

City St George's, University of London: Degree Outcomes Statement 2023/24

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A Introduction

City St George's tradition of providing high quality education relevant to business and the professions dates back 160 years, through the history of City, University of London and St George's University of London. In August 2024 the two institutions merged, and City St George's now educates over 27,000 students from more than 170 countries across its three campuses in Clerkenwell, Moorgate, and Tooting.

Our student cohort reflects the vibrant diversity of our pan London locations, with students representing a wide range of cultural backgrounds and lived experiences. We are proud of this diversity and value and what it brings to our university. Most of our home undergraduate students join us from London and the South-East, with many choosing to live at home and commute.

This Degree Outcome Statement cover the period 2023/24, which was the last year prior to the merger of the two universities which took place on 1st August 2024. The data for the statement is the combined OfS data for the legacy institutions, with the commentary produced in two parts, to cover Legacy City and Legacy St George's and the practice in place at each institution at the time. References to committees, policy titles, and roles reflect the structures and practices in place at each legacy institution prior to the merger.

B Legacy Statements

1 Institutional degree classification profile

The degree classification profile contained in this Statement provides an overview of the combined degree attainment data for City, University of London and St George's, University of London undergraduate students from 2018/19 – 2023/24.

Overall, the outcomes for the legacy institutions were broadly similar and in line with the sector. For example, the proportion of 'good honours' (1st class and 2:1 degrees) decreased by just over 2 percentage points at City St George's to 76.4% compared to 76.6% for the sector (down 0.6 percentage points).

Although the proportion of 'good honours' degrees awarded in 2023/24 continued to be a significant decline from the peaks recorded during COVID-19, at both legacy institutions it is above where it was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic six years ago, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Total number of awards and proportion of 'good honours' awarded to City St George's full time undergraduate students between 2018/19 and 2023/24 compared to sector

Year of Award	City St George's Total Awards	City St George's 'Good Honours'	England 'Good Honours'
2018/19	2760	76.1%	77.5%
2019/20	2642	82.5%	82.5%
2020/21	2620	87.8%	83.2%
2021/22	3273	82.8%	79.0%
2022/23	3342	78.7%	77.2%
2023/24	3416	76.4%	76.6%

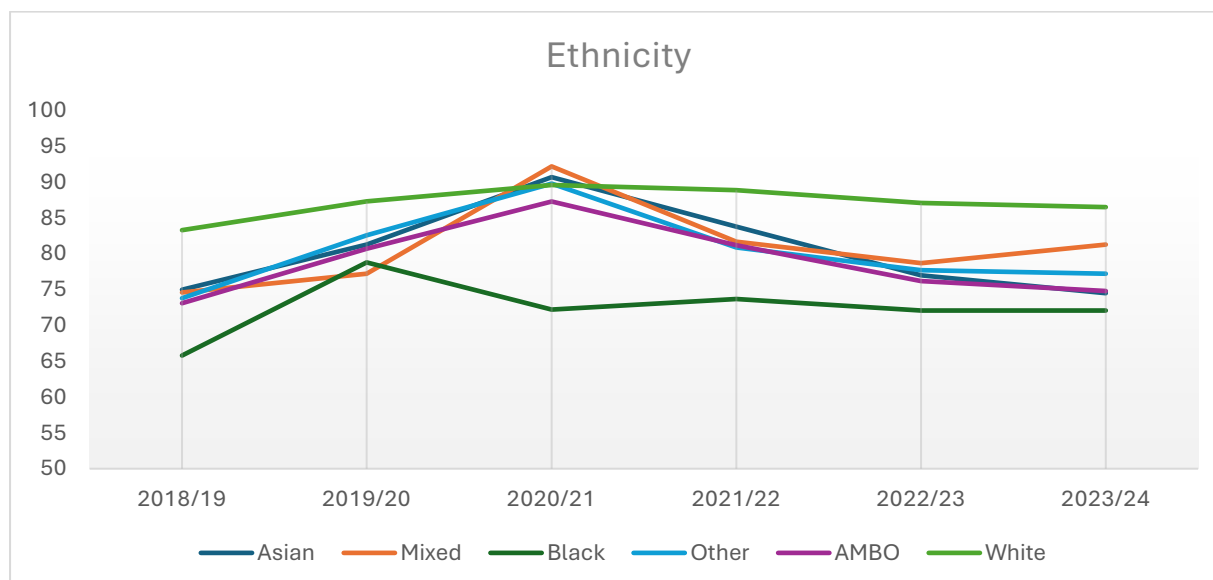
Source: [Access and participation data dashboard - Office for Students](#)

