

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
SELECTIONS PROCEDURES COMMITTEE
GRADE EQUIVALENCE WORKING GROUP
DRAFT REPORT 5 – 20th SEPTEMBER 2021

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| <i>Executive summary</i> | 2 |
| <i>Committee members</i> | 2 |
| <i>Advice on implementation</i> | 2 |
| <i>What is a grade?</i> | 3 |
| <i>What is grade equivalence?</i> | 3 |
| <i>Grading scales in Australia: Bachelor’s & coursework Master’s degrees</i> | 4 |
| <i>Grading scales in Australia: Honours degrees</i> | 5 |
| <i>Grade conversion systems</i> | 6 |
| <i>“Returning Home”</i> | 8 |
| <i>Problems with converting grades from the University of Melbourne</i> | 8 |
| <i>Criterion-referenced assessment</i> | 9 |
| <i>Conclusions</i> | 10 |
| <i>Recommendations</i> | 10 |
| <i>References</i> | 11 |
| <i>Appendix 1: Australian universities and their grading scales</i> | 12 |
| <i>Appendix 2: Establishing grade equivalence</i> | 13 |
| <i>Appendix 3: Implementation of a new grading scale at UoM</i> | 16 |

Executive summary

Academic transcripts issued by the University of Melbourne display, for each subject, both a final score (0 to 100) and a discrete grade (H1, H2A, H2B, H3, P, F) indicating which of a series of pre-determined intervals the student's score fell. When a University of Melbourne graduate applies to study at an overseas institution, it is their grade based on the Weighted Average Mark (WAM) and not their score (the WAM itself) that is converted to the other institution's grading scale.

Common grade conversion systems, particularly those used in North America, do not deal well with grades from the "Honours Level" grading scale used by the University of Melbourne. This appears to place UoM graduates at a disadvantage compared to students at other Australian universities, none of whom use the Honours Level grading scale.

In this report we explain the source of the contradictions that arise when using existing systems to convert Honours Level grades to US Letter Grades. The primary recommendation is to replace the Honours Level grading scale with a "High Distinction / Distinction / Credit / Pass" grading scale used by all other Australian universities. An additional recommendation that flows from this is to remove the grade translation on the University's "returning home" web page. The third recommendation is to include on the academic transcript the median score for subjects in which more than 10 students were enrolled.

An appendix contains information provided by staff in Student and Scholarly Services on the issues and timeframe for implementation should one or more of the recommendations be accepted.

Committee members

Members of the Selection Procedures Committee's Grade Equivalence Working Group were:

Professor Lyle Gurrin (Chair)

Professor Margreta Kuijper

Professor Veronique Duche

Dr Davina Potts

Professor Ted Whitem (*ex officio*)

Ms Jacqui Kearns (administrative assistance and minute taking)

Advice on implementation

Dr Davina Potts

Ms Kris Day

Ms Lucy O'Brien

What is a grade?

Student assessment is an important part of university teaching. This is typically achieved in higher education by measuring the level of achievement in a component subject or award course and assigning each student a score or grade.

In this report, a *score* will refer to a number out of a possible total, for example, a percentage from 0 to 100 representing the proportion of the marks obtained by the student. Such a score will always be discrete even if there are a large number of possible values due to allowing, for example, half-marks or decimal places. If the maximum number of marks is sufficiently large then we can usually consider the resulting scores to be continuously-valued measure, that is, they are a quantitative measurement.

On the other hand, a *grade* is a discrete evaluation using an ordinal scale, usually constructed as a set of ordered categories, for example, letters (e.g. A through to F with the chromatic variants “+” or “-“ used as suffixes to indicate sub-grades), descriptors (e.g. the Honours Level H1 / H2A / H2B / H3 / P or High Distinction / Distinction / Credit / Pass; see Tables 1 – 3 below) or a single- or two-digit number (e.g. 4 to 1 (Austria), 10 to 20 (France, Belgium), 18 to 30 (Italy), 1 to 7 (University of Queensland)). Grades are a type of rank, but they are not strictly a measurement. Grades are also not to be confused with a student’s percentile rank, which is the percentage of students in the cohort who received an equal or lower grade. For example, half of the cohort may have received a score of 75/100 or more, in which case a student who receives a score of 75 is on the 50th percentile, not the 75th percentile.

