

## Assessment Handbook

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It is your responsibility as a student to read this document carefully and to refer to the information and guidance it provides for the different stages of your study. If you need further clarification, you can ask your Student Support Team for advice, or contact one of the named offices referred to in this Handbook.

If you are a continuing student with the University, you need to be aware that some aspects of policy, procedure and deadlines relating to assessment matters have changed and you must not assume that arrangements which have applied to your previous study continue to be applicable. You must ensure that you refer to current information, including this Handbook.

This document has been produced by Assessment, Credit and Qualifications at The Open University.

While we have done everything possible to ensure accuracy, the information in this publication may change in the light of altered regulations or policy or because of financial or other constraints.

We may record our phone calls with you to make sure that we have carried out your instructions correctly and to help us improve our services through staff training

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## Contents

<b>Section 1 Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 How to use this Handbook	4
1.2 Types of assessment	4
1.3 Your StudentHome page	4
1.4 Assessment results	5
1.5 Additional needs and assessment	5
1.6 Assessment and completion of modules	5
<b>Section 2 Assignments</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Continuous assessment	6
2.2 Assignment scores	7
2.3 Preparing assignments	8
2.4 Submitting TMAs	9
2.5 Marking of TMAs	12
2.6 Submitting CMAs	14
2.7 Marking CMAs	16
2.8 Substitution	16
2.9 Special circumstances affecting continuous assessment	17
2.10 Posting assignments on websites	18
<b>Section 3 End-of-module assessment tasks</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Examinable components	18
3.2 Exams	19
3.3 Exam arrangements	19
3.4 Absence from exams	23
3.5 Special Circumstances relating to exams	24
3.6 Modules with other examinable work	26
3.7 Late submission of examinable work	26
3.8 Non-submission of examinable work	27
3.9 Special circumstances relating to other examinable work	28
<b>Section 4 Module results</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1 Assessment strategies	30
4.2 Determining results	30
4.3 Module Result Panels	31
4.4 Your result	32
4.5 Result grades	33
4.6 Resits and resubmissions	34
4.7 Getting your result	36
4.8 Viva voce exams	37
4.9 Module result checks	37
4.10 Formal module result appeals	38
4.11 Aegrotat credit	38
<b>Summary of changes</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Appendix 1 - Plagiarism</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Appendix 2 - Substitution: how it works</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendix 3 - Additional information for Level 1 modules with continuous assessment only</b>	<b>47</b>

<b>Contact information</b>	<b>48</b>
Student Support Teams	48
Central offices and departments	48
Assessment Processing	48
Policy Exceptions and Academic Conduct	48
Exams team	48
Student Casework Office	49
Data Protection Coordinator	49
Disability Resources Team	49
Open University Students Association (OUSA)	49
Student Recruitment	49
<a href="#"><u>Appendix 4 - Module grading and resit/resubmission information - separate document</u></a>	

## Section 1 Introduction

### 1.1 How to use this Handbook

This Assessment Handbook is for you to use during your module or programme of study. It outlines the University's policies relating to the different elements of assessment you may have to complete for your module or programme and explains the outcomes and/or module result you will receive at the end of each module. You'll find our formal Code of Practice for Student Assessment (along with our other student regulations and formal policies) on our website at [www.open.ac.uk/students/charter/essential-documents](http://www.open.ac.uk/students/charter/essential-documents). At appropriate points in your study you will also be directed to other documents which provide specific information relating to assessment such as the Exam Arrangements booklet, or the Submitting Examinable Work booklet.

This Handbook tells you the **general** rules and regulations for completing and submitting your assessed work and explains the result grades we use, while module or programme-specific information such as your Module Guide, Study Planner and Assignment Booklet will tell you about the **individual** elements of assessment in your module.

This Handbook contains four appendices which provide information about the University's statement on Plagiarism; How substitution works; Additional information for Level 1 modules with continuous assessment only; and the result statuses which apply to individual modules.

You can also refer to the [HelpCentre](#) where you'll find additional information about assessment, for example, a glossary of some of the phrases, terms and abbreviations used in assessment, and a selection of forms and information sheets. The site also includes links to other useful websites.

This Handbook is updated regularly, and the most up-to-date version will always be available from [Essential Documents](#).