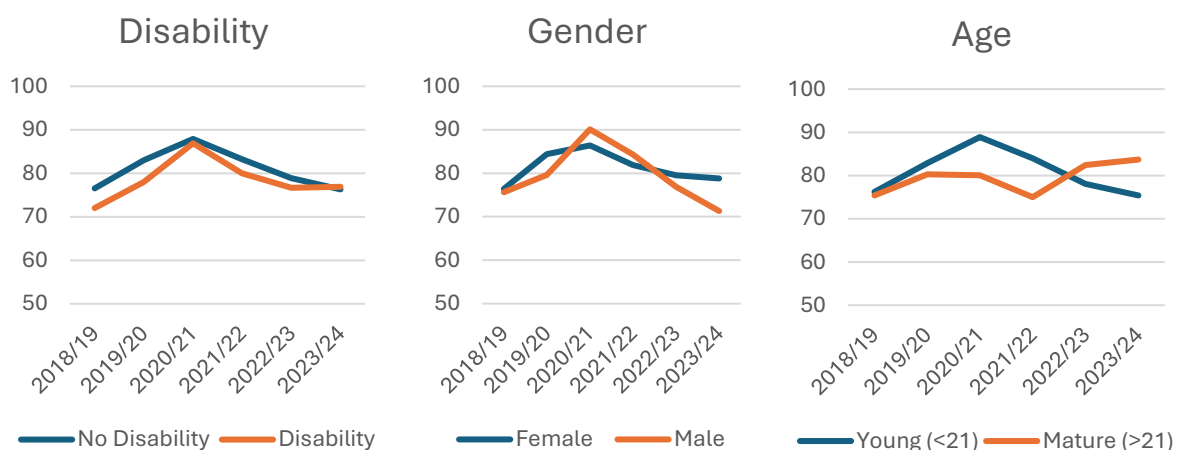
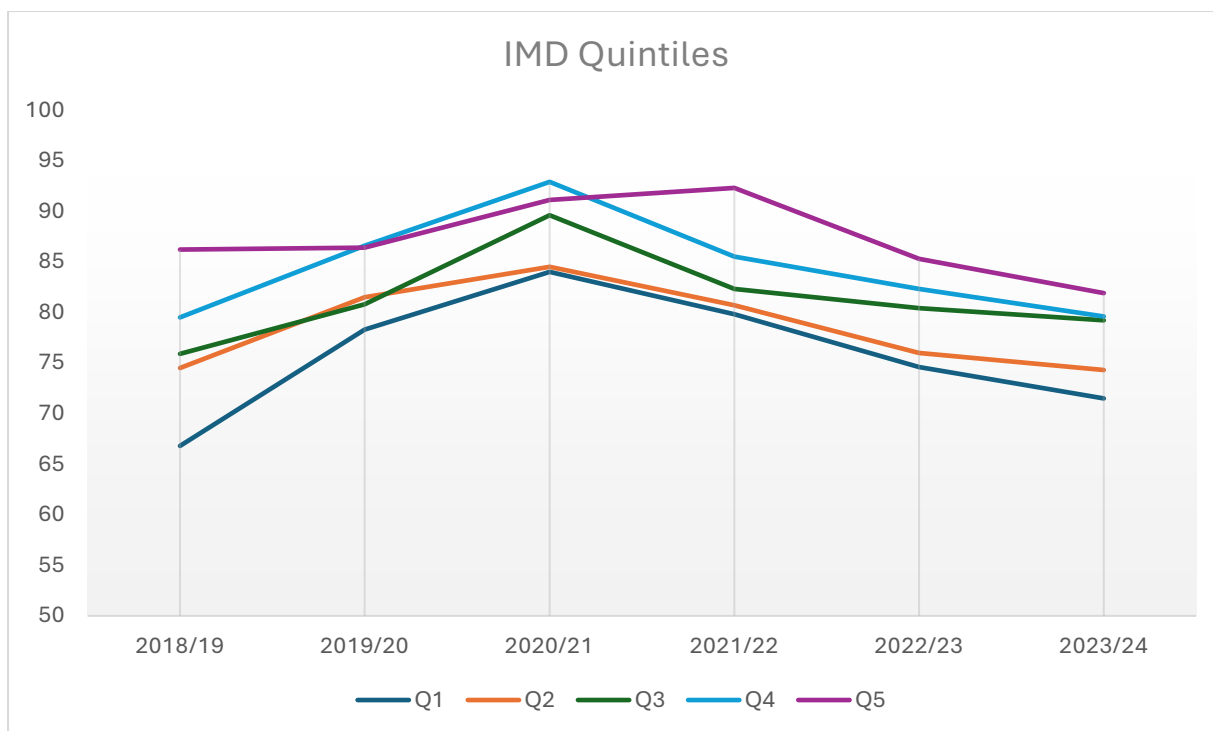
Throughout 2023/24 the two institutions of City St George's, University of London remained committed to empowering students from all backgrounds to achieve their full potential. The past six years we have seen an enhanced effort to address the degree awarding gaps for underrepresented groups, especially students of Asian, Mixed, Black and Other (AMBO) backgrounds. Our [Access and Participation Plans 2020-21 to 2024-25](#) submitted to the Office for Students, set out how we continued to address degree awarding gaps in partnership with students.

