

Contents

Alternative Format.....	3
Introduction	3
Scope	4
What this policy covers	4
What this policy does not cover.....	4
Support and Information.....	5
How to contact us	5
Reporting Bullying and Harassment.....	5
Policy.....	6
1 Policy Summary.....	6
2 Policy Purpose.....	7
3 Open University exams.....	7
Types of Exam	8
4 24 hour or three-day exams.....	8
5 Timed exams	9
6 Timed exams with a fixed start time	10
7 Online Invigilated Exams	10
Before your exam	11
8 Reasonable adjustments and additional arrangements.....	11
9 Clashing Exams.....	13
10 Religious Festival	13
11 Taking your exam in different time zones	13
During your exam: Preparing your answers.....	13
12 Answer Format	13
13 Completing the correct number of answers.....	14
14 Word limits.....	14
15 Academic Conduct	14
During your exam: Submitting answers	15
16 How to submit answers on the online TMA/EMA service.....	15
17 How to submit answers on the iCME system	16
18 Submitting drafts.....	17
19 Late penalty periods	17

20	Consequences of submitting late	18
	Problems during your exam	19
21	Special circumstances	19
22	Deferral and Discretionary Postponement	19
23	Technical Difficulties	19
	After your exam	21
24	Marking.....	21
25	Problems with submission	21
26	Non-submission.....	22
	Methods of appeal	23
	Definitions.....	23
	Related Policies and Legislation	27
	Give Us Your Feedback.....	28
	Our Student Charter Values	28
	Our commitment to Equality Diversity and Inclusion	28
	Welsh language standards	28
	About this Document	29
	Summary of Significant Changes since last version	29
	Policies Superseded by this Document.....	29
	Document Information	29
	Charity Statement.....	29

Alternative Format

If you require this Exam Policy document in an alternative format, please contact your Student Support Team via <http://www.open.ac.uk/contact/> (phone +44 (0)300 303 5303) if you are a current Open University student.

If you are an Apprenticeship learner, please contact your Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team, or AEST using the following details:

For Apprenticeship Programmes in England, Scotland and Wales, Email: apprentice-support@open.ac.uk Telephone: 0300 3034121.

For Apprentices in Northern Ireland your most appropriate contact may be your Staff Tutor, Education Manager, or Faculty Co-ordinator.

Students living in Wales can speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on 029 2047 1170, should you wish to do so.

Introduction

Each assessment type is governed by its own policy to maintain consistency across modules. This document outlines the rules that cover taking Exams and how to get support if you think you need some adjustments or experience difficulties during the exam and require extra help. You can find out whether our module has an exam as its final assessed task by checking the module assessment strategy on [StudentHome](#). A small number of exams will need to be invigilated remotely and are governed by additional rules. If the exam is going to be invigilated this will be clearly outlined to you prior to the module starting. Additional rules for these exams are set out in our [Online Invigilation Policy](#). Further guidance to support you in preparing for and taking your exam can be found on the [Help Centre](#).

[Definitions](#) section at the end of this policy helps to explain any terms you may be unfamiliar with.

For guidance on how this policy may relate to your personal circumstances, please contact your Student Support Team (SST) using the details on [StudentHome](#).

If you are an Apprenticeship learner, please contact your Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team, or AEST using the following details:

For Apprenticeship Programmes in England, Scotland and Wales, Email: apprentice-support@open.ac.uk Telephone: 0300 3034121.

For Apprentices in Northern Ireland your most appropriate contact may be your Staff Tutor, Education Manager, or Faculty Co-ordinator.

Students living in Wales can speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on 029 2047 1170, should you wish to do so.

Scope

What this policy covers

This policy applies to all access, undergraduate and taught postgraduate students, including apprentices and students in secure environments, who are studying a taught module where an exam is a final assessed task. It includes information about The Open University's approach to reasonable adjustments and additional arrangements for students in need of support and may also be of interest to those considering OU study.

What this policy does not cover

This policy does not cover the following types of assessment:

- Tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) and interactive computer-marked assignments (iCMAs) - please see the [TMA and iCMA policy](#)
- End-of-module assessments (EMAs) - please see the [EMA policy](#)
- End-of-module tutor-marked assignments (emTMAs) - please see the [emTMA Policy](#).

Information about the types of assessment on your module can be found in the module's Assessment Strategy on [StudentHome](#).

