

Code of Practice for Student Assessment

The Code of Practice for Student Assessment explains how your study will be assessed. However, not all types of assessment apply to all modules and you should read the particular assessment strategy for your module on StudentHome. Throughout this document, when we refer to a 'module' this includes studying a microcredential course.

The Code of Practice for Student Assessment should not be read in isolation. It is one of a group of student policy documents and it is important that you read it in conjunction with the following documents.

- The [Academic Regulations \(Taught Courses\)](#)
- The regulations governing your qualification
- [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#)
- [The Academic Conduct Policy](#)
- [The Assessment Policies](#)

These documents are available on the [Student Policy and Regulations website](#).

Definitions

The terms used in this Code of Practice for Student Assessment are defined below.

Assessment

The term used to describe all the different ways that The Open University assesses how you are progressing during your module. It covers Tutor-marked assignments (TMAs), Interactive computer-marked assignments (iCMAs), exams, End-of-Module tutor-marked assignments (emTMAs), End-of-Module Assessments (EMAs) and microcredential assessments.

Assignment

This refers to the term we use for the parts of the module assessment that are not included in the final assessed task - for example, TMAs, iCMAs and reports.

Component

A component of assessment is made up of a number of tasks. A module may have:

- a. one component of assessment, where the scores from the tasks included lead to a single overall score which is your module result, or
- b. two components of assessment: a continuous assessment component, where the scores from the tasks included lead to an overall continuous assessment score, and an examinable component which provides an overall examinable score. The overall score from each component is used to calculate your module result.

End-of-Module Assessment (EMA) tasks

This means one of the final assessed tasks within a module. On many modules, you have to work independently to produce an extended piece of work rather than taking an exam at the end of your study. For ease of reference, these essays, projects, portfolios, dissertations, assessments, etc. are referred to collectively as end-of-module assessments (EMAs)

End-of-Module Tutor-Marked Assignment (emTMA)

Where a module does not have an exam or EMA, the last TMA on that module will be classed as an emTMA. If this is the case, your assessment strategy will clearly state which assignment is the emTMA. Please note that the 'final TMA' that comes before the exam, EMA or emTMA is not the same as an emTMA.

Exams

An exam is completed at home (remotely), or at another location of your choice, using your own computer, stationery and equipment. It is usually a set of questions that you must complete and submit within a set amount of time, with a fixed submission deadline, and contributes to the examinable component of your module.

Final assessed task

A final assessed task is the name given to the assessments completed at the end of the module. The types of final assessed tasks that a module can have are exam, End-of-Module Assessment (EMA), and End-of-Module Tutor-Marked Assignment (emTMA).

Interactive computer-marked assignments (iCMA)

This means an interactive form of assessment made up from a series of questions and submitted online. This submission method was originally developed to facilitate interactive computer-marked assignments but it is now also being used for some remote exam submissions that are not either interactive or computer-marked.

Module Result Panel

The Module Result Panel (MRP) is responsible for the setting and marking of all controlled assessments for each presentation of a specific module, and for proposing a result for each student on a module presentation to the Cluster Examination and Assessment Board (Cluster EAB).

Postponement

Discretionary Postponement: If you are unable to complete your final assessed task i.e. exam, End-of Module Assessment (EMA) or End-of-Module Tutor-Marked Assignment (emTMA). The Open University may give you permission to postpone it to the next available opportunity on a discretionary basis.

Elective Postponement: If you have been offered a resit or resubmission opportunity which is scheduled within 12 to 16 weeks of your original exam period or EMA/emTMA cut-off date, you may be eligible to postpone this to the next available opportunity.

Resit

If you take your exam but do not achieve the required standard for a pass on your module you may be offered a resit opportunity. There is a minimum requirement to qualify for a resit specific to your module/s which is explained in the Assessment section on StudentHome. You can only resit once, and your module result will normally be capped.

