

Code of Practice for Student Assessment

The Student Regulations (including the Code of Practice for Student Assessment and the Code of Practice for Student Discipline) apply to all students of The Open University.

These regulations define the basis of the registration agreement between you and us. Students who register for or declare a specific academic qualification from the University are also governed by our qualification regulations which deal with registering for or declaring a qualification, completing a qualification and other matters about qualifications. The detailed assessment rules for each module appear separately as module rules.

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

- The [Academic Regulations \(Taught Courses\)](#)
- The regulations governing your qualification
- [Student Regulations](#)
- [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#)
- What constitutes plagiarism or cheating ([Appendix 1](#)).

The current regulations are available by going online to the Open University Essential Documents website at www.open.ac.uk/students/charter/essential-documents.

Definitions

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

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.

Assignments

These are the tutor-marked (TMA) and computer-marked assessment (CMA) tasks and any other assessment tasks that are approved either as parts of the continuous assessment component of a module or of the examinable assessment component. The scores for these are used individually, and in conjunction with other task scores in the determination of an overall module result.

Updated February 2016

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England & Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

End-of-module assessment (EMA) tasks

These are the formal written, oral or computer-based examinations and any other assessment tasks (which may be tutor-marked or computer-marked tasks) that are approved as the examinable assessment component. The scores for these are used individually and also with the score achieved in the continuous assessment component, in the determination of an overall module result.

SA 1 Module assignments

SA 1.1 How you will know about your assignments

We will tell you in the module rules how many assignments you need to complete for a particular module, whether they contribute to continuous assessment or the examinable component, how many of these we will use to work out your overall results (assignments used in this way are known as summative assignments), and how individual summative assignment scores will be combined.

SA 1.2 Submitting assignments

We expect you to submit every assignment in a module by the date we tell you. Unless it is specifically arranged otherwise, you must submit all parts of an assignment together.

SA 1.3 Assignments for assessment purposes

The scores you have been awarded for all summative assignments will be used, as appropriate as part of the continuous assessment or the end-of-module assessment components, together with the assignment weightings given in the module rules, in the calculation of your overall continuous assessment component score and your overall examinable component score for the module. Any assignments you have not submitted (or that you submitted too late) will be counted as having a mark of zero. Some modules allow 'substitution' to increase one or more assignment scores that fall below your usual standard. This is done automatically and uses information about your assessment throughout the module (again weighted in line with the module rules).

Some modules have assignments (or groups of assignments) for which you must achieve a minimum (overall) score in order to pass the module. Failure to achieve the minimum score will usually lead to you failing the module with no entitlement to resit the examination or resubmit the EMA task (whichever applies).

We will tell you in your module rules which assignments may be substituted, whether any are necessary for assessment purposes and whether any are subject to minimum-score requirements.

SA 1.4 Assignment score appeals

If you are not satisfied with 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 your Assessment Handbook.

SA 1.5 Resubmitting assignments

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

SA 1.6 Disciplinary Code

If you are found guilty of misconduct or plagiarism in an assignment, we will deal with you in line with our [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#).

SA 2 Examinations

SA 2.1 Examinations

The following regulations apply to the conduct of formal examinations. We will provide more information about your examination in the Examination Arrangements booklet, which will be issued shortly before the examination.

SA 2.2 Eligibility

You are eligible to sit an examination of the University as long as you are registered or enrolled for the module leading to the examination, or you have been allowed to resit the examination.

SA 2.3 How the examination will be run

Examinations will be run as set out by Senate. We will tell you beforehand the date, time and location of the examination, and will give you full information about how the examination will be held. The timetable cannot be changed except in an emergency. You will be told in the Examination Arrangements booklet how long is allowed for the examination, and the time will also be shown on the question paper. No additional time will be allowed either for reading the question paper or to candidates who arrive late for an examination.

SA 2.4 Students overseas

On certain modules and for particular categories of student, we will try to arrange examinations overseas. If we have arranged this for you, you may have to pay a fee, in advance, for each examination.

