

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

1. Undergraduate Frequently Asked Questions

General

Where can I find help and advice? In the first instance please contact the Student Office, room G09, Ashton Building. If staff there are unable to help, they will point you in the right direction.

What should I do if I have a problem with my registration? If you have any problems with registering your modules on Liverpool Life or if you are unsure about your options, please contact the Student Office (G09).

Where can I find my timetable? Your personal timetable will be available via Liverpool Life. Please check regularly, particularly during the first few weeks of term.

Where will my lectures be held? Your lectures will take place in various lecture theatres around the campus. The venues are listed on your personal timetable.

How will I know which tutorial groups to go to for my modules? Your tutorial groups will be allocated on the timetable. Your lecturer will advise you when your tutorials/practicals are due to begin.

How long am I expected to spend on my studies each week? Usually ten hours study per week is expected for each module, including both teaching and private study. See [Section 4](#) of the Undergraduate Student Handbook.

What should I do if I have a timetable clash? Please contact the Student Office (room G09) for advice. In some cases, it may not be possible to avoid the clash and it will be necessary to miss occasional lectures. You should advise the Student Office of any lectures that will be missed on a regular basis for this reason, so that the attendance records can be modified accordingly.

What should I do if I want to change one of my optional modules? Your Academic Advisor can give advice regarding your optional modules. Changes to 7.5 credit modules (COMP281, COMP282, COMP283, COMP284 and COMP285) must be made by the end of week one in the second semester. Other modules can normally be changed during the first **two** weeks of each semester, although it is advisable to make any change as early as possible. You will need to collect a form from the Student Office (room G09) and ask your Academic Advisor to

authorise this. The Student Office will then amend your registration.

What should I do if I want to change to another programme within the Department?

Transfers are possible between the single honours degree programmes, subject to approval from the appropriate Director of Studies. See **Section 3.4.1** of the Undergraduate Student Handbook. If the change is approved, you will need to complete a transfer form which can be obtained from the Student Office (room G09).

What should I do if I have problems with my study, either for academic or personal reasons?

In the first instance you should contact your Academic Advisor. If you are unable to contact him/her, then please contact the Student Office (room G09) for advice.

What should I do if I am not happy with my Academic Advisor?

Please contact the staff in the Student Office (room G09) who will try to arrange an alternative tutor.

What should I do if I want to suspend or withdraw?

If you have problems which cannot be resolved, you may either need to take some time out from University (suspension) or you may wish to leave the University completely (withdrawal). In both cases you will need to obtain approval from either:

- **Dr David Jackson (DJackson@liverpool.ac.uk)**,
for students on G400, G401, G404, G490, G500, G501, G610, GZ10 and G700
- **Dr Valentina Tamma (V.Tamma@liverpool.ac.uk)**,
for students on G402, G403, G491, G502, G503, G611, G61Z and G701
- **Dr Giorgos Christodoulou (G.Christodoulou@liverpool.ac.uk)**
for students on GN34, G3N4 and N300
- **Mr Sebastian Coope (Coopes@liverpool.ac.uk)**
for students on GG14 and GG16

You will also need to complete a form, which is available from the Student Office (room G09).

Where can I get a letter confirming my student status?

You can request these via Liverpool Life

What should I do if I lose my smart ID card?

Replacement cards can be obtained online. Please see <http://www.liv.ac.uk/students/student-administration-centre/documents-id-cards/student-id-cards.htm>.

Attendance

What should I do if I miss a lecture?

It is very important that all absence with good cause is reported to the Student Office (G09). If you miss a lecture, you should complete an absence form which is available from the Student Office or online at

<http://intranet.csc.liv.ac.uk/department/ltas/mitigation.html>.

If you are absent for longer than five days, you will also need to obtain a medical note or other evidence. Completed forms should be returned to the Student Office. If your absence is for a good reason, your attendance record will be amended accordingly. See **Section 4.4/4.5** of the Undergraduate Student Handbook.

What should I do if I forget to take my student smart card to a lecture or forget to scan my card?

Whenever possible, please sign the temporary register available from the lecturer. If you are unable to do so, please inform the Student Office (room G09).

Can I see my attendance record?