Resubmission

If you submit your end-of-module assessment (EMA) or end-of-module tutor-marked assignment (emTMA) but do not achieve the required standard for a pass on your module you may be offered a resubmission opportunity. There is a minimum requirement to qualify for a resubmission specific to your module/s which is explained in the Assessment section on StudentHome. You may only resubmit once, and your module result will normally be capped

Special Circumstances

If your performance in any of the assessment on your module has been affected by something beyond your control, you can bring these 'special circumstances' to the attention of the Module Result Panel for consideration when they agree your module result. The MRP will not always look at all Special Circumstances that are submitted, but they will always look at Special Circumstances for students in certain situations (such as close to a grade boundary).

Task

A task is the generic term for any assessment completed by a student. Tasks may be used in the determination of the level of achievement by the student and in the determination of the module result.

Threshold

This means on some modules there is a minimum requirement or score (such as 40%) that you must achieve for an individual piece of work or activity, or for a number of pieces of work combined, to achieve a pass result.

Tutor-marked assignment (TMA)

As part of the teaching methodology on most modules, you have to submit written assignments to your tutor. These are called tutor-marked assignments. TMAs must be submitted online via a link on your StudentHome page. In some exceptional cases TMAs can or may need to be submitted on paper or hard copy. Your module materials will tell you which method you should use.

SA 1 Module assignments

SA 1.1 How you will know about your assignments

We will tell you in the assessment strategy for your module on StudentHome how many assignments you need to complete. The assessment strategy will include information on how the assignments contribute to a single overall score or to the continuous assessment component or the examinable component. It will also include how assignments are used to work out your overall result (assignments used in this way are known as summative assignments) how individual summative assignment scores will be combined and the pass mark for your module.

SA 1.2 Submitting assignments

We expect you to submit every assignment in a module by the published date, in a format and by the method that we tell you. Unless it is specifically arranged otherwise, you must submit all parts of an assignment together. If you submit each file separately, only the last file you submit will be marked. Therefore, if your task consists of more than one file, you must zip the files together. Please refer to the relevant [Assessment Policies](#) which will tell you how to submit your assignment and what you must do if you are unable to submit by the cut-off date.

SA 1.3 Assignments for assessment purposes

The scores you have been awarded for all summative assignments will be used, as appropriate and weighted according to the assessment strategy of your module, as part of the single overall score or the continuous assessment component or the examinable component. Any assignments you have not submitted (or that you submitted too late) will be counted as having a score of zero. Some modules have assignments (or groups of assignments) for which you must achieve a minimum (overall) score in order to pass the module (known as threshold requirement). Failure to achieve the minimum score may lead to you failing the module with no entitlement to resit the exam or resubmit the EMA or emTMA (whichever applies).

In the assessment strategy for your module you will find which assignments are necessary for assessment purposes and where they are subject to minimum-score requirements.

SA 1.4 Assignment score appeals

If you are concerned about the score awarded for a particular assignment, or want to ask about any comments that have been made, you must follow the procedure and timescales for appeals set out in the [TMA and iCMA policy](#).

SA 1.5 Resubmitting assignments

You are not normally allowed to resubmit any marked assignment, whether tutor-marked or computer-marked, to try to improve the score for that assignment. The exceptions are:

- a) if your module permits resubmission of an emTMA and you have a resubmission result for the module (see section SA 6).
- b) if your module allows TMA and iCMA reassessment, however, not all modules allow this. Please refer to the [Module Results Determination Policy](#) to know more about TMA/iCMA reassessment.
- c) If your module allows 'Second Opportunity' as specified in the assessment strategy of the module.

SA 1.6 Disciplinary Code

If you are found to have plagiarised or committed academic misconduct, you will be subject to our [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#).

SA 2 Exams

The following regulations describe how we conduct exams. We provide more information in the [Exam Policy, Remote Exam Handbook](#) and on your module website.

SA 2.1 Eligibility

To be eligible to take an exam, you must be registered or enrolled for the module with the exam, or you have been allowed to resit the exam.

SA 2.2 How the exam will be run

We will tell you beforehand the date, time and format, and will give you full information about how to take your exam. Exams can usually be completed in three hours, but you may have further time to complete and submit your answers, depending on the type of exam you are taking. Further information on the types of exam and how they should be submitted, submission deadlines and late penalty periods can be found in the [Remote Exams Handbook](#) and specific information relating to your exam on your module website.