SA 2.5 In the examination room

SA 2.5.1 Identification

You must identify yourself in the examination room by producing valid identification (bearing both your photograph and your signature) that the senior invigilator accepts. If you do not provide appropriate identification, you may be asked to leave the examination room, or your work may not be accepted for assessment purposes.

SA 2.5.2 Permitted materials

You may take into the examination room only those materials that are authorised in the Examination Arrangements booklet or in your letter confirming any additional examination arrangements.

SA 2.5.3 Late arrival

If you arrive late for the examination you will be allowed into the examination room to complete the examination in the time remaining.

SA 2.6 Leaving the examination room

SA 2.6.1 Leaving within the first half-hour

You may not leave the examination room during the first half-hour or during the final 15 minutes of the examination session, except in an emergency.

SA 2.6.2 Leaving after the first half-hour

You are allowed to leave the examination room temporarily at any time after the first half-hour of the examination session and, as long as you have been accompanied by an invigilator, you will be allowed back into the examination.

SA 2.6.3 If you finish your examination early

You are allowed to leave the examination room when you have finished your examination at any time after the first half hour of the examination session and before the final 15 minutes (you must give your question paper and answer booklets to an invigilator when you leave) but you will not be allowed back into the examination.

SA 2.6.4 Removing stationery

You may not remove the examination question paper, any answer book, whether used or unused, any part of an answer book, or any other examination stationery from the examination room.

SA 2.7 Conduct of students at the examination

While in the examination room, you must not behave in a way that, in the opinion of the senior invigilator, would annoy or disturb other candidates.

SA 2.7.1 Misconduct during the examination

For the purpose of this regulation, misconduct in the examination is defined as:

- a) taking into the examination room, or possessing while in that room, any books, notes or other similar material, except those which have been supplied by the invigilator or authorised in the Examination Arrangements booklet or your confirmation of additional arrangements letter;
- b) helping or trying to help another student, or getting or trying to get help from another student;

- c) consulting or trying to consult any books, notes or other similar material while temporarily outside the examination room during the period of the examination;
- d) having a mobile phone, or other communication device, at your desk or on your person;
- e) misrepresenting your identity or allowing another person to represent you at the examination.

SA 2.7.2 Disciplinary Code

If you are found guilty of misconduct in the examination, we will deal with you in line with our [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#).

SA 2.7.3 Indiscipline in the examination

For the purpose of this regulation, indiscipline in the examination is defined as any socially unacceptable action or behaviour that comes within the terms of regulation SD 2 of the [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#).

SA 2.7.4 Serious cases

In serious cases of indiscipline, the senior invigilator may stop your examination and may ask you and anyone else involved to leave the examination room.

SA 2.8 Absence from the examination

SA 2.8.1 Ill health or other serious circumstances

If you (or your representatives) contact the University before midnight (UK local time) on the day following the examination and provide relevant documentary evidence relating directly to the date of the examination and a written explanation of your absence within fourteen calendar days of the examination, you may be allowed to take the examination at a later date (discretionary postponement). You can find more details about this in your Assessment Handbook.

We will not offer you another examination 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 examination opportunities, or the date of the next scheduled examination would be more than 13 months later than your first examination 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 assessment tasks that are approved as the second (examinable) assessment component. We will provide you with more information in the Information for Students Submitting Examinable Work booklet, which will be issued approximately six weeks before your cut-off date.

SA 3.2 Submission of assessment tasks

SA 3.2.1 Cut-off dates

You must submit your assessment task(s) in accordance with the published cut-off date unless you have been formally granted a discretionary postponement. The deadline for receipt of assessment tasks is noon (UK local time) on the cut-off date. The University operates a grace period of 12 hours. Work submitted before midnight (UK local time) on the cut-off date will be accepted without penalty.

SA 3.2.2 Late submission

If your submission is received up to 24 hours after the grace period (eg. after midnight (UK local time) on the cut-off date and before midnight (UK local time) on the day following the cut-off date), the EMA will be accepted but the task score will be reduced by 10%-points or to bare-pass level whichever gives the higher score.