Assigning each letter or descriptor a number and averaging those numerical values generates the familiar *grade point average* (GPA). While the GPA appears to be a continuously-valued measurement, the assignment of numbers to categories is not usually based on a defensible measurement system and is in many cases arbitrary, so we continue to view a discrete set of ranges for the GPA as a proxy for a grade. We do not consider the GPA further in this report.

What is grade equivalence?

Many grading scales are defined by partitioning the set of possible values for a score on the integer (whole number) scale from 0 to 100 into a series of intervals, assigning a label to each interval (the grade) so that two scores that lie in the same interval are assigned the same grade. That is, the grade is a discrete representation of a score.

Grading scales in Australia: Bachelor's & coursework Master's degrees

Examples of grading scales used by three of Australia's Group of Eight (Go8) universities are presented in Tables 1 - 3. Australia has 38 public and 2 private universities (Bond University and the University of Notre Dame Australia). Of these 40 universities, 14 use the High Distinction / Distinction / Credit / Pass (HDCP) system with cut-off points 80, 70, 60 and 50 (Table 2) and 25 use the HDCP system with cut-off points 85, 75, 65 and 50 (Table 3). Three universities use different labels for "High Distinction", "Distinction", "Credit" and "Pass" (USQ = HD/A/B/C, UQ = 7/6/5/4 and Latrobe = A/B/C/D) but all three use either the 80/70/60/50 (Latrobe) or the 85/75/65/50 (USQ and UQ) set of cut-off points. The only one of the 40 universities that does **not** use one of the two HDCP systems is The University of Melbourne [R1]. See also Appendix 2.

Moreover, UoM's "Honours Level" grading scale is the only one that has a separate label for the five-point ranges 65-69, 70-74 and 75-79 ranges. No other university attaches a grade label to an interval that has a range of less than 10 marks for bachelor's and coursework master's degrees, although some use 15 or 20 marks, as does UoM for the grades for "Pass" and "First Class Honours" respectively.

Table 1: The University of Melbourne "Honours Level" (HL) grading scale.

| Level | Grade | Score range |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------------|
| First Class Honours | H1 | 80-100 |
| Second Class Honours (Division A) | H2A | 75-79 |
| Second Class Honours (Division B) | H2B | 70-74 |
| Third Class Honours | H3 | 65-69 |
| Pass | P | 50-64 |
| Fail | F | 0-49 |

Table 2: Monash Uni. "High Distinction / Distinction / Credit / Pass" (HDCP) grading scale.

| Level | Grade | Score range |
|------------------|-------|-------------|
| High Distinction | HD | 80-100 |
| Distinction | D | 70-79 |
| Credit | C | 60-69 |
| Pass | P | 50-59 |
| Fail | F | 0-49 |

Table 3: Sydney Uni. "High Distinction / Distinction / Credit / Pass" (HDCP) grading scale.

| Level | Grade | Score range |
|------------------|-------|-------------|
| High Distinction | HD | 85-100 |
| Distinction | D | 75-84 |
| Credit | C | 65-74 |
| Pass | P | 50-64 |
| Fail | F | 0-49 |

Grading scales in Australia: Honours degrees

Many Australian universities use the same grading scale for honours as for undergraduate and postgraduate coursework subjects. Table 4 displays the grading scale used by three of the Group of Eight and all Victorian Universities except Melbourne and Latrobe (see above). Note the first three columns are identical to the Monash grading scale in Table 2. UNSW, UNE, UWS, Newcastle and Flinders University also use the grade descriptors in Table 4, but with the cut-off points from Table 3 above (Sydney).