SA 2.3 Students overseas

If you are outside the UK at the time of an exam that is held remotely, you can ask to adjust the time of your exam to one that is more suitable for your time zone. Further information is available on the [Help Centre](#).

SA 2.4 Conduct of students taking an exam

While taking an exam, you should not take any action or behave in a way which may give you or others an unfair academic advantage.

SA 2.4.1 Misconduct during the exam

- a) You will not be prevented from accessing and consulting your module materials or the internet while completing a remote exam. However, as with other assessments, it's important to complete your work independently and using your own words. You should not copy content directly from a source or present someone else's work as your own. This is plagiarism, which is a type of academic misconduct.
- b) You must not discuss the content of a remote exam with your Tutor or anyone else during the submission window or the two days following your overall submission deadline. This includes discussing the remote exam in forums and on social media.

- c) You must not post questions or ask for answers on websites or services offering help with assignment/exam answers, or use any content available from such sites.
- d) You can find more information about academic conduct and what behaviours are considered to be misconduct in the [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#) and the [Academic Conduct Policy](#).

SA 2.5 Absence from the exam

SA 2.5.1 Ill health or other serious circumstances

You may be able to take your exam at a later date, known as Discretionary Postponement, if you (or your representatives) contact The Open University before midnight (UK local time), on the day following the exam and provide relevant documentary evidence to explain the unexpected circumstances that prevented you from taking your exam. Evidence must be provided within fourteen calendar days of your request. You can find more details about this in the [Postponement Policy](#).

We will not offer you another exam if:

- a) you have not satisfied any residential school requirement or Alternative Learning Experience associated with that module, or
- b) you have already been provided with three exam opportunities, or the date of the next scheduled exam would be more than 13 months later than your first exam opportunity, whichever occurs first.

The conditions covering resits and resubmissions (paragraph SA 6.2) will also apply to you.

SA 3 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

SA 3.1 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

The following regulations apply to End-of-Module Assessments (EMAs) and end-of-module Tutor-Marked Assignments (emTMAs). We will provide you with more information in the [EMA and emTMA guidelines booklet and on the Help Centre](#).

SA 3.2 Submission of assessment tasks

SA 3.2.1 Cut-off dates

You must submit your final assessed task(s) in accordance with the published cut-off date unless you have been formally granted a Discretionary Postponement.

The deadline for receipt of your final assessed task(s) is visible on StudentHome and in your module materials and detailed in the [EMA Policy, emTMA Policy or Exam Policy](#) as applicable. For EMAs and emTMAs this is normally noon (UK local time) on the cut off date. On most modules The Open University operates a grace period of 12 hours so work submitted up until 23:59hrs (UK local time) on the cut off date will be accepted without penalty.

SA 3.2.2 Late submission

Submissions received up to 24 hours late (eg. after 23:59hrs (UK local time) on the cut-off date and before 23:59hrs (UK local time) on the day following the cut-off date), the EMA or emTMA will be accepted but the task score will be reduced by up to 10 percentage points or to bare-pass level, whichever gives the higher score. You won't fail the task because of the penalty, but it might have implications for how well you do on the module overall. You could get a lower grade of pass because of the penalty and in some cases you could fail the module.

Submissions received beyond 23:59hrs (UK local time) on the day following the cut-off will not be marked and you will not be considered to have completed the EMA or emTMA. You will not be offered another opportunity to submit the EMA or emTMA and you will receive a Fail result.

Information about late submissions for exams is detailed in the [Remote Exams Handbook](#).

SA 3.2.3 Ill health or other serious circumstances

On most modules, if circumstances beyond your control prevent you from making even a partial or late submission for your EMA or emTMA, you should consider deferral (if your module allows for this) or you may be eligible to postpone submission until the submission date for the following presentation of the module (a Discretionary Postponement).

Please refer to section SA 2.5.1 for further information about ill health or serious circumstances when taking an exam.