### 1.2 Types of assessment

The University has some standard types of assessment that we may use in your module: assignments, oral or practical assessments, projects, exams, dissertations and portfolios. There are other types of assessment, but these are the most common.

Open University modules usually have two assessment components: assignments completed during the module known as continuous assessment (see Section 2), and an exam or other examinable piece of work such as a project, portfolio or dissertation (see Section 3). These pieces of examinable work are usually referred to as end-of-module assessments or EMAs.

Some modules will use only one component of assessment. This component is usually made up of assignments only.

### 1.3 Your StudentHome page

You must make sure that you are able to sign on to [StudentHome](#) at the start of your module using the username and password we sent you when we confirmed your registration. If you

have any problems signing in, you'll find some instructions on the screen to help you or you can contact our Computing Helpdesk by email [ou-computing-helpdesk@open.ac.uk](mailto:ou-computing-helpdesk@open.ac.uk)

As well as a wealth of valuable study resources, you will be able to quickly access assessment-related information, including:

- your assignment scores for your current module
- (if your module has an exam) your exam date and time and the address of your allocated exam centre once this information becomes available. You will also be told how to ask for an exam at a non-established centre.
- (if your module has an EMA) the cut-off date for your work to be submitted once it is available
- results for previous modules and the result of your current module, once it is available
- your module website
- information about our modules and qualifications.

#### **1.4 Assessment results**

Your scores for assignments will be notified to you throughout your period of study and will be displayed on your StudentHome page. Your final module result along with a score for your exam or EMA will also be displayed in the 'Study' tab of your StudentHome page when it is available. Your StudentHome page will provide you with an indication of when we expect your final module result to be released, and we will usually notify you by email when your module result is available. If your module contributes to a qualification, you will receive an offer of qualification along with any classification when you have completed the required study. This will normally happen within a week of the issue of your final module result.

#### **1.5 Additional needs and assessment**

Further information relating to assessment for students with additional needs can be found on the [Help Centre](#) or by asking your Student Support Team.

#### **1.6 Assessment and completion of modules**

When you have registered on a module, you are normally expected to complete all the assessment activities and finish the module in line with the cut-off dates in your Study Planner.

However, the University recognises that in some cases, students may start to study a module but are then unable to complete all aspects of study or assessment within the scheduled timetable.

You may be permitted short extensions to individual assignments (see Section 2).

If you want to suspend or reduce your study intensity, or delay the completion of study and/or assessment, you may be able to withdraw from a module and then join the next presentation to complete it. We refer to this as 'deferral'. Please refer to our

[Deferrals and Withdrawals policy](#) available from the [Assessment section of Essential Documents](#) for further information. If you defer, you may be able to carry the assignment scores you have already completed over to your deferred presentation. If you carry scores forward, we refer to this as Assessment Banking. You may apply for deferral at any point up to the last working day before the date of the final piece of assessment for your module, which will normally be the exam or the cut-off date for your EMA submission. You cannot apply for a deferral if you have already been granted a previous deferral or postponement on the same module, or if you are taking a resit exam or resubmitting the EMA.

You can find more information about Deferral and Assessment Banking from the [Assessment section](#) of Essential Documents. You will need to receive and acknowledge that you have received individual advice before a deferral can be approved.

In some very limited circumstances, you may be eligible to postpone the exam or submission of the EMA only to the next available assessment period on a discretionary basis. You would need to meet University criteria and provide third party documentary evidence. You can find more information about this in sections 3.3 to 3.7.

If you are awarded a Fail: Entitled to Resit or Fail: Entitled to Resubmit module result where the assessment is scheduled within twelve to sixteen weeks of your original exam period or submission date, you can elect to postpone this 'early' resit or resubmission to the next available opportunity. You can find more information about this in section 4.6.

## **Section 2    Assignments**

### **2.1      Continuous assessment**

Your continuous assessment can be made up of tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) and computer-marked assignments (CMAs). Some CMAs are submitted via an online form or are interactive (iCMAs). TMAs are usually essay or short-answer questions, although following the need to build Employability skills in to modules, there is a move towards much more variation in the type of task that students have to do in a TMA. Examples include: creation of a poster, creation of a PowerPoint presentation, reports based on group work as part of their continuous assessment. CMAs are made up of a series of questions and you choose the answers from a given selection. iCMAs can include a range of question types.