Submissions received beyond this point will not be marked and you will not be considered to have completed the assessment task. You will not be offered another opportunity to submit this assessment task and you will receive a Fail result.

SA 3.2.3 Ill health or other serious circumstances

On most modules, if prolonged circumstances beyond your control prevent you from making even a partial or late submission for your piece of work, you should consider Deferral or you may be eligible to postpone submission of the examinable component until the submission date for the following presentation of the module (a discretionary postponement). If discretionary postponements are not permitted on your module, your module materials will indicate this.

SA 3.2.4 Applying for discretionary postponement

You must apply for a discretionary postponement in accordance with the instructions in the Information for Students Submitting Examinable Work booklet. 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 assessment task(s) 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, we will deal with you in line with our Code of Practice for Student Discipline.

SA 4 Students with disabilities and additional requirements

SA 4.1 Sources of Information

Information about support we can offer for assessment can be found in [Meeting Your Needs](#) for modules with an examination.

SA 4.2 Assignments

Your Assessment Handbook tells 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 your continuous assessment has been affected by your disability or additional requirements, you should submit a special circumstances claim form as detailed in Paragraph SA 5.1.

SA 4.3 Examinations

If you have declared a disability, we will contact you before your examination to ask you about any additional arrangements you may need. If you have not declared a disability but have other additional requirements, you should contact your student support team. You must normally provide the University with the information required at least six weeks before the examination period.

SA 4.3.1 If you are unable to get to an examination centre

You will be allowed to take the examination at home, in hospital or elsewhere if:

- a) for reasons of ill health or other additional requirements, you cannot go to an examination centre; and
- b) your National Director/Assistant Director, Student Services¹ thinks this is justified.

You must produce a medical certificate to confirm your additional requirements or ill health. The examination will be held under the supervision of an invigilator appointed by us.

SA 4.3.2 If you are unable to write your answers

You will be allowed to record your answers in a different format if you have additional requirements that, in the opinion of your National Director/Assistant Director, Student Services¹, prevent you from completing them in writing. You must produce a medical certificate to confirm your additional requirements.

SA 4.3.3 Format of question paper

You will be allowed to have your examination question paper produced in an appropriate format approved by us if you have relevant additional requirements. You must produce appropriate documentary evidence to confirm your additional requirements.

¹ National Director (for national centres in Scotland, Ireland and Wales) and Assistant Director, Student Services (for English regional centres).

SA 4.3.4 Additional time

You will be allowed additional time in which to complete your examination if you have requirements that, in the opinion of your National Director/Assistant Director, Student Services¹ or the Chair of the Assessment Exceptions Group, justify it. You must produce appropriate documentary evidence to confirm your additional requirements.

SA 4.3.5 Notification of additional arrangements

When the Examination and Assessment Board meets to consider your module result, it will be provided with brief factual details of any additional arrangements which have been made for your examination. If you feel that the arrangements made for your examination did not adequately compensate you for your disability, you should submit a special circumstances claim form as detailed in Paragraph SA 5.2.

SA 4.4 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

SA 4.4.1 Submission of assessment tasks

If you are unable to submit your assessment task by the cut-off date for reasons related to your disability, 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, you should submit a special circumstances claim as detailed in Paragraph SA 5.3.

SA 5 Special circumstances

SA 5.1 Submission of special circumstances

If you think that you have studied your module effectively but that special circumstances have had a serious effect on your performance in either the examination, other end-of-module assessment or the continuous assessment, you may bring information about this to the attention of the Examination and Assessment Board. You can find further guidance about this in your Assessment Handbook.

SA 5.2 Notification

You must notify the University of your intention to submit Special Circumstances information before midnight (UK local time) on the day following the final module examination or other end of module assessment. Submission of special circumstances information may mean that the determination of your module result is delayed whilst this information is considered.

SA 5.3 Assignments

If you want to tell the University about circumstances which have affected your continuous assessment, you must submit form PT39 within fourteen days of the cut-off date of your final tutor-marked assignment.