SA 3.2.4 Applying for Discretionary Postponement (if your module permits this)

You must apply for a Discretionary Postponement in accordance with the instructions in the [Postponement policy](#). You will need to provide relevant documentary evidence covering the three weeks leading up to the submission period.

We will not offer you another opportunity to submit your final assessed task if:

- a) you have not satisfied any residential school requirement or Alternative Learning Experience associated with that module, or

- b) you have already been provided with three submission opportunities, or the submission date of the next presentation of the module would be more than 13 months later than your first submission opportunity, whichever occurs first.

The conditions covering resits and resubmissions (paragraph SA 6.2) will also apply to you.

SA 3.3 Disciplinary Code

If you are found guilty of misconduct or plagiarism in the end-of-module assessment, you will be subject to our [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#)

SA 4 Students with disabilities and additional requirements

SA 4.1 Sources of Information

There is detailed information on the [Help Centre](#) about the support we can offer you if you have a disability or additional requirement, are ill or injured at the time of the assessment, have caring responsibilities, or you are pregnant or a new parent.

SA 4.2 Assignments

The relevant [Assessment Policies](#) tell you how to submit your assignments and what you must do if you are unable to submit an assignment by the cut-off date. If you feel that any of your assignments or your final assessed task have been negatively affected by circumstances outside of your control, you should submit Special Circumstances as detailed in the [Special Circumstances Policy](#).

SA 4.3 Exams

If you have declared a disability, we will contact you before your exam to ask you about any reasonable adjustments you may need. If you have not declared a disability but have other additional requirements, you should contact your [Student Support Team](#). You must contact the University to [tell us about your needs](#) and may need to provide third party documentary evidence to support your request. Further information is available on the [Help Centre](#).

SA 4.3.1 Additional time and rest breaks

You can request additional time in which to complete your exam, or rest breaks during your exam that would support you in completing your exam due to your disability or additional requirements. Where exams take place remotely using your own equipment you may not need the same adjustments as you would to sit an exam at an exam centre.

SA 4.3.2 Notification of additional arrangements

When the Module Result Panel meets to consider your module result, it will be provided with brief factual details of any additional arrangements which have been made for your exam. If you feel that the arrangements made for your exam did not adequately compensate you for your disability or additional requirements, you should submit [Special Circumstances](#) as detailed in [Special Circumstances Policy](#).

SA 4.4 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

SA 4.4.1 Submission of assessment tasks

If you are unable to submit your EMA or emTMA by the cut-off date for reasons related to your disability or additional requirements, you should consider deferral or you may be eligible for Discretionary Postponement as detailed in paragraph SA 3.2.3. If you complete your assessment but feel that your performance has been affected by your disability or additional requirements, you should submit [Special Circumstances](#) as detailed in Paragraph SA 5.1.

SA 5 Special Circumstances

SA 5.1 Submission of Special Circumstances

If you think that you have studied your module effectively but encountered circumstances that had a serious effect on your performance in either your assignments or final assessed task, you may submit this information so that it is available to the Module Result Panel when they determine your result. You can find further guidance about this in the [Special Circumstances Policy](#).

If you want to tell The Open University about circumstances which have affected your study and/or your assessment, you must complete the [form to report your Special Circumstances](#) before midnight (UK local time) four calendar days after the cut off date of your final assessed task. Any supporting evidence must then be submitted within 14 days of your Special Circumstances submission. Submission of Special Circumstances information may mean that the determination of your module result is delayed whilst this information is considered.

SA 5.2 Awarding aegrotat credit

The Open University may award aegrotat credit to students who are registered or enrolled on the final module of some qualifications. Aegrotat credit is an award of a pass which may be awarded posthumously, or to students who are too ill to complete any further study. Further information can be found in the [Module Result Determination Policy](#).

