The Open University

Aegrotat Policy

Contents

Alternative Format

If you require this Aegrotat Policy document in an alternative format please [Contact Us](#), telephone us on +44 (0)300 303 5303, or get in touch with your dedicated Student Support Team via StudentHome if you are a current Open University student.

If you are studying an apprenticeship, please contact the Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) by email on apprentice-support@open.ac.uk, or telephone (+44 (0) 300 303 4121).

Welsh-speaking Students and Learners may speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on +44 (0) 29 2047 1170.

Research Degree Students can contact the Research Degrees Office via email research-degrees-office@open.ac.uk.

Introduction

This document sets out The Open University's policy for Aegrotat awards. Aegrotat awards can be considered under two specific sets of circumstances:

- Posthumously, where a student has died while registered on a qualification.

- Where a student has a serious illness or disability which means they are unable to complete their qualification, now or in the future.

Any terminology that may be unfamiliar is explained in a glossary at the end of this document.

For specific guidance on how this policy may relate to your personal circumstances, please contact your Student Support Team (SST) who can advise on the implementation of policy. For Apprentices studying as part of an apprenticeship programme, contact the appropriate Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) or equivalent contact, for more information; alternatively, your employer can contact their named Apprenticeship Programme Delivery Manager (APDM) for further information, see Contact Details below for more information. You can also refer to the contact us page for further contact details.

Scope

What this policy covers

This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students studying a module that leads to an academic qualification.

What this policy does not cover

Students studying modules or courses that do not lead to a qualification, for example Access modules or OpenLearn courses. Qualifications are those recognised under the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ).

- Postgraduate research students: please contact the [Research Degrees Team](#)
- Learners studying a microcredential: please contact [microcredential support](#) or [contact the SST](#).
- Students studying under partnership agreements: please contact the [OUVP Curriculum Partnerships team.](#)
- Vocational qualification learners: please contact the [Vocational Qualification team.](#)

- Students who have submitted their final assessed task for the final module. For those students who have encountered issues that may have impacted their performance on their final module task, should refer to the [Special Circumstances Policy](#).

- Students who are unable to submit the final assessed task for the final module due to illness. If the student is expected to be able to return to study in future should refer to the [Changing your study plans policy](#) or the [Postponement Policy](#).

Support and Information

How to contact us

If you have any queries around the content provided within this document and how to interpret it, please [Contact Us](#). To check the contact details for the Open University, please see [OU Offices](#).

If you are studying an apprenticeship, please contact the Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) by email on apprentice-support@open.ac.uk, or telephone (+44 (0) 300 303 4121). Welsh-speaking Students and Learners may speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on +44 (0) 29 2047 1170. Research Degree Students can contact the Research Degrees Office via email research-degrees-office@open.ac.uk.

Help Centre Articles

Aegrotat award for death or serious illness of student

Reporting Bullying and Harassment

The Open University is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment where everyone feels safe and is treated with dignity and respect. Unlawful discrimination of any kind across The Open University will not be tolerated. We encourage staff, students, learners and visitors to report incidents of assault, bullying harassment, hate crime or sexual harassment through Report + Support. This platform also provides information about what you can do if you or someone you know experiences such incidents, and where you can find support.

Policy

1. Policy Purpose

1.1. This policy states the criteria for assessing a request for an Aegrotat award. It also specifies the evidence required, explains how a decision is made, and what the outcomes to a request might be.

1.2. The objectives of this policy are to provide information about Aegrotat awards for:

a) Students who are unable to complete their qualification due to serious illness or disability. The impact of their disability or illness must mean they are unlikely to return to study in the future.

b) The next of kin of a student who has died while studying towards a qualification.

2.   Policy Principles

2.1   The principle of the policy is to ensure that students who are unable to complete their studies due to serious illness, disability or death may be able to receive an award of a qualification based on their previous study record. They must not have previously received Aegrotat credit awarded by The Open University.