This policy does not apply to:

- Postgraduate research students - please contact the [Research Degrees Team](#)
- Learners studying a Microcredential - please refer to the [Microcredential Assessment Handbook](#)

- OpenLearn Learners - please contact the [OpenLearn team](#)
- Students studying under partnership agreements - please contact the [OUVP Curriculum Partnerships team](#)
- Vocational qualification learners - please contact the [vocational qualification team](#).
- Students studying a non-credit bearing Short Course or professional development course - please refer to the [Conditions of Registration \(Short Courses\)](#).

Support and Information

How to contact us

If you have any queries about this policy, please [Contact Us](#). To check the contact details for the Open University, please see [OU Offices](#). If you want to contact your Student Support Team (SST), please refer to the '[Contact the OU](#)' Help Centre webpage.

SiSE student can contact the National Support team for any queries. Their contact details are available on the [Contact us](#) page.

If you are studying an apprenticeship, please contact the Apprentice 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.

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 Summary

This policy covers exams, which are the final assessed task for some undergraduate and taught postgraduate modules. While some modules have exams, others have an End-of-Module Assessment (EMA) or End-of-Module Tutor-Marked-Assignment (emTMA) as their final assessed task, and these are covered by separate policies.

Exams at The Open University are completed online, in a location of your choice, using your own computer, stationery and equipment. There are two types of exams, Remote Exams and Online Invigilated Exams.

For Remote Exams you can consult your module materials and other online resources during your exam but will be unlikely to have time to make extensive use of these resources. During Online Invigilated Exams access to materials and programmes will be restricted. Online Invigilated Exams are limited to specific modules, and this will be clearly outlined to you prior to the module starting. The conditions for the exam will be made clear to you on your module website. For more information, please read the [Online Invigilation Policy](#).

The Exam Policy covers how, where and when you will submit your exam, what happens if you have problems submitting your exam and what happens if you submit it late or not at all. It also outlines the additional support available to students with disabilities or additional requirements.

This policy should be read in conjunction with module specific information such as the Assessment Strategy that can be found on [StudentHome](#), your Module Guide and Module website. These resources will give you more information about the individual assessment tasks on your module and how they make up your module result.

If you have any queries or need guidance on how this policy may relate to your personal circumstances, please contact your Student Support Team using the details on [StudentHome](#).

2 Policy Purpose

This purpose of the Exam Policy is to provide clear up to date information to students and learners about exams at The Open University. The objectives are:

- To clearly communicate the support available to you and how you can ask for this
- To describe what will happen if you experience any problems while taking your exam
- To describe what will happen if you submit your exam late
- To describe what will happen if you do not submit your exam.

3 Open University exams

- 3.1 Open University exams are completed at home or at a place you choose, using your own computer, stationery and equipment. They are submitted online by either uploading a file containing your answers, answering questions directly on screen or a combination of both. Alternative arrangements are in place to support Students in Secure Environments to complete their exam.
- 3.2 Exams are held in regular exam periods throughout the year, based on module start dates and durations, and are scheduled immediately after the end of formal teaching on a module. You can find out when our exam periods are on the [Help Centre](#).
- 3.3 The date and time of your exam will be published on your module website within the first six weeks of your module starting. We will email you to make you aware that the date and time have been published.
- 3.4 Your remote exam will be one of four types, described in [Types of Exam](#) below. You should check your module website carefully to understand the type of exam you will take and how you will submit your answers.
- 3.5 There will be specific times for you to access the exam questions and submit your answers, called a 'submission window'. The submission window will vary depending on your module; you'll find this information on the Assessment tab of

your module website following the publication of the date and time of your exam.

- 3.6 You may submit written work for an assessment through the medium of Welsh. If there are no Welsh-speaking markers for your module, The Open University may send your work to be translated into English, and this translation would be assessed. If you would like to receive your exam questions in Welsh language, please email wales-support@open.ac.uk or cymorth-cymru@open.ac.uk.

For information, please see [Assessment through the medium of Welsh](#) ([Fersiwn iaith Gymraeg](#)). If you submit your work in Welsh, it will be treated no less favourably than an English-language submission. Your mark will not be affected, and you should expect to receive your result at the same time as students who have submitted their work in English.

Types of Exam

4 24 hour or three-day exams

4.1 If your module has a 24-hour submission window, you will be able to access your exam from midnight (00:00) on the day of your exam and will have until 23:59 (UK local time) the following day to complete and submit your answers.

4.2 If your module has a three-day submission window, you will be able to access your exam from midnight on the first day of the exam and will have until midnight on the third day of the exam to complete and submit your answers.