You must submit your assignments on or before the cut-off dates given in the Study Planner for your module unless you have been granted an extension before the cut-off date. Extensions are not permitted for CMAs /iCMAs.

#### **2.1.1    Formative and summative assignments**

'Formative' assignments are set for teaching purposes only and the scores you get for them don't count towards your overall continuous assessment score (OCAS). Some formative assignments will be compulsory, so must be submitted even though the scores do not contribute to your result.

However, most of your assignments will be 'summative', and the scores for these assignments are combined to make up your overall continuous assessment score (OCAS).

**The assessment strategy for every module is accessible via the module record page on StudentHome. This will tell you which category each assignment falls into.**

### **2.1.2 Keeping your assignments**

You should always check carefully that you are submitting the correct assignment and keep a copy of each assignment you submit. If you submit electronically you must wait until you get the on-screen receipt to be sure that it has been accepted by the system. You should make a note of the receipt number as proof of your successful submission. Please see Section 2.5.9 'Keeping copies of your TMAs' for more information.

If you are submitting an assignment on paper, you should retain a photocopy along with proof of posting (see 'Submitting TMAs on paper' in Section 2.4). This evidence will be required in the event that a document sent in the post is not delivered or delivered late. The University will not accept any responsibility for assignments that don't reach your tutor or the appropriate office by the due date, and you will be asked to provide evidence that your work was submitted on time if you claim that an assignment is missing from your student record.

Most students keep their marked assignments until at least the end of the module or qualification, largely because they're an invaluable aid to revision. **We strongly advise you to keep your marked assignments, along with your proof of posting or submission, until you have your module or qualification result. We are not able to provide you with copies of your assignments.**

## **2.2 Assignment scores**

### **2.2.1 Calculating your overall continuous assessment score (OCAS)**

Individual assignments are weighted to reflect their relative importance. In working out your overall continuous assessment score (OCAS), the assignment score your tutor gives is multiplied by the assignment weighting to produce the figure that will count towards your continuous assessment. You'll be given a zero score for any summative assignment you don't submit, unless your module allows 'substitution' (explained in Section 2.8, 'Substitution').

Your module may have a 'threshold' for one or more of the elements of continuous assessment. This is a minimum score on a particular element that you must reach in order to pass the module.

The assessment strategy for each module, which will include all the information of this kind, is explained in the module materials. We also provide a standardised version of the assessment strategy for every module which is accessible via the module record page on StudentHome.

On the majority of modules your performance in all forms of assessment is recorded and reported back to you in line with the following numerical University Scale.

**Table 1 The University Scale**

<b>Band</b>	<b>University scale score</b>	<b>Performance standard</b>
A	85-100	Pass 1
B	70-84	Pass 2
C	55-69	Pass 3
D	40-54	Pass 4
E	30-39	Bare fail
F	15-29	Fail
G	0-14	Bad fail

Some modules use other scales for marking individual assignments, and those will be explained in your assignment material, but the overall score for an assignment will be recorded and reported using the University Scale.

## **2.3 Preparing assignments**

Your assignments serve two main purposes. They help you to learn and they enable the University to judge the standard you've achieved. The preparatory work you do for an assignment and the process of writing it should help you to concentrate on particular aspects of the module and to consolidate what you've learned so far.

The nature of assignments will obviously vary from module to module. Most module teams offer advice and suggestions in the assignment notes about the scope of the question and what's expected of you.

### **2.3.1 Should you discuss your assignments with other students?**

Although some students find that they work best on their own, many learn a great deal from discussing aspects of the module with others. The opinions and insights that you form while discussing a question are no less valuable than those you form while reading books or listening to lectures. We assure you that there's nothing wrong in discussing assignment questions with fellow students, or other people, before you begin your work. But when you sit down to write your assignment you are expected to work alone and not to use other people's work (in its entirety or in part) as if it is your own.

### **2.3.2 Good academic practice and plagiarism**

The University's Plagiarism Statement can be found as Appendix 1 to this Handbook. Please read it carefully and follow the link to [Developing Good Academic Practice](#). The University uses text comparison software to help detect plagiarism which will check your assignments against both the work of other students and against internet sources and other published material. If you submit an assignment that contains work that is not your own without indicating this to the marker you are committing plagiarism and this is an offence under SD1.8 of the Code of Practice for Student Discipline.