2.2   An Aegrotat award will normally be made based on the qualification the student is nearest to achieving. See Appendix for examples.

2.3   If a student has not completed enough study to be awarded the qualification they are registered for, they may be awarded an interim qualification. Interim qualifications include, but are not limited to:

a) Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)

b) Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

c) The 300-credit Open Degree (awarded without honours)

d) Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)

e) Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)

2.4   Where a student is being considered for a classified award, any Aegrotat award made will also be classified. Classification will be calculated according to rules set out in the Academic Regulations. Further information can be found in Understanding your Class of Honours.

2.5   Where possible, students will be awarded Aegrotat credit for the qualification they are registered on or a named interim qualification. If the qualification requirements cannot be met, an Open qualification will be considered. This could occur where a student needs to meet a professional competency standard to be awarded a qualification.

3.   Posthumous Aegrotat eligibility criteria

3.1   Students who die while registered for a qualification, or who were registered for a qualification but withdrew prior to their death, may be considered for an Aegrotat award.

3.2   You should contact an Educational Adviser to request an Aegrotat award on behalf of a student. Posthumous Aegrotat requests will require evidence of the student's death (e.g. a Death Certificate) and of the applicant's relationship to the student.

4.   Serious illness or disability eligibility criteria

4.1   To be considered for an Aegrotat award due to serious illness or disability, you must be:

a)   registered on a qualification, or have recently withdrawn from a qualification due to your illness or disability;

b)   Unable to complete that qualification either now or in the future due to serious illness or disability.

4.2   You must provide third-party medical evidence in support of your application.

5.   Academic criteria

5.1   To be eligible for consideration of an Aegrotat award, students must have successfully completed at least one module linked to the qualification they are registered on, and either

a) be registered on the next module required for the qualification; or

b) had been registered on the next module required for the qualification but withdrew due to serious illness or disability.

(see Appendix for examples).

5.2   Exceptionally, cases can be considered if a student was not registered on the final module for a qualification. This can only be considered where a student has completed all but the final 30 credit module leading to a qualification.

5.3   For postgraduate qualifications consisting of either two 90-credit modules or a 60-credit and a 120-credit module, an application for Aegrotat credit may be considered if the student has started study on their final module. The student must have completed enough assessment to allow us to determine whether they would have successfully completed their study.

6.   Implications of an award of Aegrotat credit

6.1   Aegrotat awards can only be made where the student is deceased or there is third-party evidence that the student is unlikely to ever complete their qualification.

6.2   Open University awards that contain Aegrotat credit cannot be reversed. Aegrotat credit only counts once and only towards the qualification it was awarded for.

6.3   Exceptionally, a student may be awarded an Aegrotat credit due to illness or disability but then recover sufficiently to resume their studies. If they then wish to count their completed modules towards a subsequent qualification (for instance to complete a professional qualification), the Assessment Exceptions Group (AEG) has the discretion to consider cases on an individual basis. Any modules awarded by Aegrotat credit cannot be counted towards a further qualification. The student should contact an Educational Adviser in their SST to discuss their situation.

Procedure

7.   How to request an Aegrotat award

7.1   If you are a student or their advocate, or the next of kin of a deceased student, please contact an Educational Adviser in your Student Support Team to request consideration of an Aegrotat award.

7.2   Associate Lecturers or members of module teams who are aware of students who may be eligible for an Aegrotat award may also contact an Educational Adviser. The Adviser will contact the student, advocate, or next of kin as appropriate.

8   Responsibilities of the student or their representative

8.1   Any request must be initiated by, or have the consent of, the student or their representative, such as an advocate or next of kin for deceased students.

8.2   Students or their representatives should:

a)   Advise The Open University of the student's situation, by contacting the relevant Student Support Team.

b)   Supply third-party supporting evidence (normally medical evidence or a death certificate) and, where appropriate, evidence of their relationship to the student.