4.3 You will submit your answers using the online TMA/EMA service unless you are studying one of the following modules, which will use the interactive Computer Marked Exam (iCME) system:

- A276 *Classical Latin: the language of ancient Rome (24-hour exam)*
- A342 *Central questions in the study of music (24-hour exam)*
- B815 *Financial markets and the financing of organisations (24-hour exam)*
- B816 *Financial strategy and governance (24-hour exam)*
- B818 *Investment and portfolio management (24-hour exam)*
- B819 *Derivatives and risk management (24-hour exam)*

- B(XY)873 *Effective strategic management in business and the public sector* (24-hour exam)
- T217 *Design Essentials* (24-hour exam)

The Assessment tab of your module website will make clear which system you will use to submit your exam.

4.4 The exam will be designed so that it can be completed within 3 hours, but you are able to use the full 24-hour submission window to complete and submit your work.

4.5 If you don't submit your answers before the submission deadline you will have a further 24 hours to submit within the late penalty period, regardless of the system you must use to submit your answers. Any answers submitted within this period will be considered late and will incur a mark penalty. Further information can be found in section 19 [‘Late Penalty Periods’](#).

5 Timed exams

5.1 If your exam has a duration of less than 24-hours (for example 4.5 or 3.5 hours), you will be required to submit your answers using the iCME system, either by uploading a file containing your answers, answering questions directly into the system, or a combination of both.

5.2 Timed exams offer flexibility to allow you to begin at a convenient time on the day of the exam, usually within a 12 or 24-hour window. Once you begin your exam, you will then have a set period to complete your answers (for example 3.5 or 4 hours), but your exam must be completed and submitted by the specified time on the submission date, no matter when you start it. You will have a further period of time to prepare, check and upload your answers, known as upload time. For example, if your exam has a 4.5-hour duration, made up of 3.5-hour exam time and 1 hour upload time with an additional 1-hour late penalty period, and must be submitted by the end of the 24-hour submission window at 23.59 hrs (UK local time), we recommend you start no later than 18.30 hrs.

5.3 If you don't submit your work by the submission deadline, a late penalty timer will show any available time to submit during the late penalty period, where you will incur a mark penalty for a late submission. Late penalty periods will not extend

beyond the overall submission window and vary per module. Further information about Late Penalty Periods can be found in [section 19 Late Penalty Periods](#).

6 Timed exams with a fixed start time

6.1 Timed exams with a fixed start time will begin at a specific time or within a specific short period (UK local time), in either a morning (10:00) or an afternoon (14:00). You will have a fixed amount of time to complete your exam, followed by a short period of additional time to prepare and submit your answers.

6.2 You will access questions and submit your answers using the iCME system, where a timer will show your remaining exam time, as well as any additional time to prepare and submit your answers. You will be required to either upload a file containing your answers, answer questions directly into the system on your web browser, or a combination of both. The way you should complete your answers will be made clear on the iCME system.

6.3 Your module website will include information about whether any late penalty period is available for your module if it has an exam with a fixed start time.

7 Online Invigilated Exams

7.1 Online Invigilated Exams are exams where an invigilator remotely supervises you throughout the timed duration of your exam. This to ensure that you take the exam yourself and complete it fairly without help from any unauthorised people or materials. Your exam may be taken at home or somewhere else you choose. There are additional rules associated with Online Invigilated Exams which are set out in the [Online Invigilation Policy](#).

Online Invigilated Exams will be timed exams with a fixed start time which will begin at a specific time or within a specific short period (UK local time), in either a morning (10:00) or an afternoon (14:00).

7.2 You will have to complete ID checks and a scan of your room starting at time specified. You will then have a fixed amount of time to complete your exam, followed by a period of additional time to prepare and submit your answers. The time required to complete the ID checks and room scan will not reduce the amount of time for you complete your exam.

7.3 You will access questions and submit your answers using the iCME system, where a timer will show your remaining exam time, as well as any additional time to prepare and submit your answers. You will be required to either upload a file containing your answers, answer questions directly into the system on your web browser, or a combination of both. The way you should complete your answers will be made clear on the iCME system.

7.4 Your module website will include information about whether any late penalty period is available for your module.

Before your exam

8 Reasonable adjustments and additional arrangements

8.1 The Open University has a duty to make reasonable adjustments where a student would be at a substantial disadvantage as a result of their disability or circumstances in order to comply with its obligations under the [Equality Act 2010](#) in England, Scotland and Wales, the [Disability Discrimination Act 1995 \(Amendment\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2004](#), or any other statutory duty or obligation.