You will be able to see your attendance record online on the departmental website at <https://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/attendance.html>. You will need to enter your username and password to view this.

Exams/Coursework

What should I do if I miss a deadline for coursework or a class test?

You are allowed to submit work up to five working days late, in which case the University's standard penalties apply. If you miss a deadline because you are ill or for other good reason, you should complete the mitigating circumstances affecting coursework form which is available from the Student Office (room G09) or online at

<http://intranet.csc.liv.ac.uk/department/ltas/mitigation.html>.

It is important that you also inform your lecturer who may be able to arrange an extension. Please see **Section 5.1.4** of the Undergraduate Student Handbook.

What are extenuating circumstances?

These are circumstances which have affected your academic performance, either in term time or during the exam period, for example sickness, bereavement or personal problems. The Board of Examiners can take these circumstances into account when looking at your results, provided the appropriate form has been completed and suitable evidence received. Please see **Section 4.5** of the Undergraduate Student Handbook.

What happens if I miss an exam?

Normally, missed exams can be re-taken in August/September, although marks will be capped at 40% unless there are mitigating circumstances. It is very important

that you inform the Student Office (G09) if you intend to miss an exam. In cases of illness or other personal circumstances, you should also complete the mitigating circumstances form at <http://intranet.csc.liv.ac.uk/department/ltas/mitigation.html>. Please see **Section 4.5** of the Undergraduate Student Handbook.

How and when do I find out my exam timetable?

Your personal exam timetable will be made available via Liverpool Life. Dates of the exam periods and the dates when the timetables are published can be found on the Student Administration and Support website at <http://www.liv.ac.uk/students/exams/schedule.htm>. The exam timetable will also be posted outside the Help Desk, room H225, on the 2nd floor of the George Holt Building.

Where can I see past exam papers?

Past exam papers can be found on the Computer Science website at <http://intranet.csc.liv.ac.uk/student/exampapers/>. Please note that exam papers with multiple choice questions are not made available.

How will I find out my exam marks?

Exam marks can be seen on Liverpool Life a few weeks after the exams take place. The date when marks are released will usually be advised by e-mail. General feedback on assessment and exams is available at <http://www2.csc.liv.ac.uk/examfeedback/>

What happens if I fail an exam?

Year 1 and Year 2 students can usually retake failed exams in August/September. Resits of final year modules usually take place in January/May of the following academic year.

What is a compensatory fail?

Up to two modules may be passed with marks between 35 and 39, providing they are not mandatory modules and providing that all other modules have marks of 40 or above. These marks are then known as "compensatory fails".

What is a mandatory module?

If a module is mandatory for your degree programme, then you are required to take that module and you need to obtain a mark of 40 or above on it in order to progress to the next year of study or to qualify for a degree. See **Section 3.6** of the Undergraduate Student Handbook for details of which modules are mandatory.

Technical

What should I do if I forget my username or password or have technical problems with the computers?

For matters relating to computer systems within the Computer Science Department, please go to the departmental Help Desk, room H225 in the George Holt Building. For problems with University computer systems (PC labs in the halls or libraries, or central services such as e-mail or Liverpool

Life), you will need to go to one of the central University help desks. These are situated on Brownlow Hill (no. 224 on the campus map) or in the Harold Cohen or Sydney Jones Libraries.

How can I forward my email to another account?

The University recommends that all University-related email uses the University mail systems. However, we recognise that many students already have accounts elsewhere (Hotmail, GMail, etc), and would prefer to read all their email in one place. It is possible to set up "mail forwarding", so that messages arriving at your University account are passed on to another email address. This can be configured via the Student Portal at <http://www.liv.ac.uk/students/>. Having logged in, select the tab "E-mail/Diary". At the bottom of this page is a form to specify where mail should be forwarded to.

Many web-based mail systems allow you to specify several mail identities. When sending University-related mail from such a system, we advise that you should always use your University email address. There is more information about use of University email at <http://www.liv.ac.uk/csd/email>.

When can I use the departmental facilities?

The Computer Science buildings are open during normal working hours from 8:30 to 17:00, Monday to Friday, and the computer labs will be cleared and locked at around 17:30. It is not possible to use the departmental Windows systems outside these times or at weekends. The departmental Linux service is accessible over the Internet (linux1.csc.liv.ac.uk or linux2.csc.liv.ac.uk), and so can be used at any time. See <http://intranet.csc.liv.ac.uk/guides/network/ssh/ssh.html> for more information.

