

Changes to Academic Regulations for Taught Awards (ARTA)
Addendum to ARTA relating to all taught students considered for progression and
award from 1st May 2025

1. Purpose and Background

An initiative of the Education Strategic Delivery Plan is the development of a Quality, Enhancement and Development Framework (QED) for all taught programmes. An operational activity of this initiative is to carry out a review of ARTA to ensure the regulations continue to maintain the integrity of Northumbria Awards, meet the OfS conditions of registration and provide students with appropriate opportunities to succeed.

A Task and Finish Group was set up with academic representation from each faculty, Dean of Students and relevant areas of Student, Library and Academic Services (SLAS) to consider the challenges faced with the current regulations, options for potential improvements and comparison to sector practice.

An outcome of the next part of this review is a change to the borderline regulation used to define the agreed classification for awarding students, both at UGT and PGT.

This change to ARTA is intended to:

- i. ensure consistency of opportunities provided to students between our UGT and PGT cohorts, and Northumbria students with those studying at other similarly placed institutions in the sector who have already implemented this regulation.
- ii. increase the opportunities for students to succeed in their studies, with a direct positive effect on the University's position with respect to OfS Condition of Registration B3, TEF and domestic league tables.

The change to the Borderline Regulations can be managed as an in-year regulatory change to the 2024/25 edition of ARTA and applied for implementation ahead of the May & June 2025 Programme Assessment Boards.

2. Details of the changes

Current regulation

The marks profile of a student is regarded as borderline where the average mark is not more than 2% below a boundary between classes of degree. The higher class of degree is awarded where **the majority of all graded credits at the award level lie on or above the appropriate boundary**. If this is not the case, the lower class of degree is awarded.

Proposed regulation

The marks profile of a student is regarded as borderline where the average mark is not more than 2% below a boundary between classes of degree. The higher class of degree is awarded where **half of all graded credits at the award level lie on or above the appropriate boundary**. If this is not the case, the lower class of degree is awarded.