8.2 During your Remote Exam you will continue to have access to any computing equipment or software you might normally use for Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs). You will need to tell us about any additional equipment or software you wish to use in an Online Invigilated Exam. If you require reasonable adjustments or additional arrangements for an Online Invigilated Exam then instructions for these are contained in the [Online Invigilation Policy](#).

8.3 If you believe you will need additional arrangements to support you to complete your exam, such as extra time, to split your exam over more than one day, or supporting help from a scribe or amanuensis, contact your [Student Support Team](#) as soon as possible and request arrangements via the form on the [Help Centre](#). You must contact us before the date shown on the Help Centre in the to allow time for the arrangements to be put in place. Your Student Support Team will confirm what evidence you need to provide to help us understand your needs and will give you further guidance on the additional arrangements that can be put in place for your exam. If you've already told us you have a disability, your Student Support Team will contact you in advance to find out what arrangements you might need.

8.4 If you are experiencing a temporary illness or injury, we may be able to make additional arrangements to support you to take your exam. We will make efforts to put arrangements in place at short notice, however where this is not possible it may be beneficial for you to consider deferral or postponement if you believe your performance will be significantly impacted.

8.5 Unless you tell us you no longer need them, any agreed adjustments will be automatically carried forward if you need to take a resit or decide to postpone your exam.

8.6 If you have more than one exam during an exam period, you should discuss the arrangements you will need for each exam with your Student Support Team – they won't be automatically applied to each module's exam.

8.7 The person who marks your exam won't be told about any disability, illness or additional requirements you make us aware of, or about any additional arrangements put in place for you to take your exam. This is so they can provide the Module Result Panel with an independent assessment of the academic merit of the work you present.

8.8 The Module Result Panel will have brief factual details about your disability or additional requirements and any reasonable adjustments or additional arrangements that were in place for your exam. They won't have any other information you've given to the University or your Tutor.

8.9 If you think your disability or circumstances have put you at a serious disadvantage, the extra time or other adjustments or arrangements for your exam weren't adequate; or if you would like the Module Result Panel to take other information which may have affected your performance into account when considering your result, please contact your Student Support Team and submit Special Circumstances using the form on the [Help Centre](#). Further information can be found in Section 21 [Special Circumstances](#).

9 Clashing Exams

If you have two or more exams that start and end within the same 12 or 24-hour submission window, we'll treat these as 'clashing exams' and will contact you to arrange for you to complete the exams at a different time.

10 Religious Festival

Wherever possible, the University avoids scheduling exams that clash with major religious festivals. If you'll be unable to complete your exam on the day of the submission deadline for religious reasons, you should contact your [Student Support Team](#) as soon as possible. Further information on requesting special arrangements for your exam for religious reasons, including the deadline by which you must tell us you are unable to take your exam, can be found on the [Help Centre](#).

11 Taking your exam in different time zones

11.1 If the timing of your exam is not appropriate for your time zone, for example if it is during unsociable hours, we may be able to arrange for you to take it at a more suitable time. This may mean that you complete your exam after other students completing it in the UK.

11.2 To apply for a change to your exam time, you should contact examinations@open.ac.uk clearly stating your module, the country/time zone where you will be taking the exam and your preferred submission deadline. Although we will try to schedule your exam as close to your preferred time as possible, adjustments may be limited to maintain integrity of the exam.

11.3 Adjustments will not be made for students sitting an exam with a 24-hour submission window.

During your exam: Preparing your answers

12 Answer Format

You may be required to submit your exam by uploading a file in a specific format or inputting answers directly into the assessment system on your web browser. Your module website will specify how you should complete your exam and any file formats that should be used.

If you submit your answers in a different format and we cannot access your work, you will receive a zero score for your exam.

13 Completing the correct number of answers

Where your exam offers a choice of questions to answer, you should only answer the number of questions required, as outlined on the front page of the question paper.

This means you may need to carefully choose which questions to answer and submit.

Markers will mark answers in the order they are presented in your submission. Unless outlined on the front page of the question paper, any additional answers won't be marked.

14 Word limits

Any word limit for your exam, and any penalties for submitting answers that are significantly over this limit (10% or more), will be made clear on the question paper.

15 Academic Conduct

15.1 You won't be prevented from accessing and consulting your module materials or the internet while completing your Remote Exam. However, as with other assessments, it's important to complete your work independently and using your own words.

15.2 If you're taking an Online Invigilated Exam your access to other materials and the internet will be restricted. See the Online Invigilation Policy for more information about what may or may not be permitted during the exam.

15.3 You should not copy content directly from a source, including your module materials, or present someone else's words as your own. This is plagiarism, which is a type of academic misconduct.