The degree awarding gap for good honours varied across demographics at both institutions.

An awarding gap between White and AMBO students remains and increased in 23/24 (10.9% to 11.7%). Between White and Black students the gap reduced very slightly (15% to 14.4%) in 2023/24, whilst the gap between White and Asian students increased by nearly 2 percentage points (10.10% to 12%).

The awarding gap between Q5 and all other IMD Quintiles reduced in 2023/24. There was a small drop of 0.3% for Q1 vs Q5 and 2.2% for Q3 vs Q5.





For the first time at both institutions, the percentage of good honours awarded to those with a declared disability was greater than the percentage awarded to those without and there is near parity in the gap between the two.

The gap between female and male students continued to grow (up by nearly 5%).

Interestingly, the gap between Young and Mature students has continued to grow in favour of mature students (4.3pp to 83pp).

We are now working collaboratively to address the degree awarding gaps identified as detailed in the target measure of our Access and Participation Plan for Student Success attainment.

2 Assessment and marking practices

City St George's academic regulations, policies and procedures are robust and were comprehensively reviewed following the merger.

Up to and including 2023/24 all programmes leading to an award operated in accordance with their respective institution's regulations.

Legacy City operated in accordance with Senate Regulation 19: Assessment Regulations. The Regulations covered all aspects of the conduct of assessment, how students' progress and how awards were made. They set out provisions for Extenuating Circumstances, appointments and role of external examiners, functions of Assessment Boards and rules around academic conduct and integrity. Senate Regulation 11 governed the Conduct of Examinations.

The Assessment and Feedback Policy in place for 2023/24 outlined the principles on which assessment was based including the use of assessment criteria, grade-related criteria, marking and moderation processes. Independent scrutiny of the assessment process for each programme was undertaken by at least one external examiner appointed according to the criteria set out in the External Examiners Policy.

On behalf of the University's Senate, Assessment Boards for each programme oversaw student progress between years and degree classifications. They safeguarded the consistency, fairness and standards of City's awards and the application of the Assessment Regulations from which its decisions were made.

Sanctions for academic misconduct were set out in the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy. Academic appeals for taught and research programmes were governed by Senate Regulation 20 and 21 respectively. Academic Appeals for validated taught and research programmes were governed by Senate Regulation 20b and 21b respectively. Reports on appeals, extenuating circumstances and academic misconduct were considered on an annual basis by Senate and its sub-committees, ensuring a transparent and consistent approach for all students.

At Legacy St George's, engagement with sector reference points was embedded within quality assurance processes. The new programme approval mechanism ensured that programmes were benchmarked against sector reference points including the UK Quality Code, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and, where they applied, subject benchmark statements.

External experts from other universities and from professional communities were fully involved in the approval process. As an established provider of programmes that enabled graduates to practice as healthcare professionals, the programmes were overseen by external regulators including the Health and Care Professions Council who worked with legacy St George's to assure standards.

There were well-developed processes for designing assessment tasks, developing assessment criteria and for internal moderation to ensure consistency of marking within programme and module teams. The approach was underpinned by a mature external examiner system. External examiners advised on the extent to which legacy St George's practices complied with sector-wide expectations. Reports from externals provided high levels of assurance regarding fairness, validity and reliability of all aspects of assessment.

Where students were assessed in the workplace, training and development opportunities were provided for assessors as well as promulgate assessment criteria to ensure consistency and use of moderation processes to ensure reliability in assessment.

