorrectly formatted and up to one page over length, then a single 20-mark penalty will be applied.

3.02 Dissertation

Please find information on final year projects here: [Course unit information | MyManchester](#)

3.03 Examinations and coursework

Examinations

The Final Year Examinations consist of on-campus, invigilated exams under closed-book conditions, for each of the Year 3 lecture units. The semester 2 final year examinations also include two special programme-specific papers in which essay writing and problem-solving and data handling/analysis are tested. Training for these two *“synoptic”* papers is given in programme-based tutorial time.

Written exams will be sat during the examination period at the end of the semester in which the unit is taught (i.e. January or May/June). Units that run across both semesters will normally be examined in the May/June exam period. Units taken from other Schools may be examined at a different time.

Attendance at all examinations is compulsory. The pass mark for unit examinations is 40%.

To prepare for examinations, you are encouraged to use any quizzes and practice exercises posted on Canvas and to look at copies of past examination papers and any mock examples available. These can be obtained from the [My Learning](#) tab in your MyManchester portal, where you can search for papers by Faculty, School, exam name or code, year or semester. If the unit has no past papers the Unit Coordinator should make questions available that are representative of the kind that will be set in the examination available at least 6 weeks before the exam which will be representative of the kind that will be set in the examination. **Please note that there are no past problem papers, although example questions will be made available through programme-based tutorials.**

3.04 Laboratory work and practical reports

Most of the practicals will require you to do some background reading **before** the session, so please come prepared.

Practical work is assessed either as written work that you submit during or at the end of a unit, your ability to perform a task during a practical session, and/or as an online assessment or examination at the end of the unit. Details of assessment will be given to you at the start of each unit. Short answer questions and essay-type questions are NOT negatively marked. You will not lose marks for incorrect material (but will not gain any either) so it is worth writing something, even if you are not sure it is correct.

If you fail to submit an assessment by the due date and time, it will not normally be possible for it to be marked. If ill-health prevents you attending a practical session or meeting a submission deadline, see Guidelines on ill health.

NB: In many practical classes you will work as one of a pair or larger group of students. Be careful that you feel confident with all the procedures yourself and do not leave it to others to do tasks for you: remember, in the exam you will be on your own. Furthermore, although you will most likely obtain results as part of a group, it is **essential** that any practical work that you submit for assessment is **written in your own words**, unless you have been specifically instructed to submit a group report (see Plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic malpractice).

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3.06 Programme specific assessment requirements

Not relevant to this handbook.

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18663 snippet_title=SBS Prizes and awards 25-26]

[intense_snippet snippet_id=18661 snippet_title=SBS Statement about the use of Turnitin 25-26]

3.09 Plagiarism and academic malpractice

Academic Malpractice is a serious offence – it is treated as seriously as cheating in exams. As a student, you are expected to cooperate in the learning process throughout your programme of study by completing assignments of various kinds that are the product of **your own** study or research. Coursework, reports and essays submitted for assessment must be **your own** work, unless an assignment is a joint **group projects** as clearly instructed by the Unit Coordinator. Please, be aware that there are regular cases where students, knowingly or unknowingly, commit **plagiarism or some other form of academic malpractice** during their assignments, which is **regarded a serious offence and will be penalised affecting the mark of your submission, and you may even fail the unit** (with or without loss of credits).

It is your own responsibility to ensure that you understand what constitutes academic malpractice; COMMITTING ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE UNINTENTIONALLY IS NO DEFENCE

Training on how to avoid malpractice will also form an important part of the first stage of the Writing and Referencing skills modules in Year 1, you will be given exercises and guidance on plagiarism/academic malpractice in tutorials; if you are still unsure about any aspect of this, you should ask your Academic Advisor for advice. Some brief guidance is provided in the following:

- Academic malpractice includes **plagiarism, collusion, fabrication or falsification** of results and anything else intended by those committing it to achieve credit that they do not properly deserve. This also includes submitting work which you have previously submitted for credit – this is **self-plagiarism**.
- You should be aware that all **teaching materials** and **examination papers** are subject to **copyright** by the University of Manchester. If these are shared externally, then you will be subject to academic malpractice procedures, and possible legal action.
- All students are required to confirm that they have read and agree to the University's **declaration on Academic Malpractice** as part of the online registration process.
- A number of measures are taken to detect academic malpractice:
 - As part of the formative and/or summative assessment process, you may be asked to submit electronic versions of your work to **TurnitinUK and/or other electronic systems for the purposes of detecting plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice**. If you are asked to do this, you must do so within the required timescales.
 - The **School reserves the right to submit your work** to TurnitinUK and/or other electronic systems, even if you have originally not been asked to do so.
 - Please note that when work is submitted to the relevant electronic systems, it is copied and then stored in a database to allow appropriate checks to be made and to **detect self-plagiarism**.
 - You will be given an opportunity within the tutorials to submit a draft essay through this system, and it is very much in your best interests to do this so that you **understand how it works**.
 - If you are suspected of having committed academic malpractice, a disciplinary hearing may be involved and penalties will be applied.

Please see below links to information and resources about academic integrity and academic malpractice

- [Regulation XVII \(Conduct & Discipline of Students\)](#)
- [Academic malpractice procedure](#)
- [Plagiarism and Academic Malpractice – Guidance for Students](#)
- University of Manchester Library My Learning Essentials, including workshops and online resources such as 'Getting started with referencing' and 'Avoiding plagiarism'
- The University of Manchester referencing guide
- An Introduction to Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism (Student Guidance Service)
- Student Support Website – [Good Study Skills](#) and [Avoiding academic malpractice](#)

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18667â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS â?? Artificial Intelligence (AI) statement 25-26â?³]

3.12 External Examiner name, role and reports

External Examiners are individuals from another institution or organisation who monitor the assessment processes of the University to ensure fairness and academic standards. They ensure that assessment and examination procedures have been fairly and properly implemented and that decisions have been made after appropriate deliberation. They also ensure that standards of awards and levels of student performance are comparable with those in equivalent higher education institutions.