15.4 Submitted exam answers will be subject to plagiarism and collusion checks, which may include the use of CopyCatch and Turnitin software.

15.5 We may undertake additional verification or invigilation of exams to reduce the possibility of academic misconduct or to meet the requirements of Professional and Regulatory Bodies.

15.6 You must not discuss the content of the exam with your Tutor or anyone else during the submission window or the two days following your overall submission deadline. This includes discussing the exam on social media.

15.7 You must not post questions or ask for answers on websites or services offering help with assignment answers or use any content available from such sites.

15.8 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](#). Further guidance is available on the [Help Centre](#).

During your exam: Submitting answers

16 How to submit answers on the online TMA/EMA service

16.1 If your module website indicates that you must submit your exam using the online TMA/EMA service, you should use the TMA30(EMA) link found under the Assessment tab on your module website and follow the on-screen instructions to submit your exam.

16.2 The overall submission deadline for your exam will be 23:59hrs (UK local time) on the submission date.

16.3 You should name your file clearly, using the format of your Personal Identifier, module code and exam number (which will be TMA30) with no spaces. For example, X1234567D202TMA30. The file name will be limited to 50 characters. Labelling your file incorrectly will not prevent your submission from being marked.

16.4 It is strongly recommended that you check the file you submitted is correct and you've uploaded it for the correct module. Errors can't be rectified after the late penalty period.

16.5 Some modules require multiple files to be submitted as part of your remote exam answers. Where this is required, multiple files must be submitted as a single compressed (zip) file. Extra files, missing appendices or corrections received after the late penalty period won't be marked. If you submit each file separately to the online TMA/EMA service, only the last file you submit will be marked.

17 How to submit answers on the iCME system

17.1 You should submit your exam answers for a timed exam (with or without a fixed start and end time and date) using the iCME81 link under the Assessment tab on your module website. Follow the on-screen instructions to access your online exam questions. Further information about submitting your exam via the iCME on your module website can be found in the [iCME Remote Exam Submission Guide](#).

17.2 For an online invigilated exam, you will need to follow the instructions on your module website to access the online invigilation provider. You will complete your exam pre-checks, as described in the [Online Invigilation Policy](#). There may be a short delay between completing your checks and contact from the invigilator. Your exam will begin after your pre-checks have been completed and the invigilator provides access to your exam.

17.3 Once you have started your exam attempt, timers on the left side will show the remaining exam time, any additional time given to upload and submit, and the late penalty period, where applicable.

17.4 If you are required to upload a file containing your answers, you should name your file clearly, using the format of your Personal Identifier, module code and exam number (iCME81) with no spaces. For example, X1234567D202iCME81. The file name will be limited to 50 characters. Labelling your file incorrectly will not prevent your submission from being marked.

17.5 To submit your exam, you must click “Submit all and finish” after uploading your file or answering questions within the iCME system, and then “Submit all and finish” on the confirming pop-up. If you do not complete the “Submit all and finish” process, any work you have uploaded or questions you have answered will be submitted on your behalf unless you have applied for a Discretionary Postponement. This may mean that only part of your work is submitted for marking, and a late penalty will be applied if the “Submit all and finish” process is not completed by the submission deadline.

17.6 It is strongly recommended that you check the file you submitted is correct and you’ve uploaded it for the correct module. Errors can’t be rectified after the late

penalty period. See Section 25 [Problems with submissions](#) for information on what you should do if you realise there is a problem with your exam submission.

17.7 Where a module requires multiple files to be uploaded, you should upload these separately, without combining or zipping them. Multiple or zipped files will not be accepted where they are not specified as required, and they will not be marked.

18 Submitting drafts

18. You can submit drafts of your exam answers on both the online TMA/EMA service and iCME system, with each submission overwriting the previous one.

18. The final version you upload and, if using the iCME system is the version available when you click submit all and finish, will be the submission that will be marked. If you submit a new version during the late penalty period, the work you submitted in the late penalty period will be the version accepted and will be subject to a late penalty, regardless of when you made the first submission.

19 Late penalty periods

19.1 If your module requires you to submit your exam using the online TMA/EMA service, you must submit your work by 23:59 hrs (UK local time) on the submission date. Work received in the 24-hour period immediately after the submission deadline (including work submitted at or immediately after midnight) will be considered to have been submitted during the late penalty period.

19.2 If your module requires you to submit your exam using the iCME system, the late penalty period available to you varies depending on your module. Check your module website for more information about the late penalty period applicable. Information will also be displayed on the late penalty timer on the iCME system during your exam.