SA 5.4 Examinations

If you want to tell the University about circumstances which have affected your examination, you must notify the University of your intention to do so before midnight (UK local time) on the day following the examination. You must then submit form E39 along with third party documentary evidence within fourteen days of the date of your examination. You can find more information and guidance about this in your Examination Arrangements booklet.

SA 5.5 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

If you want to tell the University about circumstances which have affected your end-of-module assessment, you must notify the University of your intention to do so before midnight (UK local time) on the day following the cut-off date. You must then submit form E39P along with third party documentary evidence within fourteen days of the cut-off date of your submission cut-off date. You can find more information and guidance about this in your Information for Students Submitting Examinable Work booklet.

SA 5.6 Awarding aegrotat credit

The University may award aegrotat credit under policy agreed by Senate 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.

SA 6 Resits and resubmissions

SA 6.1 When resits and resubmissions are allowed

You may (in line with any relevant qualification regulations) be allowed one opportunity to resit the examination or resubmit other repeatable assessment tasks 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; 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 examination) have taken the examination and have achieved any minimum level set by Senate; and
- d) (for modules with other end-of-module assessment 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.

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) You must normally resit/sit the examination or resubmit/submit assessment work that counts instead of, or as well as, the examination within 3 examination/submission opportunities or 13 months of the first examination/submission or postponement, whichever occurs first.
- c) If you are resitting an examination or resubmitting other assessment work, we will consider you to have failed the module until Senate, on the recommendation of the appropriate Examination and Assessment Board, decides otherwise.

SA 6.2.2 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 (SA2.8) and (SA3.2.4) or,
- b) Your resit/resubmission is within twelve weeks of your original examination or submission. If your resit resubmission is within this timescale, you may choose to delay your resit/resubmission to the next main examination/submission period (elective postponement). Elective postponements are available for resit/resubmission students only and must be notified to the University prior to the resit/resubmission examination/submission date.

SA 6.2.3 Registration or enrolment for resits and resubmissions

If you are registered or enrolled for an undergraduate module and are eligible for a resit/resubmission, you will be automatically registered or enrolled on the resit/resubmission presentation. For the avoidance of doubt, all modules that are studied towards an undergraduate qualification or integrated master's degree are treated as undergraduate modules for the purpose of this regulation.

If you are registered for a postgraduate module (other than as part of an undergraduate or integrated master's qualification and are eligible for a resit/ resubmission, you will be required to register and to pay a resit/resubmission fee in advance. We will send you details of how to register.

SA 6.2.4 Capping of resit resubmission results

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

SA 7 Viva voce examination

You may be asked to complete additional assessment tasks, such as an oral examination, if the appropriate Examination and Assessment Board thinks it is necessary before your module result is determined. You may not request a viva-voce examination.

End of Code

Summary of changes made in this Code during 2013

April 2013

SA 1.1, SA 1.3: These two sections have been amended to reflect that not all tutor marked or computer marked assignment tasks form part of continuous assessment.

SA 2.5.3: This section has been amended to cover all late entry to the examination, previously split into within half an hour of the start time (previous SA2.5.3) and after half an hour of the start time (previously SA2.5.4).

SA 2.5.4: This section has been removed as section 2.5.3 now covers all late entry.

SA 3 End of Module Assessment tasks: the terminology has been changed to bring this document into line with the Assessment Handbook.

SA 3.2.1: References to noon (GMT) have been replaced with (UK local time) to avoid confusion between GMT and BST. All references to midnight have also been amended to read midnight (UK local time).

SA 4.3: Information about the timescale for requesting additional arrangements has been added.

SA 6.2.2: This section has been revised to clarify that elective postponement is only available to resit/resubmission students on modules within the new academic year and which offer resit/resubmissions within twelve weeks of the original assessment. This section previously covered registration for resits/ resubmissions which is now covered in section 6.2.3.

SA 6.2.3: This section has been added to draw a distinction between undergraduate modules, for which there will be no fee and automatic registration, and postgraduate modules where students will continue to register and pay a fee.