SA 6 Resits and resubmissions

SA 6.1 When resits and resubmissions are allowed

You may (in line with the assessment strategy for your module and any relevant qualification regulations) be allowed one opportunity to resit the exam or resubmit your EMA or emTMA if you fail a module and:

- a) have achieved an overall assessment score for that module of at least 40, or such other minimum level approved by Senate, in the continuous assessment component and (where this applies) have also achieved a certain score (known as a 'threshold requirement') on specified assessment tasks in the continuous assessment component;
or
have achieved an overall score for that module of at least 30 and (where this applies) have also achieved a certain score (known as a 'threshold requirement') on specified assessment tasks;
and
- b) (for modules that have a residential school) have satisfied the appropriate residential school requirement or ALE for that module; and
- c) (for modules that have an exam) have taken the exam and have achieved any minimum level set by Senate; and
- d) (for modules with an EMA or emTMA that allow you to resubmit the work to pass) have achieved any minimum score for this assessment set by Senate for this purpose.

You must follow the conditions set out in paragraph SA 6.2.

Not all modules permit a resit or a resubmission. The assessment strategy for your module will tell you if a resit or resubmission is permitted. Further information is available in the [Resit and Resubmission Policy](#).

SA 6.2 Conditions for allowable resits and resubmissions

The conditions for resits and resubmissions that are allowed under paragraph SA 6.1 are as follows.

- a) Only one resit/resubmission opportunity is permitted for each module registration or enrolment.
- b) Where your module has an exam, you must normally sit or resit the exam within a maximum of 3 exam opportunities or within 13 months of the first exam or postponement, whichever occurs first.

- c) Where your module has an EMA or emTMA, you must normally submit or resubmit the EMA or emTMA within a maximum 3 submission opportunities or within 13 months of the first submission or postponement, whichever occurs first.

SA 6.2.1 Timing of resits and resubmissions

If you are eligible for a resit or resubmission, we will notify you when this resit/resubmission will take place. You must complete your resit/resubmission at this time unless:

- a) You are granted a Discretionary Postponement (SA 2.5) and (SA 3.2.4) or,
- b) Your resit/resubmission is within 12-16 weeks of your original exam or submission. If your resit/resubmission is within this timescale, you may be eligible to choose to delay your resit/resubmission to the next main exam/submission period (Elective Postponement). Elective Postponements are available for resit/resubmission students only on eligible modules and must be notified to The Open University prior to the resit/resubmission exam/submission date. Further information is available in the [Postponement Policy](#).

SA 6.2.2 Registration or enrolment for resits and resubmissions

If you are registered or enrolled for an undergraduate or taught postgraduate module and are eligible for a resit or resubmission, you will be automatically registered or enrolled on the resit or resubmission presentation. Further information will be sent to you by email.

SA 6.2.3 Capping of resit and resubmission results

When resitting or resubmitting, your final grade will be capped unless you have been notified at the time of your resit or resubmission result that you have been awarded an uncapped resit/resubmission due to Special Circumstances. If you are successful in passing your resit or resubmission, you will not be awarded more than the minimum pass grade for this module.

SA 7 Viva-voce assessment

You may be asked to complete additional assessment tasks, such as a written piece of work or a speaking exam, if the Module Result Panel thinks it is necessary before your module result is determined. The additional assessment will provide the Panel with additional information about your academic performance so that it can reach a decision about a student who, for example, has special circumstances. You may not request a *viva-voce* assessment.

Summary of changes made in this Code during 2016

February 2016

The list of associated documents that should be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice for Student Assessment has been updated to reflect the publication of the Academic Regulations (Taught Courses) and the withdrawal of the Student Regulations and General Qualification Regulations.

Summary of changes made in this Code during 2019

November 2019

All sections have been updated to reflect changes in terminology, processes and the introduction of modules assessed through one component of assessment.

The wording in some sections has been reviewed and updated to make the information clearer.

The introduction of Microcredentials has been referenced in the introductory section.

Summary of changes made in this code during 2023

All sections have been updated to reflect changes in terminology, specifically ensuring that reference is made to specific assessment policies rather than the previous Assessment Handbook.

The wording in some sections has been reviewed and updated to make the information clearer.

The information relating to exams has been revised to ensure that it is more appropriate for remote exams, including specific reference to the Remote Exams Handbook.