19.3 If you submit your work after the submission deadline but before the end of the late penalty period, your work will be considered late and will incur a late penalty. No exam answers will be accepted after the end of the late penalty period or after the overall submission deadline displayed on your module website, whichever comes first.

19.4 If you are late to begin a timed exam with a fixed start time, the submission deadline will remain the same. This means that the overall time you have available to complete and submit your exam, made up of your exam time, upload time and late penalty period, will reduce depending on when you begin. The time you have available as a late penalty period will reduce first, followed by the upload time and finally the exam time. For example, if your exam had a 10:00 start time and was a 4-hour exam with 30 mins upload time and 1-hour late penalty period, but you did not begin until 11:00, you would have the 4-hour exam time and 30 min upload time remaining but would not have any late penalty time.

20 Consequences of submitting late

20.1 If you submit your answers during the late penalty period, your work will incur a late penalty. 10 percentage points will be deducted from the marks you receive for your exam answers for a late submission. However, this mark reduction won't reduce your score to below a pass mark for this assessment, so in cases where this would reduce your score below what is required to pass, the penalty percentage will be reduced. For example, for modules with a pass mark of 40, a score of 59 would become 49 with the penalty, 45 would become 40 and 35 would be unchanged. For modules with a pass mark of 50, a score of 69 would become 59 with the penalty, 55 would become 50 and 45 would be unchanged.

20.2 Although you will not fail the exam due to a late penalty, it might have implications for your overall module result. The impact of marks deducted because of a late penalty depends on the Assessment Strategy for your module. Your module's Assessment Strategy can be found on [StudentHome](#). In some cases, you could fail the module, for example where your module assessment score is determined through an average of all your assessment tasks, known as a Single Component Assessment strategy, rather than through achieving a certain threshold on each of your overall assessment, continuous assessment and exam, known as a Dual Component Assessment strategy.

For Level 2 and 3 modules, a lower grade could impact your overall undergraduate Honours degree classification or your postgraduate qualification classification.

Problems during your exam

21 Special circumstances

21.1 If circumstances outside of your control had an impact on the completion or submission of your exam, you should submit Special Circumstances to make the Module Results Panel (MRP) aware so they can take this into account when considering your result. Please refer to the [Special Circumstances Policy](#) for more information.

21.2 You should submit special circumstances before midnight (UK time) four calendar days after your exam submission deadline and, if you're able to, should also send evidence to support it.

21.3 Wherever possible, you should attempt to make a submission, even if it is partial. If you are unable to make any submission, you should consider deferral or discretionary postponement. Further information is available in section 20.

22 Deferral and Discretionary Postponement

22.1 If you know in advance that you will be unable to submit your exam, you should consider deferring to allow you to restart your module at a later date and can do this up to the last working day before your exam. To arrange a deferral please refer to the [Changing Your Study Plans](#) policy. If you are studying as part of an apprenticeship programme, you should [contact](#) your AEST or equivalent contact for further discussion. Your AEST will discuss the implications of changing your study plans with you and your employer.

22.2 If, on the day, you experience circumstances outside of your control, such as illness, and are unable to submit your exam or you submit it after any late penalty period has ended, you should consider applying for a Discretionary Postponement to allow you to sit your exam at the next opportunity. You will be asked to submit evidence to support your application. Further information is available in the [Postponement Policy](#).

23 Technical Difficulties

23.1 If you experience technical issues during your exam, you should contact the [Computing Helpdesk](#), who are available 24/7, for technical support. If the technical issues mean your submission is delayed or you are unable to submit at all, contact

your [Student Support Team](#) as soon as possible. They will be available between 8:00 and 20:00 on exam days. Outside of these hours, please contact them by email. It is important that you quickly make us aware of any issues so we can offer appropriate and timely information and guidance.

23.2 If you are taking an online invigilated exam and you have a problem during your exam session, you'll be able to alert and communicate with your invigilator via the chat function provided. They'll help you and instruct you on what to do next. The invigilator will be able to help you with issues that might come up with the invigilation software. For any other technical issue, you should contact the [Computing Helpdesk](#). If you lose connection with your exam session or have an issue that prevents you from submitting your exam, contact your [Student Support Team](#) (SST) as soon as you can.

23.3 If we are alerted to a module-wide technical issue that affects all students taking an exam, we will urgently contact impacted students by email. We will also display a message on the Bulletin Board of StudentHome to notify you that we are aware of an issue and of any action we are taking to rectify it so that you are not adversely impacted.