The External Examiners for the Undergraduate Programmes are:

Programme	External Examiner	Institution
Biochemistry	TBC	TBC
Biology	Dr David Booth	University of Dundee
Biology with Science & Society	Dr David Booth	University of Dundee
Biomedical Sciences	Prof. Rachel Ashworth	University of Worcester
Biotechnology	Dr Christopher Randall	University of Leeds
Genetics	Prof. Guy Tear	Kingâ??s College London
Immunology	Dr Rachael Rigby	Lancaster University
Medical Biochemistry	TBC	TBC
Medical Physiology	Dr Taufiq Rahman	University of Cambridge
Microbiology	Dr Christopher Randall	University of Leeds
Molecular Biology	Dr Paul Lavender	Kings College London
Neuroscience	Assoc. Prof. Tracy Farr	University of Edinburgh
Pharmacology	Dr Taufiq Rahman	University of Cambridge
Zoology	Dr James Gilbert	University of Hull

Please note that it is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners under any circumstances, in particular with regards to a studentâ??s individual performance in assessments. Other appropriate mechanisms are available for students, including the Universityâ??s appeals or complaints procedures and the UMSU Advice Centre. In cases where a student does contact an External Examiner directly, External Examiners have been requested not to respond to direct queries. Instead, External Examiners should report the matter to the School contact who will then contact the student to remind them of the other methods available for students.

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4. Student Voice

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4.02 Role of the Student Voice Committee

School-level Student Voice Committees are a forum for students, student representatives and staff to meet. The Committees are an opportunity to provide feedback on specific issues, make suggestions for improvement and any other aspects about the course, Department/School, or university.

4.03 Role of the Programme committee

The purpose of the committee is to provide a forum to facilitate communications and discussions and will

- Review proposals made by the SBS Teaching Board
- Be responsible for overseeing the operation and management of UG programmes of study
- Consider all aspects of the student experience of the UG programmes that they undertake and to ensure issues are acted upon appropriately and reflected in the SEAP
- Consider External Examiner reports and actions to be taken as a consequence
- Be responsible for the content, structure, delivery of the UG programmes and ensure quality standards are maintained e.g. web audits, CMA requirements, accreditation requirements
- Oversee student representation and analysis of student feedback, implementing actions to address areas of concern and to incorporate these into the SEAP
- Approve curriculum changes and programme amendments as recommended by the SBS TLSE Executive Committee

The committee will have decision making authority on matters within its remit and will report to the SBS TLSE Executive Committee

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5. Attendance requirements, interruptions and mitigating circumstances

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5.02 Student Engagement

Attendance is expected at all timetabled sessions, as active engagement is essential for academic progress. Students are responsible for attending regularly and engaging fully with the course material.

5.04 Procedure for reporting ill health

If you are going to be absent from a timetabled session you need to submit an absence form via SEAtS. You can find instructions on how to do this [here](#) . You must submit this absence form in order to get your absence authorised. Please note: absences will only be authorised for reasons outside of your control, such as illness. Some units, such as the tutorial unit or the practical units, have specific attendance requirements. It is important you familiarise yourself with them at the start of the academic year. You can find details of these requirements on the relevant Canvas pages.

5.05 How to change, interrupt or withdraw from a programme

If you come across difficulties during your studies which mean that completing the semester, year or remainder of your degree is not possible, you might want to consider a temporary interruption or withdrawal from your course. Please visit the Student Support webpages for further guidance on [interruptions and withdrawals](#).

Changing degree programme or pathways

If you feel that you no longer wish to continue on a programme or pathway of your choice and would like to transfer to another programme or pathway, please discuss this with the Student Support and Wellbeing team, or contact your Academic Advisor. If agreed, please complete a â??Degree Programme Change Requestâ?? adhering to the deadlines. Be aware that transfers between programmes or pathways may depend on exam performance in certain units, or some of your unit choices up to this point may be incompatible with the new programme or pathway.

Interruption of Studies

It is the Universityâ??s expectation that students complete their programme in one continuous period of uninterrupted study. It is understood, however, that students may encounter personal difficulties or situations which may seriously disrupt their studies. In such instances, students may be granted a temporary interruption to their studies.

If students have been, or are being, affected by mitigating circumstances that have lasted or are expected to last for a significant period, or that may impact upon a significant number of units, it may be better for students to apply for an interruption to their studies.

If an application to interrupt a programme of study is approved, it would normally be to help students recover from medical problems, or problems of a personal or financial nature which are having, or may have, a negative impact on performance. However, the School has the flexibility to consider and make decisions on whether to approve requests for interruption in relation to other circumstances too, e.g. work placements.

In the first instance students should speak to members of staff within the School, e.g. the Student Support and Wellbeing team, Academic Advisor, Student Support Hub, Senior Advisors; about if a period of interruption would be the most appropriate course of action. If students decide to apply, they

must make an appointment (via the Student Support Hub) to meet with one of the Senior Advisors who will provide the application form and go through it with students. Students will need to include evidence to support their application, e.g. medical evidence, confirmation of work placement.

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6. Support for students

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[intense_snippet snippet_id=â?•18707â?³ snippet_title=â?•SBS -Disability Advisory and Support Service 25-26â?³]

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6.09 University College

The [University College for Interdisciplinary Learning](#) (UCIL) offers course units that provide you a chance to explore a topic beyond the scope of your main degree, providing new perspectives and skills that complement your academic journey.

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