Table 4: Bachelor’s and Honours degree grading scales for Go8 universities ANU, Monash, UWA, Victorian universities Deakin, RMIT, Swinburne, Federation, Victoria and Western Australia’s Edith Cowan University.

| Range | Bachelor | Code | Honours | Code |
|--------|------------------|------|---------------------------------|------|
| 80-100 | High Distinction | HD | First Class Honours | H1 |
| 70-79 | Distinction | D | Second Class Honours Division A | H2A |
| 60-69 | Credit | C | Second Class Honours Division B | H2B |
| 50-59 | Pass | P | Third Class Honours | H3 |

Some Australian Universities do not use the same grading scale for bachelor’s and honours degrees. The University of Adelaide uses the (higher) cut-off points in Table 3 for bachelor’s degree subjects, but the (lower) cut-off points in Table 2 for honours. The University of Sydney also uses lower cut-off points for equivalent grades in honours compared to a bachelor’s degree, but how much lower depends on the length of the honours program – see Table 5. Sydney’s grading scale for “appended honours” (e.g. an honours year) is identical to Melbourne’s existing “Honours Level” grading scale, including that students scoring less than 65 are not usually awarded a degree “with honours” at either institution. For “integrated honours” that are awarded for superior performance by a student throughout a degree, Sydney’s grading scale sets the cut-off points five marks lower than for appended honours.

Table 5: Bachelor’s and Honours degree grading scales at the University of Sydney.

| Range | Bachelor | Honours (less than 2 years) “Appended Honours” | Honours (2 years or more) “Integrated Honours” |
|--------|----------|---|---|
| 85-100 | HD | H1 | H1 |
| 80-84 | D | H1 | H1 |
| 75-79 | D | H2A | H1 |
| 70-74 | C | H2B | H2A |
| 65-69 | C | H3 | H2B |
| 60-64 | P | NA (Fail) | H3* |
| 50-59 | P | NA (Fail) | H3* |

*Prior to 2017, third class honours (H3) was not awarded for integrated honours, that is, marks in the range 0 to 64 were not awarded honours.

Grade conversion systems

An important consequence of the above definition of a grading scale is that it is **rank-preserving**, that is, a higher score always corresponds to an equal or higher grade than a lower score. Different grading scales use different cut-off points so it is not always possible to determine exactly the grade that would have been awarded on one scale if only the grade (and not the underlying score) is known on the other scale. Nevertheless, a number of freely-available grade conversion tables exist, such as the (1) the World Education Services' [R4] mapping of the HDCP scale to US letter grades (Table 6); (2) UNSW's "gumleaf plot" (Figure 1) [R2] that features the HCDP scale, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) [R5] and a conservative US letter grading scale (Figure 1); and (3) AACRAO's EDGE database [R6] mapping one of the Australian HDCP grading scales to a US equivalent (Figure 2). See also Appendix 2.

Table 6: World Education Services (WES) conversion system for the Australian HDCP scale and a US letter grading scale.

| Australian Grade Description | US Grade Equivalent |
|--|---------------------|
| High Distinction | A+ |
| Distinction | A |
| Credit | B |
| Pass | C |
| Conceded, Conditional or Compensatory Pass | D |
| Fail | F |

Figure 1: A "gumleaf plot" showing the range of percentiles corresponding to UNSW marks in 2015 (horizontal axis), and the corresponding ECTS and conservative US letter grades (vertical axis). For example, for a score of 80 the corresponding vertical line intersects the gumleaf region at about 40% and 8%, so the class rank of a student receiving that score would be expected to lie within these bounds.