The opening hours for University PC labs vary, depending on the location. However the Harold Cohen and Sydney Jones Libraries provide 24 hour access. Please see <http://www.liv.ac.uk/csd/pccentres> for more details.

2. Common Myths about Degree Classification, Progression and other topics

Classification Myths

MYTH

I need to get a "good" mark on my Year 3 project in order to be awarded a "good" Honours degree (1st or 2.1).

FACT

The project is just another 30 credit module. Apart from requiring a pass mark (40+) it is treated no differently from other Y3 modules regarding degree classification: you could have a mid 40s mark on the project and still be awarded a 1st or 2.1.

If I fail any Y3 modules I cannot be awarded a "good" Honours degree (1st or 2.1).

Degree classification is decided by computing a weighted average of Y2 and Y3. It is perfectly possible for this average to be above 70 (60) even with a failing module in Y3. Should this happen you will be awarded a 1st (2.1).

If I had to retake (or had resit exams in) Y1 or Y2 then I cannot be awarded a "good" Honours degree.

Y1 academic history (resits or retake) has no influence on degree classification. In the same way, Y2 only affects the weighted average. If some modules must be taken twice or more this average will only be affected by the module marks being capped at 40. This may reduce your average but should it be 70 (60+) you will be awarded a 1st (2.1).

Progression and Resit Myths

MYTH

If I have a resit in a first semester module then I am not allowed to go to second semester lectures.

FACT

Progression is **year** based not **semester** based. If you have resits from first-semester modules you can (in fact **SHOULD**) continue with second-semester modules.

If I *do* have any resits then I do not need to include any modules with so-called "compensatable failure" (35-39) among these.

Apart from *very exceptional circumstances* (of which you would explicitly notified if needed) the University regulations require **all** failed modules to be resat. If you have 3 modules with marks of 39 all of these have to be resat. If you have a module with a mark of 34 and another with a mark of 39 **both** must be resat.

I have "a lot" of resit exams and I think it would be best to restart the Year afresh. I am free to do this without informing anyone of my intention.

Not to attempt resit exams because you have decided to restart the year without informing the University is a **VERY BAD IDEA**. There will, normally, be no difficulty with you restarting the year of study, however, if you have not completed the required forms you would be expected to be present at the resit exams. Unexplained absence

from exams (as this would appear) is treated extremely seriously by the University and could even result in your studies being terminated.

I have only one failure so I can "carry" this module to the next year of study and resit it then.

While it is true that it is *possible* to proceed "notwithstanding" to the next year of study despite having, technically, failed the current year, there are very strict conditions under which this is possible. If, in the opinion of a Senior University Committee, you do not satisfy **all** of these conditions, then you will have to repeat the module (even though it will be the **only** module you study in that year).

Extenuating Circumstances (formerly known as "Mitigating Circumstances") Myths

MYTH

The more Extenuating Circumstances (EC) claims that I make the less chance there is that they will be treated seriously.

FACT

It does not matter whether you have made a single EC claim or several hundred such claims over the course of your time of study. Each such claim is treated according to its nature and the supporting evidence provided **independently** of how many or how few have previously been lodged.

I can claim Extenuating Circumstances for anything that I consider has made a difference to my studies.

Certainly you are free to submit a **claim** of Extenuating Circumstances citing any grounds you consider relevant. This, however, does not mean that the claim will be **accepted**. The University Code of Practice on Assessment ([Appendix M](#) and [Annex 1](#) to this) set out situations that **are** acceptable (eg illness, bereavement, etc) given supporting documents and those which **are not** acceptable (misreading timetables, matters arising from financial issues). While these are not meant to be exhaustive, if something is clearly indicated as falling into the latter category it is unlikely that an EC claim will be accepted.

PLEASE REMEMBER

If you are told something is the case by a fellow student do not assume their information is necessarily accurate. It may well be so, but the only guaranteed 100% reliable sources are those published on the University web pages. If you are unsure about a particular procedure ask your academic advisor or go along to the Student Office.