9.   Responsibilities of The Open University

9.1   Once an Aegrotat request is made by an Educational Adviser, a case conference panel will be convened. The panel will determine whether to recommend an Aegrotat award and, where appropriate, recommend a classification. The panel will review the student's performance on all completed and partially completed modules within the qualification. The panel's recommendation will be put to the Module Results Approval and Qualification Classification Panel (MRAQCP) for final approval.

9.2   It will usually take 6-8 weeks from receipt of an application for a final decision to be reached. The Educational Adviser who has presented the case will be kept updated of progress and will contact the student or their representative. An Aegrotat award for a module cannot be made before the normal end date of the module.

9.3   Where time is a critical factor, for instance if the student is receiving end-of-life care, the Educational Adviser should be informed. Every effort will be made to progress the case as quickly as possible.

Methods of appeal

If a student or their representative has a query or experiences a problem with any aspect of The Open University's application of this policy, please contact us within 28 days of the issue arising.

If a student or their representative feels that we have not responded appropriately to their query or concern, they can raise a formal complaint or appeal using the Students Complaints and Appeals Procedure. To find out more information about how to do this visit our Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure webpages on Help Centre. We also have a specific complaints procedure for complaints relating to Welsh Language Standards. Details on this procedure are available in the document Welsh Language Standards – Dealing with Complaints and Comments.

Definitions

Assessment Exceptions Group (AEG)

The AEG is responsible for considering exceptions to assessment policy in individual student cases.

Aegrotat

A qualification bestowed posthumously or due to serious illness or disability which results in the student being unable to continue to study or return to study at a later date.

Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST)

The AEST is the first point of contact for Apprentices in line with Apprenticeship Programmes.

Apprenticeship Programme Delivery Manager (APDM)

APDMs support employers participating in an Apprenticeship Programme. They offer support and advice on recruitment, registration, and eligibility; function as the conduit between the Employer and the OU; and provide support to line managers/workplace mentors and Apprentices. APDMs also review, track, and respond to Apprentice progression by working with the Employer, the Apprentice, and the faculty to achieve successful completion. They collect and act upon feedback from the Employer and the Apprentice to continually enhance this process.

Discretionary Postponement

This is a process that students can follow if serious, unexpected circumstances mean they are unable to make a reasonable submission of a final assessment or sit an exam on the due date.

Educational Adviser

A staff member within the Student Support Team who can provide guidance on any issue that is not directly related to module content.

Interim Qualification

A lower-level qualification that may be awarded if a student completes sufficient credit for the lower-level qualification award, but not enough to receive the higher-level qualification. For example, a Certificate of Higher Education.

Module Results Approval and Qualification Classification Panel (MRAQCP)

The MRAQCP is responsible for the ratification and final approval of all module results at The Open University. They are also responsible for the final approval of Aegrotat cases, including classification.

Special Circumstances

If your performance in any of the assessment(s) on your module has been affected by something beyond your control, you can bring the 'special circumstances' to the attention of the Module Result Panel for consideration when they agree your module result.

Student Support Team (SST)

Student Support Teams (SSTs) are specialists made up of experienced academics, Educational Advisers and other staff with subject-specific expertise and are the first point of contact for students or their representatives with queries about their study.

Third-party evidence

Evidence obtained from an independent or professional body or person other than the student or their representatives, for example a doctor's letter, medical records, or a death certificate.

Related Policies and Legislation

Refer to the following documentation in conjunction with this document:

- [Academic Regulations](#) and your Qualification Regulations, if applicable (available via StudentHome once you are registered for a qualification, or on the online prospectus).

- [Module Results Determination Policy](#)

- [Code of Practice for Student Assessment](#)

- [Student Privacy Notice](#)

Welsh language standards

[Safonau'r Gymraeg (Welsh Language Standards)](#)

The Open University is one of several universities named in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. This means that any students in Wales can expect to receive certain services from the OU in Welsh. These are outlined in what's called the OU's Welsh language standards.

This means that you can speak to our student recruitment and support team in Welsh or contact the university in Welsh. You can find out more about your rights as a Welsh language user on the OU in Wales website.