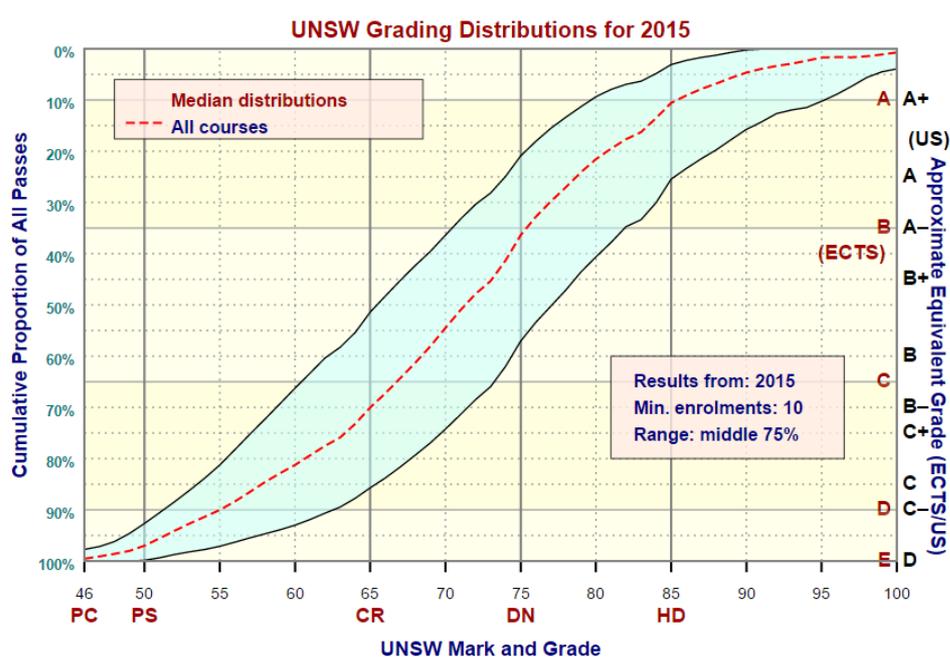


Figure 2: A table of vetted information provided by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO) on the Electronic Database for Global Education converting Australian grades from the HCDP grading scale to a US equivalent [R6].

| GRADE | DESCRIPTION | RANKING | U.S. EQUIVALENT |
|-------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 7 | High Distinction | 85 – 100% | A |
| 6 | Distinction | 75 – 84% | A |
| 5 | Credit | 65 – 74% | B |
| 4 | Pass | 50 – 64% | C |
| 3 | Conceded* | Pass (45 – 49%) | D |
| 1-2 | Failure | 0 – 44% | F |

**Note: The Conceded grade is not offered by all institutions. Where a host institution uses the Conceded, Conceded Pass or Pass Conceded grade, a D will be issued. Where the host institution does not use Conceded, Conceded Pass or Pass Conceded grade, an F will be issued.*

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY COPYRIGHT AACRAO EDGE.

Table 7: The existing grade conversion systems published by the University of Melbourne for exchange students completing a semester visiting the University of Melbourne.

| University of Melbourne | Grade | Percentage Grade | USA/ Canada | European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| First Class Honours | H1 | 80-100 | A+ A | A |
| Second Class Honours (Division A) | H2A | 75-79 | A- | B |
| Second Class Honours (Division B) | H2B | 70-74 | B+ | B |
| Third Class Honours | H3 | 65-69 | B | C |
| Pass | P | 60-64 55-59 50-54 | B C+ C | D D E |
| Fail | N | 45-49 0-44 | C- F | FX F |

“Returning Home”

The University of Melbourne provides a grade conversion table for exchange students who have completed subjects at UoM and who are “returning home” – see Table 7 [R3]. UoM *recommends* that this system is used by the institution at which the exchange student is enrolled in an award course to convert the grades on the UoM academic transcript to USA/Canada and ECTS grades. We note that the enrolling institution’s responsibility to perform such a conversion, not UoM’s.

A similar issue is potentially faced by students enrolled in an award course at UoM who take one or more subjects for credit at another institution, including studying abroad on exchange. The score or grade awarded to the student by the other institution would, ideally, be converted to the UoM grading scale for inclusion in their academic transcript. Any such conversion is a complex exercise especially since the percentiles of the distribution of 0 to 100 scores are often not available for other institutional grading scales. What happens in practice, however, is that UoM only transfers grades for credit, with the student being awarded a simple “Pass” or “Fail” with an indication on the academic transcript that the subject was assessed only on this basis. Such students are encouraged to include their overseas transcript with their UoM transcript when it is used. Many of UoM’s partner institutions do the same so as not to unreasonably penalise or unfairly advantage students assessed under other grading scale.