SA 6.2.4: This section has been renumbered due to the addition of section 6.2.3 as above.

The wording has been amended to include the word “normally” in both sentences in relation to capping.

Appendix: The Appendix comprising the University’s Plagiarism statement has been updated to reflect a January 2013 editorial amendment.

May 2013

SA 6.2.4: was further amended to clarify the capping of results following a resit or resubmission.

June 2013

‘Introduction to the Qualification Regulations’ has been removed from the list of associated documents that should be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice for Student Assessment.

Guidance about printing the regulations has been removed and students are advised to refer to current regulations via Essential Documents.

Summary of changes made in this Code during 2014

July 2014

SA 2.8.1, SA 3.2.4 and SA 6.2

These sections have been amended to clarify the number of examination/EMA submission opportunities and the time limit for completion of modules which are available to students.

August 2014

Editorial changes to terminology: module enrolment in addition to registration, and declared qualifications in addition to registered qualifications.

SA 6.2.3

This section has been amended to clarify that postgraduate modules studied as part of an integrated masters degree will be treated as undergraduate modules for the purpose of this regulation.

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.

Appendix 1

Plagiarism

What constitutes plagiarism or cheating

If you submit an assignment that contains work that is not your own, without indicating this to the marker (acknowledging your sources), you are committing 'plagiarism' and this is an offence. This might occur in an assignment when:

- using a choice phrase or sentence that you have come across
- copying word-for-word directly from a text
- paraphrasing the words from a text very closely
- using text downloaded from the internet
- borrowing statistics or assembled facts from another person or source
- copying or downloading figures, photographs, pictures or diagrams without acknowledging your sources
- copying from the notes or essays of a fellow student
- copying from your own notes, on a text, tutorial, video or lecture, that contain direct quotations.

Although you are encouraged to show the results of your reading by referring to and quoting from works on your subject, copying from such sources without acknowledgement is deemed to be plagiarism and will not be accepted by the University. This means that you must make it clear which words and ideas are yours and which have come from elsewhere, through the use of quotation marks as well as in-text citations.

Such poor academic practice may occur due to inexperience. So you should study the 'Developing Good Academic Practices' website <http://learn1.open.ac.uk/site/dgap001>. You should also read carefully all the module specific study advice that you receive in your mailings, especially statements concerning plagiarism and how to reference your sources. Where plagiarised material is included in assignments, tutors are likely to notice the shifts in style and may be aware of the source. Seek their advice on this early on in your study. The University also uses text comparison software which it applies to electronic assignments as well as scanned or retyped assignments.

The temptation to plagiarise may arise from lack of self-confidence or from a lack of understanding about the aims of the assessment and about what is required of you. Assignments provide a vehicle for assessing your performance during your module and contribute to your overall module result. However they also assist you in understanding your subject and aid your learning on the module. When you attempt to use the ideas and terms of the module independently you learn more thoroughly and develop your own writing style. You are likely to perform better in examinations if you have learned how to write your own answers to questions in assignments. By submitting work that is not your own you are denying yourself the benefit of this valuable learning strategy. Copying the work of others would be counter-productive to your goal of understanding the module work and to real achievement. Most students will not wish to take such a negative approach to studying, and the University does not tolerate it.

You are encouraged to collaborate with others in studying, but submitted work copied from or written jointly with others is not acceptable, unless collaboration is required in the particular assignment. Therefore you will be asked to acknowledge a statement to confirm that all assessment work you have submitted is your own and that you have not cheated.

Submitting work that has been done by someone else and persistent borrowing of other people's work without citation are obvious instances of plagiarism and are regarded as cheating. Copying answers from social networking sites is cheating. Paying for work from other sources and submitting it as your own is also cheating. It is intellectually dishonest to cheat and thus give one student an unfair advantage over others. Passing on your assignments to others, with the knowledge that another student may plagiarise the assignment will also lead to a penalty. If a case of plagiarism is proven, this is a serious offence and the Open University disciplinary procedures will be followed.

November 2012

(Editorial amendment 2 January 2013)