### **2.3.3 Confidentiality of assignments and other assessments**

All information you give in assignments and other assessments is regarded as confidential to you, your tutor or practice assessor, the marker, and the University, and won't be divulged to anyone outside the University.

However, some programmes have additional confidentiality guidelines and data protection rules which you will be told about in the assignment guide for your module or your programme-specific information.

The assessment for some modules includes work done using collaborative tools, for example, forums, wikis or blogs. By design these tools are accessible to anyone with the relevant permissions to the website on which they are hosted and, as such, the work done in these media cannot be considered to be confidential.

In your assignments and elsewhere in your module you may be encouraged to apply the module content to your own work. This sometimes means that you may need to give information about, and occasionally to pass judgement on, the company or organisation for which you work or have worked for in the past. The University treats such information with complete confidentiality. Tutors may use it only for purposes directly connected with the teaching of the module, and may not divulge it for any other purpose during or after their service with the University.

### **2.3.4 Processing personal data as part of your studies**

Students aren't usually expected to process personal data as part of their Open University studies, but if you do need to do so (perhaps for the purposes of a project) you must obtain the agreement of your tutor or supervisor that the processing is necessary and immediately inform the Data Protection Coordinator. The address is at the end of this Handbook.

The Data Protection Coordinator will advise you about the requirements and implications of the Data Protection Act, including the security arrangements appropriate to your set of personal data. The Data Protection Coordinator will also be responsible for dealing with subject-access requests related to personal data you hold.

## **2.4 Submitting TMAs**

There are two different methods of submitting TMAs, either online via a link on your StudentHome page or on paper. Your module materials will tell you which of these methods you should use, or whether you can choose which to use. For some modules the nature of the TMAs means that it isn't possible to submit online for all of the TMAs, so you may find that you use paper for some TMAs and submit others online.

The cut-off date given in your Study Planner is the last date by which each assignment should arrive. We strongly advise you not to leave submission of your TMAs until the last minute.

If your TMA is not received on or before the cut-off date, it will not be marked and you will not get a score for it unless you have already had an extension to the cut-off date agreed. For the last TMA on your module, your tutor cannot agree an extension beyond the first day of the month in which the module ends.

If you are submitting your assignment online, you should ensure that you submit well before midday (UK local time) on the cut-off date in case you experience technical problems. However, there is a 12-hour grace period so any TMAs received before midnight on the cut-off date will still be accepted.

If you are submitting on paper, you should allow at least three days for delivery and ensure you obtain proof of posting. Don't use any form of delivery which requires a signature on receipt, and do ensure that you put sufficient postage on the envelope.

If you have difficulties submitting your assignment online using the link on your StudentHome page, you can submit by email directly to the University (not to your tutor). However, submission via StudentHome is always preferable because it guides you through the process, and receipt by the system is quicker.

For more detailed information about submitting assignments, please see the [Help Centre](#).

### **2.4.1 Submitting TMAs online**

You should note that you can only submit one file for each TMA (if you submit a second file it will overwrite the first one, unless your tutor has already downloaded it, or the cut-off date has passed). This means that if your TMA consists of more than one file you need to zip the files together. You must ensure that your submission contains all of your TMA, that you are submitting the correct version of your TMA, and that it is in the right file format. If you submit a wrong file, or an unreadable file, you will not be allowed to submit another version.

Unless your module materials tell you otherwise, your file must be no bigger than 10MB in size. If it exceeds this size, you will not be able to submit it. You can either zip the file to reduce its size, or reduce the size by, for example, converting image files to a different format.

The [Help Centre](#) gives further information about submitting TMAs online.

### **2.4.2 Partly completed TMAs**

Unless you're told otherwise, you must send in all parts of an assignment together. A part-assignment sent as a second instalment will not be marked. If you send a second instalment on paper, your tutor will return it to you with a note to say that it can't be accepted. If you submit a second instalment via the eTMA system after your tutor has marked the first, your tutor will not mark it. If you have difficulty in completing all the parts of an assignment on time, you should ask your tutor, before the cut-off date, for permission to submit the whole assignment late. You must check your assignment before sending, either on paper or electronically, as if it turns out that you have sent the wrong file, or an earlier draft, or just missed something out, you will not be allowed to resubmit.