Problems with converting grades from the University of Melbourne

A problem with grade conversion systems such as those displayed in Table 6, Figure 1 and Table 7 arises for students who have completed a degree at UoM and who are seeking entry to graduate programs in North American institutions. Consider a UoM student whose Weighted Average Mark (WAM) is between 75 and 79 inclusive, corresponding to an Honours Level grade of Second Class Honours (Division A) or H2A. At any other Australian university a score of 75 or more would result in a grade of “Distinction”, that invariably

convert to an “A-” or even an “A” in the US letter grading scale. The H2A grade does not, however, receive as favourable a treatment in the same grade conversion systems. One US agency (the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers, AACRAO) [R6], that supports best practice in admissions, enrolment management and student services for 2,600 institutions in 40 countries, believes, based on their interpretation of Australian university grading scales, that the “qualitative academic indicator” for UoM’s H2A grade is “above average” and is therefore equivalent only to the “middle to upper range” of a B grade in the US letter grading scale, that is, a “B” or “B+”.

Contrast this with the fact that many US universities now have their average grade for passing student as “A-“: UNSW quotes Princeton as awarding as many as 35% of students an “A-“ [R2] and a 2019 article in *Forbes Magazine* [R7] claimed that 45% of students across the whole of the US receive an “A-” grade and 75% receive at least a “B-” grade. The H2A grade, an above average grade at UoM, converts to only an average “B+” grade or below average “B” grade in the US.

Criterion-referenced assessment

The University of Melbourne *Assessment and Results Policy* (MPF1326) (under *Assessment design, marking and grading* sections 4.24 – 4.36) states that “assessment and grading in subjects must be criterion-referenced and aligned to specific subject learning outcomes, including the graduate attributes and the generic skills they encompass”.

One consequence is that the learning of students is evaluated, scored and graded without reference to the achievements of others. There is, therefore, no requirement that the resulting marks or scores are scaled any specific distribution. In particular, the median mark for a cohort of students enrolled in a subject is not fixed to any value. Provision of a subject’s median mark to external parties may allow them to interpret a particular student’s performance in relation to the performance of the entire student cohort in that subject.

Conclusions

The University of Melbourne is the only Australian University that uses the “Honours Level” grading scale for all subjects, courses and the weighted average mark (WAM) on a student’s academic transcript. Despite the “grade translation” displayed on UoM’s “Returning Home” webpage, international grade conversion systems typically do not convert the H2A grade (a WAM in the range 75-79) to any of the “A” grades. In contrast, a score of 75 or more at any other Australian university would receive at least a “Distinction” grade and would be converted to at least a “A-“ grade on the US letter grading scale [R2,R4,R6]. The grading scale used by UoM *and* the grade conversion systems used by US institutions appear to disadvantage some above average UoM students when compared to the grade conversions afforded above average students at all other Australian universities.

Recommendations

1. Change the “Honours Level” grading scale to “High Distinction / Distinction / Credit / Pass” grading scale for individual subjects as used by all other Australian universities, while keeping the overall honours year grade scale H1/H2A/H2B/H3 for bachelor honours programs only.
2. Change the grading scale cut-off points to 80/70/60/50. For bachelor’s and master’s coursework programs, the subject grade descriptors will be those proposed in Recommendation 1: “High Distinction / Distinction / Credit / Pass”. For bachelor honours programs, the existing overall honours grade descriptors H1/H2A/H2B/H3 will apply to the new cut-off points as presented in [Table 4](#).
3. Remove the grade conversion system on the “returning home” UoM webpage.
4. Include on the academic transcript the median score and number of students enrolled for subjects in which ten or more students were enrolled, in a manner similar to the formats used by Cornell [R8] and Dartmouth [R9].

References

Australia

- R1. **Wikipedia**
“Academic grading in Australia”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic_grading_in_Australia
- R2. **University of New South Wales**
A comparison of grading systems
<https://student.unsw.edu.au/grades-comparison-of-grading-systems>
- R3. **University of Melbourne**
“Returning home / Translation of grades / Grades translation scale”
<https://study.unimelb.edu.au/how-to-apply/international-exchange-and-study-abroad-applications/returning-home>