Programmes were reviewed against a five-year cycle. With external experts at the heart of the review process this ensured assessment practices remained current. The periodic review programme was reinstated in 2022-23 (following a break during Covid).

Applications from students for an adjusted assessment (e.g. more time in an exam) with a health condition or a SpLD had to be accompanied by a report from an independent specialist or healthcare practitioner. Academic appeals were submitted to a specialist team and considered independently of the programme team to ensure fairness and rigor.

3 Academic governance

For academic year 2023/24 the two legacy institutions had separate academic governance structures.

Legacy City

Senate was the primary body with responsibility for the regulation, governance and quality assurance of City's programmes, including those delivered in partnership. Senate reported and provided assurance to Council, the governing body, on academic quality and standards through regular reports. Additional assurance was provided to Council through independent internal audits and the requirements of external regulators and assessors.

The Educational Quality Committee was a sub-committee of Senate and oversaw the implementation of the quality assurance framework. Assessment Boards were sub-committees of Senate with delegated authority to approve awards and degree classifications.

The quality and standards of validated programmes delivered by partner institutions were governed through Assessment and Course Boards, chaired by City. Course Boards reported to City's Collaborative Provision Committee, a sub-committee of Senate. Assessment Boards had a direct reporting line to Senate.

In line with the OfS Regulatory Framework and other sector guidance, such as the QAA UK Quality Code, independent scrutiny and externality was core to City's governance arrangements and provided assurance that our practices were sound and that the expected FHEQ and professional standards were met.

The framework included:

- Independent scrutiny during the approval of new programmes and the periodic programme reviews.
- Independent scrutiny of assessments and assessment criteria through external examiners. External examiners' reports were responded to by Schools and reported to Senate and its sub-committees via an Annual Report.

Legacy St George's

Academic governance encompasses policies, structures, relationships, systems and processes. There were clear, fully documented policies and processes related to all aspects of assessment. In practice, Course Directors (sometimes working alongside expert assessment leads) were responsible for managing the assessment process including the identification, preparation and support of staff involved in marking student work. Course Directors are accountable in two ways (i) to senior staff within the management structures and (ii) by reporting through the committee structure.

Course Directors were required to analyse and comment on trends in student outcomes at programme level and compare with institutional norms as part of the annual monitoring process. Course Directors were also asked to comment if the characteristics of students seemed to have a bearing on student outcomes. These analyses were contained in Annual Programme Monitoring Reports and were considered and approved by independent quality monitoring committees with issues escalated to senior committees if needed.

In parallel, legacy St George's constituted an expert group (Data Improvement Group) to monitor patterns of degree awards at institutional level and, where there were discernible changes, to investigate the drivers for change with programme teams. The Group informed the work of other groups within the institution. For example, the priorities of the Inclusive Education Steering Group were shaped in part by the outputs from the Data Improvement Group.

All programmes were reviewed or revalidated, usually every five years. Reviews and revalidations provided an opportunity for programme teams to evaluate in detail all aspects of programme design and delivery, including assessment strategies, methods and outcomes, and discuss their findings with independent peers. Validation and revalidation processes included the regulatory and professional bodies for the programmes.

Legacy St George's did not deliver honours degree programmes under partnership arrangements although our allied health programmes were delivered through the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education, a joint venture with Kingston University. The joint venture agreement with Kingston University ended in 2022, since when, the allied health programmes were delivered solely by St George's.

4 Classification algorithms

At Legacy City it was set out in Senate Regulation 19: Assessment Regulations, that classifications were determined according to the overall aggregate mark achieved in modules, with the credit value of each module determining its weighting in the aggregation of marks. The weighting of each year in the calculation of the overall aggregate mark was determined during the approval of a programme in accordance with Senate Regulation 15: Undergraduate Programmes. For Bachelor's degrees at least 50% of the overall aggregate mark must come from Year 3 assessment and not more than 15% can come from Year 1. This flexibility was to accommodate disciplinary differences. The typical weighting for a Bachelor's programme is: Year 1: 10%, Year 2: 30%, Year 3: 60%.

Some programmes operated with approved variations to the standard classification algorithm due to specific professional body requirements; because they were delivered in partnership with another institution; or for other legitimate reasons such as market standard within subject disciplines.

Students were normally permitted a maximum of two attempts at an assessment unless there were extenuating circumstances or specific professional body requirements. Marks for assessments passed at the second attempt were capped at the pass mark. Compensation, if not prevented by a PSRB, was available for failed modules in certain circumstances and in accordance with strict criteria to ensure that the learning outcomes of the programme had been met.