If you are unable to submit your exam answers online, as a last resort you should submit your answers by email before the submission deadline. Exams that require you to submit using the online TMA/EMA service should be emailed to eTMA@open.ac.uk with your Personal Identifier, module code and the TMA number (TMA30 for exams) in the subject line, separated by forward slashes e.g. A1234567/B999/30, and no further text included in the body of the email. Exams that require you to submit using the iCME system should be emailed to remote-exam-submissions@open.ac.uk with your Personal Identifier, module code and exam number (iCME81) in the subject line.

You will receive an email acknowledgement of your emailed submission however this may be delayed for up to 12-hours.

Answers submitted by email after the submission deadline may not be accepted for marking or may incur a late penalty where applicable.

After your exam

24 Marking

24.1 After you have submitted your exam, it will be marked anonymously. Depending on the types of questions that make up the exam, questions may be marked automatically, by a marker, or a combination of both. Markers will not have access to other work you've completed during the module.

24.2 Script markers are not made aware of any disability or additional requirements or arrangements that were put in place for your exam. This is so they can make an independent assessment of the academic merit of your work.

24.3 Module Results Panels will be provided with brief factual details of this information when considering module results.

24.4 The mark you are awarded contributes to the determination of your module result. Please refer to the [Module Result Determination Policy](#) for further information on how module results are calculated and awarded.

25 Problems with submission

25.1 It is important to check you have uploaded and submitted the correct file containing your exam answers. You will be reminded to do this in the confirmations of your submission displayed both on screen and sent by email.

25.2 If you've submitted the wrong file, used the wrong format, or we can't open your file, your work may not be marked, and you may fail the module. If you submit an incomplete version of your exam answers, marks will only be given for the part you submitted.

25.3 If you notice a problem with the file you have uploaded or the answers you have input directly into our systems, or you have experienced technical problems while submitting, you should contact your [Student Support Team](#).

It is important to contact us as soon as possible, as in some cases the time you tell us about a problem might determine what action we are able to take. You can submit Special Circumstances to make us aware of any problems you have experienced during the completion of or submitting your exam. Further information is available in the [Special Circumstances Policy](#).

25.4 If we notice a problem after you've submitted your exam but before the submission deadline, we will attempt to alert you to the issue and help to resolve it, however in many cases we are unable to identify issues until after the submission deadline has passed.

25.5 Exam answers submitted before the submission deadline but to the wrong module may be accepted. If you discover there is a mistake in the submission of your file, you should contact your Student Support Team as soon as possible.

25.6 If the University does not receive a correct file, you may be given an opportunity to provide a replacement, depending on the timing and the issue. If asked to provide a replacement file you will be given a strict deadline and must not alter any of your answers. However, in most cases you will be awarded a Fail: entitled to resit result provided you meet any other resit eligibility requirements. These requirements may include meeting a threshold on other assessed tasks and the number of previous opportunities you have had to pass the module. If you do not meet these additional conditions or if your module does not offer resits, you will receive a Fail result.

26 Non-submission

26.1 If you don't submit your exam by the overall submission deadline or within any late penalty period and have not been granted a formal deferral or postponement by the relevant deadlines, you will fail the module and you won't be entitled to a resit.

26.2 If you are experiencing difficulties outside of your control, such as illness or bereavement, and are unable to submit any of your exam, you should consider applying for a Discretionary Postponement to delay your exam to the next opportunity. See the [Postponement Policy](#) for further information, including eligibility criteria.

26.3 If you are able to make a partial submission, you should do this even if you feel your performance will be adversely affected by your circumstances. If you don't achieve a Pass grade, you may be offered a resit if you've met the other requirements of your module and the Assessment Strategy confirms resits are available for your module. You can submit Special Circumstances if you would like to make the Module Result Panel aware of your circumstances. Further information about Special Circumstances is available in the [Special Circumstances Policy](#).

Methods of appeal

If you have a query or experience a problem with any aspect of our application of this policy, please [contact us](#) promptly. If you feel that we have not responded appropriately to your policy query or concern, you can raise a formal complaint or appeal using the [Students Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#). You can find out more information about how to do this in the Open University's [Complaints and Appeals](#) procedure webpages on the Help Centre.

We have a specific complaints procedure for complaints relating to Welsh Language Standards. Please refer to [Welsh Language Standards, Dealing with Complaints and Comments](#) for more details."

Definitions

Academic misconduct

Any action or behaviour which may give you or others an unfair academic advantage in an assessment or exam. This includes plagiarism, self-plagiarism, enabling plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, unauthorised use of generative Artificial Intelligence and automated tools, falsification and misconduct in an exam.