International

- R4. **World Education Services (WES) Country Resources** (enter “Australia”)
<https://applications.wes.org/country-resources/resources.asp>
- R5. **European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)**
Users’ Guide 2015
https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/ects/users-guide/index_en.htm
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/da7467e6-8450-11e5-b8b7-01aa75ed71a1>
- R6. **American Academy of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)** “Electronic Database for Global Education” (EDGE). A resource from the USA for the evaluation of foreign credentials: <https://www.aacrao.org/edge>
<https://studyabroad.arcadia.edu/find-a-program/programs-by-country/australia/griffith-university/courses/> (search “Grade Scale”)
- R7. **Lindsay, T.** (2019). The 'Other' College Scandal: Grade Inflation Has Turned Transcripts into Monopoly Money. *Forbes Magazine*, 30th March 2019.
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/tomlindsay/2019/03/30/the-other-college-scandal-grade-inflation-has-turned-transcripts-into-monopoly-money/?sh=44304db94182>
- R8. **Cornell University**
Publication of median scores on academic transcripts
<https://registrar.cornell.edu/grades-transcripts/median-grades>
- R9. **Dartmouth University**
Publication of median scores on academic transcripts
<https://www.dartmouth.edu/reg/transcript/medians/>
- R10. **EGRACONS (European Grade Conversion and Accumulation System)**
The European Commission’s grade conversion system, ECTS Users’ Guide 2015
<https://tool.egracons.eu> and <https://egracons.eu>

Appendix 1: Australian universities and their grading scales

High Distinction (HD) = 85, Distinction (D) = 75, Credit (C) = 65 and Pass (P) = 50 n=25

Australian Catholic University
University of Adelaide (Go8)
Bond University (Private)
University of Canberra
Charles Darwin University
Central Queensland University
Charles Sturt University
University of Divinity (Private)
Flinders University
James Cook University
Macquarie University
University of Newcastle
Queensland University of Technology
Southern Cross University
University of New England
University of NSW (Go8)
University of Sydney (Go8)
University of Wollongong
University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Technology Sydney
University of Western Sydney
Griffith University
University of Southern Queensland (HD = HD, Distinction = A, Credit = B, Pass = C)
University of Queensland (Go8) (High Distinction = 7, Distinction = 6, Credit = 5, Pass = 4)
University of South Australia (HD = HD, D = D, C = C, 55-59 = P1, 50-54 = P2)

High Distinction (HD) = 80, Distinction (D) = 70, Credit (C) = 60 and Pass (P) = 50 n=14

Australian National University (Go8)
Curtin University (recently changed to a number 0, 1, 2, ..., 10 based on 10-mark intervals)
Deakin University
Edith Cowan University
Monash University (Go8)
Murdoch University
RMIT University
University Tasmania
Swinburne University
University of Western Australia (Go8)
Victoria University
University of Notre Dame Australia (Private)
Federation University
Latrobe University (High Distinction = A, Distinction = B, Credit = C, Pass = D)

Appendix 2: Establishing grade equivalence

Formally establishing the equivalence of grades awarded by two institutions that use different scales requires a grade distribution table for each scale. Such a table shows the statistical distribution of grades in comparable reference groups (e.g. students in the same degree program and same field of study) for each institution. Table 2.1 presents an example of a hypothetical grade distribution table from the ECTS Users' Guide 2015 [R5] representing passing grades only.

Table 2.1: An example of a grade distribution table from the ECTS Users' Guide 2015.

| Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)* | Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group | Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded | Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded |
|--|---|---|---|
| 10 | 50 | 5% | 5% |
| 9 | 100 | 10% | 15% |
| 8 | 350 | 35% | 50% |
| 7 | 300 | 30% | 80% |
| 6 | 200 | 20% | 100% |
| Total | 1,000 | 100% | |

https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/ects/users-guide/grade-distribution_en.htm#ectsTop

If grade distribution tables are available for two institutions then the grades at each institution can be located as percentile ranges on the underlying percentile scale and mapped to each other. If the percentile ranges of two grades from different scales overlap incompletely then a decision needs to be made as to whether a given grade at one institution will be assigned the minimum, average or maximum of the comparable grades in the overlapping ranges of the other institution. In the examples in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 below from the ECTS Users' Guide 2015, a grade of 12 in Paris would map to either 27 or 28 in Rome, whereas a grade of 27 in Rome would map to either 11 or 12 in Paris. Note that

1. Converting a grade from Paris to Rome (or *vice versa*) and back again does **not** return the original grade. In general, grade conversion is a one-way mapping: the direction of the conversion matters; and
2. The "percentile scale" to which we refer in the above paragraph is the student's rank in a cohort of their peers standardised to a number between 0 and 100. This is the percentage of students in the cohort who received a grade equal to or lower than the grade received by the student in question. It is **not** the percentage of the total possible marks for assessment achieved by the student. For example, half of the cohort may have received a score of 75/100 or more, in which case a student who receives a score of 75 is located at 50 on the percentile scale, not 75.