Our Student Charter Values

The Student Charter was developed jointly by The Open University and the OU Students Association. It is a declaration of our shared values and the commitments we make to each other. This document has been developed with the Student Charter values as its foundation.

The Student Charter describes ways in which members of the University community should work together in partnership with the key aim of helping all students to succeed. This policy particularly aligns with the aim of inspiring and enabling learning. It provides a route to ensure that, where a student is not able to continue studying, their academic work is appropriately recognised.

Our commitment to Equality Diversity and Inclusion

Our commitment to equality and inclusion is embedded in all that we do and reflects our mission to be open to people, places, methods, and ideas. We celebrate diversity and the strengths that it brings, whilst challenging under-representation and differences in outcomes within our institution. We promote and manage equality and diversity to meet both our strategic goals and our statutory equality duties. We achieve this in many ways, including the development of inclusive policy.

Give Us Your Feedback

If you have any comments about this policy document and how it might be improved, please share this with us, by emailing SPR-Policy-Team@open.ac.uk.

Charity Statement

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England and Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority in relation to its secondary activity of credit broking.

About this Document

Summary of Significant Changes since last version

The following changes have been made

- Minor updates to wording throughout.

Policies Superseded by this Document

This policy replaces the older version 1.0 of the Aegrotat Policy dated March 2024.

Document Information

Version number 1.1

Approved by Director, Assessment, Credit and Qualifications, Academic Services

Effective from April 2025

Date for review March 2026

Appendix 1

Table of Aegrotat credit and qualifications available

List of Aegrotat qualifications available to students, depending on the number of credits of completed OU study. Students, or their representatives, are encouraged to contact an Educational Adviser in the Student Support Team to ensure that they are interpreting the table below accurately and to discuss their individual situation in detail.

Undergraduate Qualifications

Credits of completed OU study	Additional credits registered	Total credits required	Qualification	Classified award
Fewer than 60			No qualification possible	No
60-90	30-60	120	Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	No
120	0	120	Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	No
120-150	0-60	120	Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	No
120-150	90-120[1]	240	Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	No
180-210	30-60	240	Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	No
240	0	240	Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	No
240-270	30-60	300	Ordinary Open Degree (BA/BSc)	No
300	0	300	Ordinary Open Degree (BA/BSc)	No
240-270	90-120[1]	360	Honours Degree (BA/BSc Hons)	Yes
300-330	30-60	360	Honours Degree (BA/BSc Hons)	Yes
360	0	360	Honours Degree (BA/BSc Hons)	Yes

Postgraduate Qualifications

Credits of completed OU study	Additional credits registered	Total credits required	Qualification	Classified award
30	30	60	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)	Yes
60	0	60	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)	Yes
60-90	30-60	120	Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)	Yes
120	0	120	Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)	Yes
120-150	30-60	180	Master's degree (MA/MSc)	Yes
180	0	180	Master's degree (MA/MSc)	Yes

Notes:

1. This is applicable to students who are studying at or near full-time intensity. In these cases, the panel will consider which award the student is eligible for based on the amount of study already completed on their unfinished module(s).

2. Where a student is registered on a Postgraduate qualification which is made up of either two 90-credit modules or a 60-credit and a 120-credit module, an application for Aegrotat credit may be considered individually if they have commenced study of their final module. Consideration of such requests will consider the student's progress on their final module and whether the amount of assessment submitted provides evidence of whether the student is likely to have successfully completed their study.

3. Students with credit transfer (CT) or recognition of prior learning (RPL) must still have at least one-third of their credits for a qualification made up of completed OU study.

4. For students re-using OU study, which was previously counted in another qualification, the new qualification must have at least one-third of the credits comprised of completed unique study.

5. Where a student is enrolled on a qualification but is not registered on the final 30 credit module leading to the award of that qualification, their case will be considered by the panel on an individual basis.

Students or their representatives are encouraged to contact their Educational Adviser to discuss the situation.