Amanuensis

A person who is employed to write down a student's exam answers where they are unable to do this themselves or by using assistive software.

Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST)

The AEST is the first point of contact for Apprentices in line with Apprenticeship Programmes. Please see the [How to contact us section](#) above for their contact details.

Apprenticeship Programme Delivery Manager (APDM)

APDMs support Employers participating in an Apprenticeship Programme. They offer support and advice on recruitment, registration and eligibility; act 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.

Assessment

This term covers the variety of methods the University uses to measure your progress and learning during a module. The different types of assessment could include TMAs, iCMAs, exams, emTMAs and EMAs.

Assignment

This is the term we use for assessment tasks that are not the final assessed task - for example, TMAs and iCMAs.

Assessment strategy

This is a detailed breakdown of the way a module is assessed (such as the learning outcomes to be met, type and number of assessments and their weighting). Information about this can be found on your module record on StudentHome. There may also be information in the module guide, assignment booklets or module materials.

Continuous assessment

This is the set of assignments (TMAs and/or iCMAs) that are completed during a module. Information about these can be found in the module guide, assignment booklets or module materials.

Deferral

Withdrawing from the current presentation of your module, and then re-registering on a later presentation of that module.

End-of-Module Assessment (EMA)

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 sitting a traditional exam at the end of your study. For ease of reference, these essays, projects, portfolios, dissertations or other tasks that fall at the end of your module are referred to collectively as end-of-module assessments (EMAs).

End-of-Module tutor-marked assignments (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.

Exam (examination)

An exam is a time restricted final assessed task. Exams have a set start time and must be submitted within a specific time frame. The submission deadline is typically between 2-4 hours, but can be up to 24 hours, as specified by the module team. Some exams will be invigilated by an online invigilation provider; you will be told if this applies to your module.

Exam Periods

The dates during which The Open University holds exams. The Open University holds its exams at regular periods throughout the year with exam dates scheduled based on the module length and start date.

Final assessed tasks

The assessments that you complete at the end of the module. The types of final assessed tasks that a module can have are an exam, end-of-module assessment (EMA) or end-of-module tutor-marked assignment (emTMA).

Formal teaching period

The period from the start of the module to the first of the month of the exam period (i.e., the final TMA cut-off date).

iCME

An interactive computer-marked exam submitted via the iCMA system online.

Late Penalty Period

A specified amount of time after the submission deadline when you are still allowed to submit your work but will incur a penalty for doing so. Late penalty periods vary per module.

Module Result Panel

The Module Result Panel (MRP) are 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).

Online invigilation

Online invigilation refers to the remote supervision of students during an exam using additional software and equipment, such as a webcam and microphone.

Online TMA/EMA system

This system allows you to submit work electronically for assessment and is used for some exams.

Postponement

Where 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. This is called discretionary postponement.

Resit

If you take your exam but do not achieve the required standard to pass the 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.

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.

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.

Upload time

A period of time, which varies per modules, given in addition to your exam time to prepare, check and upload your answers.

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](#)).
- Assessment Policies:
 - a. [TMA and iCMA Policy](#)
 - b. [End-of-module tutor-marked assignment \(emTMA\) Policy](#)
 - c. [End-of-Module Assessment \(EMA\) Policy](#)
 - d. [Special Circumstances Policy](#)
 - e. [Postponement Policy](#)
 - f. [Resit and Resubmission Policy](#)
 - g. [Module Results Determination Policy](#)
 - h. [Online Invigilation Policy](#)
- [Changing Your Study Plans: Deferrals, Withdrawals and Cancellation](#)
- [Pregnancy and Maternity](#)
- [Student Carers Policy](#)

- [Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#)
- [Religion and Belief Policy](#)
- [Accessibility Policy](#)
- [Equality Act 2010 in England, Scotland and Wales](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1995 \(Amendment\) regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2004](#)
- [Student Privacy Notice](#)

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.

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.

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.

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](#).

About this Document

Summary of Significant Changes since last version

The following changes have been made

- New policy template has been used so the layout has slightly changed, wording has been updated and numbering for some sections has changed.
- The wording in some sections has been reviewed and updated to make the information clearer.
- Section 17.5 has been slightly amended to include that a penalty will be applied for students who do not complete the “Submit all and Finish” process.
- Information about Online Invigilation has been added.
- Definitions section has been updated.

Policies Superseded by this Document

This document replaces the previous version 1.0 of the Exam Policy dated February 2024.

Document Information

Version number: 1.1

Approved by: Delegate, Director Academic Services

Effective from: 1 September 2025

Date for review: August 2026

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.