Legacy St George's had a clear and transparent algorithm for classifying honours degree programmes. The algorithm was based on weighted average of all work carried out by the student. The algorithm allowed minor variations in the weightings between different years of study although level 6 (the final year of a full-time honours degree programme) had to have a weighting of at least 0.6. In practice, the majority of three-year honours programmes had a 30/70 weighting (year 2/year 3) for the six-year reporting period of this Statement.

Key features of the algorithm (until 2021-22) were:

- With very few exceptions all module marks were used to determine a student's classification as per the algorithm. A practice-based module assessed on a pass/fail basis is an example of when a module might not have contribute to the classification.
- Students must have passed all modules.
- The highest module mark at level 6 was used to calculate a 15-credit enhancement to the overall final year mark
- A standard borderline zone of 1% for all the BSc degree classification boundaries, effectively operating at 68.5% (First class honours), 58.5% (Second class honours (upper division)), 48.5% (Second class honours (lower division)) and 38.5% (Third class honours) due to rounding.
- There was no provision to alter classification based on the personal circumstances of

students.

- Undergraduate students had one reassessment opportunity as of right. If students failed at resit, they could apply for a discretionary third attempt. Three was the maximum number of attempts available to honours degree students.

The algorithm was included in the regulations which were available to all students. Further advice and guidance was available on a programme-by-programme basis.

The algorithm, as it is described here, was introduced in 2014-15. It was reviewed following the publication by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) of the Principles for Effective Degree Algorithm Design (2019). The approach was in alignment with the principles.

Legacy St George's adopted a small number of refinements, to remove anomalies and provide for greater standardisation. For example:

- From academic year 2022-23, there was a university-wide approach to rounding to ensure consistency, Assessment marks and module marks were to one decimal place. Rounding to a whole number only took place at the end of the assessment process when determining classification.
- The protocol that enabled the highest module mark at level 6 to be used to calculate a 15-credit enhancement to the overall final year mark was not available to new entrants in 2022-23. For avoidance of doubt, the protocol continued to be applied for 7 awards made in 2022-23 and 2023-24, but not in 2024-25 or thereafter. The protocol was removed because the algorithm already placed a greater weighting on level 6 modules, and this was compounded by further enhancing an individual module mark. Removal of this regulation was expected to reduce marginally the proportion of good degrees conferred. The protocol was not removed prior to 2022 because this would have been a material change to the terms and conditions for continuing students.
- A single approach to weightings i.e. a 30/70 weighting (year 2/year 3), for all of our three-year honours programmes was being implemented. The change would be made when the programmes were revalidated. For the same reason as in the bullet above, the weighting was not changed prior to 2022 because this would have been a material change to the terms and conditions for continuing students.

No changes were made to the algorithm or to our wider regulatory framework in 2019-20 and 2020-21 in response to the pandemic.

5 Teaching practices and learning resources

Throughout the reporting period of this statement, legacy City remained committed to enhanced support, development and recognition of teaching excellence. The Learning Enhancement and Development directorate (LEaD) ensured that all academic staff were suitably qualified via training and oversight of mandatory teaching qualifications, principally Fellowships (at various levels) of the Higher Education Academy, as well as providing training, CPD and support for education, including digital education in all Schools. Teaching practices were assured and enhanced via the oversight of the sub-committee of Senate, the Education and Employability Board, while Learning Resources were overseen via both the Education and Employability Board and the Student Experience Board, another sub-committee of Senate.

Each academic School had its own Learning & Teaching Committee and LEaD encouraged and supported staff to enhance their teaching excellence via a range of workshops aligned to the priorities of academic Schools alongside 1-2-1 support, drop-in sessions, online support and modules provided as part of the MA Academic Practice Programme.

Oversight of teaching practices and learning resources was overseen through regular

Student Experience Continuous Improvement planning meetings between each School leadership team, the Vice President Education, the Vice President Digital and Student Experience and the Director of Student Experience. Student perceptions of teaching practices were analysed there through NSS and other student voice mechanisms (e.g. Your Voice), and through online module evaluations at Education Quality Committees. From 2022, there was also an institutional emphasis on inclusive education, monitored and encouraged through all the mechanisms described, through APP planning and by data-informed discussions between leadership and Schools. Legacy City's academic staff contributed a breadth and depth of teaching, professional and research expertise which, in combination, contributed to our institutional mission of serving business, practice and the professions.