Figure 2.1: An Example of grade conversion from the ECTS Users' Guide 2015

1 Grade conversion based on two grade distribution tables from two reference groups belonging to different national grading systems:

Reference group A in Italy (Passing grades ranging from 18 to 30 cum laude)
Reference group/Field of study: ISCED Code 023 Languages

Reference group B in France (Passing grades ranging from 10 to 20)
Reference group/Field of study: ISCED Code 023 Languages

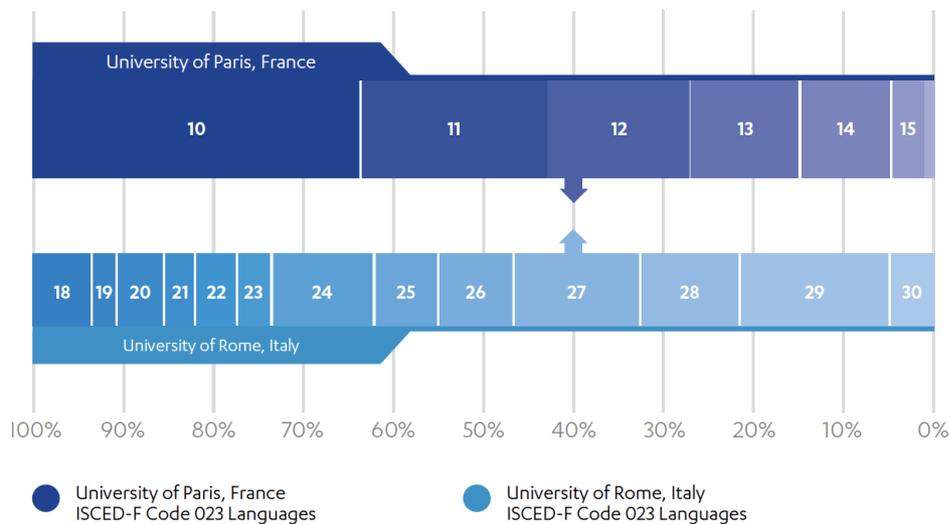
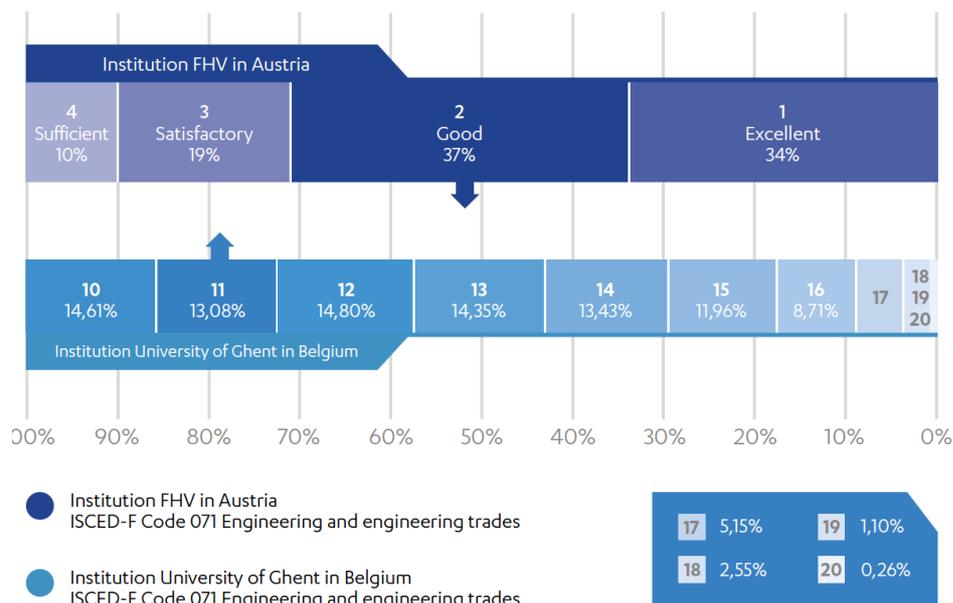