The period covered by this degree outcomes statement reflected a period of rapid change for teaching and learning at legacy St George's. Enhancements across learning resources, learning development, academic and curriculum development, student voice and the addressing of a AMBO attainment gap aimed to improve student success. This work fed through into an increase in the proportion of honours students achieving good degrees. This was consistent with the increase in good degrees seen over this period.

In 2024, legacy St George's introduced enhanced learner analytics for all programmes; This system helped identify non-engaged learners, informed by interaction with the VLE (Canvas).

Panopto lecture also enhanced student learning by providing opportunities to listen again to lecture content and revise effectively for assessments. Lecture capture also helped students with EDI issues, as it allowed those who struggled to attend in person to access content that they'd otherwise be unable to access.

We had several student feedback mechanisms in function e.g. Student Online Teaching Survey (SOLTS), student voice platform (Unitu) and student-staff liaison groups.

Ensuring a good environment for AMBO achievement and identifying barriers to was a major area of focus. There had been fluctuation in the attainment gap between AMBO students in the period covered by this statement.

Inclusivity remained a priority. In 2020-21 an Inclusive Education Steering Group was established at St George's a lecturer in Inclusive Education appointed to lead and coordinate work. A key component was the use of student advisors to review curricular content and pedagogic approaches. There was also a focus on students' differential experiences in practice-based education.

Over this period, St George's learning development staff provision was doubled and an effective "in and alongside" approach adopted. This combined the provision of elective 1:1 study support and access to Study Plus learning resources within the Academic Success Centre with learning development sessions embedded within programmes and designed to synchronise with assessment activities, in context.

Academic staff development in teaching and learning benefitted from the introduction of an inhouse Advance HE-accredited scheme for award of Senior Fellowship (SHINE) and the formation of a Centre of Innovation and Development in Education which trebled academic development support. Access to new workshops on topics such as on active learning, assessment and feedback, inclusive curriculum and a curriculum advisory group provided opportunities for teaching staff to develop their practice and learning design to enhance student learning.

6 Identifying Good Practice and Actions

Both Legacy City and Legacy St George's had well defined practices in place during the reporting period to recognize and share areas of excellence and good practice.

At City this took place through various platforms including the Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) process, and the City Learning and Teaching Forum.

Institutionally, over the last six academic years Legacy City received recognition and praise for robust and varied teaching practices; the academic support provided to students and the learning resources available. Evidence of this was attained from our student body, via the NSS written feedback, as well as our External Examiners in their annual reports.

The majority of completed APE forms provided an effective and strong overview of the health of programmes, including good practice items and comprehensive action plans mapped against the strategic priorities of Student Employability, Student Experience and Student Outcomes.

Common themes of Strength/Good Practice included:

- Student Employability - Introducing more practical experiences earlier in the programme.
- Student Experience - support given by staff on the programme and how this had enabled students to achieve their academic potential.
- Student Outcomes – the knowledge and skills assessed by assessments is impressive and assessments were well designed.

Ongoing Improvement/Enhancement activities included:

- Student Employability - The development of the curriculum following the most recent Periodic Review).
- Student Experience - timely marking and effective feedback.
- Student Outcomes - Strengthening the relationship with the Careers Service outcomes.

Legacy St George's had a small portfolio of honours degree programmes with high levels of external professional regulation. The programmes applied the same algorithm to ensure consistency of practice and the equitable treatment of students. Academic regulations also placed limits on the discretion available to Boards of Examiners for the same reason.

Legacy St George's quality assurance processes fostered dialogue between programme teams and this dialogue allowed shared solutions to common problems to emerge and for good practice in assessment to be identified and shared. For example, the significant expertise in medical education and processes in place enabled the MBBS assessment team to share its expertise in the assessment of clinical and communication skills and in the assessment of the scientific knowledge that underpins safe practice.

An internal review of degree awards was carried out in 2018-19 and led to a number of plans being initiated in response. Updated membership and terms of reference of Boards, introduced a role description and appointment criteria for Board chairs and developed a standard agenda for Examination Board meetings. Training was also offered for all staff in Examination Boards and repeated annually that training every year.

A degree classifications workshop was held at the end of academic year 2022-23, where programmes explored their degree outcomes and trends and discussed ways in which the descriptors could both enhance practice and provide assurance in regard to setting and maintaining standards.