Figure 2.2: An Example of grade conversion from the ECTS Users' Guide 2015

2 Grade conversion based on two grade distribution tables from two reference groups belonging to different national grading systems:

Institution FHV in Austria (Passing grades ranging from 1 to 4)
Reference group/Field of study: ISCED Code 071 Engineering and engineering trades

Institution University of Ghent in Belgium (Passing grades ranging from 10 to 20)
Reference group/Field of study: ISCED Code 071 Engineering and engineering trades



The figures above are specific examples from EGRACONS (European Grade Conversion and Accumulation System: <https://egracons.eu>) [R10], a project co-funded by the European commission, that aimed to develop a grade conversion system based on the examples of grade conversion tables as recommended in the ECTS Users' Guide 2015. This project mapped grading practices in countries and many individual institutions, which ultimately led to a full description of the grading scales in use in Europe. One output of the project was an online tool that allows direct and automatic conversions of grades by constructing a database of annual, statistically-based grade distribution tables supplied by each of the participating institutions – see <https://tool.egracons.eu> for further information [R10].

EGRACONS focused on converting grades given by other institutions to a local grade at the home institution. Converting local grades to grading scale at other institutions is not supported by the online platform as EGRACONS assumes that grade conversion is a responsibility of the home institution (who is “sending” the student) and not of the host institution (who is “receiving” the student).

Appendix 3: Implementation of a new grading scale at UoM

This appendix summarises the key operational considerations and estimated timeframes for the implementation of a new grading scale at the University of Melbourne.

If the new grading scale is to be implemented for the 2023 academic year, such a change would need to be approved at the beginning of 2022 with planning to start shortly afterwards. If approved, the SLIG would need to fund a 6 – 12 month Discovery Project in the first instance to undertake detailed analyses on Systems, Process and People impact, including the necessary communications required to implement such a change.

Systems impact

Specific Academic Applications Management (AAM) team advice regarding the technical effort would be required, including when this would be feasible given other priorities, including the migration to the Cloud. This work is estimated to take at least six months and would need funding for dedicated resources to support it. These are the systems affected:

- **StudentOne**, including UoM built reports such as the Statement of Results, Student Record Card, etc., the results schema and possibly WAM and Award calculation scripts. The complexity depends on whether current results schema would be “grandfathered”, meaning two results schemas are in place;
- **eQuals**; and
- **Graduate Research Scholarship Scoring Calculator** may need work. Robert Westerink will be able to advise.

Change and communications

A change and communications lead would be required for this project as a large number of stakeholders are affected both within and external to the UoM. These include:

- UoM policy consultation and updates;
- Current students and staff – communications plan, particularly students mid-way through their degrees and whether their current results schema would be “grandfathered” until they complete;
- Any references in the Handbook, prospectuses, etc. to students needing to obtain a particular grade (e.g. H3) to be considered or in contention for a place in subject, course, degree, etc.;
- UoM website update, including the websites that provides information about previous grading scales and grade conversion systems;
- VTAC and tertiary admissions offices; and
- Overseas partners and organisations that have grade conversion system in place.

Recommendation 4

- If it was decided this would be a worthwhile inclusion, AAM advice on system capability to manage these calculations, and then publish the output, would be required. It is possible that current student system functionality would not allow this recommendation to proceed, so an alternative solution would need to be found.

- More information is required before an estimate of time can be provided. For example, results are returned progressively, with special assessment results returned later, so at what point would this information be determined and published on academic transcripts?
- Given the importance of the WAM to students, seeking student feedback about this element of the recommendations is likely to be worthwhile and is highly recommended.

Other aspects that require consideration

- How will the proposed grading scale affect the awarding and title of some degrees “with Distinction”, First Class Honours, Second Class Honours, etc.?
- Any changes to the grading scale should be combined with the implementation of the “Special Consideration” changes approved by the UoM Academic Board in December 2020, as this is also likely to entail changes to the interim grading scales. It would be more efficient to implement all grading scale changes simultaneously.