### **2.4.3 Late submission of TMAs**

Illness or some other good reason may leave you unable to submit a TMA to arrive on or before the cut-off date. Please remember that late submission is not a right; you must obtain permission in advance. **For some assignments late submission is not permitted at all.**

If there are good reasons why you can't meet a TMA cut-off date, take the appropriate action as explained in the following list.

- If you decide not to submit the assignment at all, warn your tutor, before the cut-off date, not to expect it from you. You should carefully consider the potential impact that non submission may have on your OCAS, your module result and potentially your qualification classification. Some TMAs are compulsory or have a threshold which you need to achieve. If you fail to submit a compulsory TMA or reach a threshold you are likely to fail the module unless you can show that there were circumstances beyond your control that prevented you from satisfying the requirement. Substitution is not available for all assignments, or on all modules, and the effect of substitution is limited. Refer to Section 2.8.
- If you want permission to submit the assignment late, explain your reasons to your tutor **before** the cut-off date. Late submission will be allowed only if your tutor agrees that you have a genuine reason, that it's in your interest to submit late rather than get on with current work, and that it's still acceptable to record a score for your work. An extension of more than seven days will be authorised only in exceptional circumstances, and your tutor cannot agree to an extension of more than twenty-one days.

If you want to submit an assignment more than twenty-one days late, you must obtain permission through your Student Support Team, having first discussed the situation with your tutor.

- **no extension to the cut-off date will normally be allowed for a module's final assignment.** In exceptional circumstances, and depending on the last cut-off date, an extension may be possible, though discretion for permitting it is much more limited than for other TMAs. If you think that your circumstances are exceptional, ask your tutor as soon as possible whether an extension can be granted. No extensions to a final TMA can be given beyond the absolute cut-off dates given below. The absolute cut-off dates for final assignments for modules ending in each of these months are:

**Table 2 Absolute cut-off date for extension**

<b>Module ends</b>	<b>Absolute cut-off date for extensions</b>
January	1 January
March	1 March
April	1 April
June	1 June
July	1 July
September	1 September
October	1 October

If the final TMA cut-off date for your module falls beyond the dates above, no extension can be granted in any circumstances.

#### **2.4.4 Non-scored TMA marking and ongoing difficulties with assignment submission**

Occasionally, when it's too late to record a score that can contribute to your continuous assessment score, your tutor may still think it useful for your assignment to be marked so that you have the benefit of teaching comments.

Permission to submit a TMA more than seven days after the cut-off date will not usually be granted for more than two TMAs in a 60-credit module or one TMA in a 30-credit (or less) module.

If you are not able to submit TMAs by the cut-off dates given, or if you have fallen behind with your studies, you should consider the options provided in the University's [Deferrals and Withdrawals policy](#) which is available from the assessment section of [Essential Documents](#). You may be able to suspend your studies and rejoin a later presentation of your module, and you may be able to carry forward the assignment scores you have already achieved.

You should contact your Student Support Team if you are considering a deferral.

You should consider submitting special circumstances if you have evidence that circumstances beyond your control affected your performance in continuous assessment or prevented you from submitting all of the assignments. See section 2.9.

### **2.5 Marking of TMAs**

#### **2.5.1 TMAs submitted online (eTMAs)**

If you have submitted your TMA online, you will receive an email to your preferred email address to let you know when it has been marked and is available for you to collect. When you download your eTMA, you will also have a separate Assessment Summary (PT3) file which will contain your tutor's overall comments on the TMA. Your tutor will have added comments to your eTMA as well. You may need to change the settings on your word-processing program in order to see these comments. You are likely to get your eTMA back more quickly than if you are submitting paper TMAs.

#### **2.5.2 TMAs submitted on paper**

Your tutor will write comments on your script and on the accompanying TMA form (PT3) and send both script and form to Walton Hall. Your score is then recorded on the University's computer system, and your assignment and one copy of the TMA form (PT3) are returned to you. All this can take up to three weeks from the time you post your assignment.

#### **2.5.3 Your marked TMA**

When you get your work back you should check the scores awarded and read your tutor's comments carefully, taking note (for future assignments) of what seem to be your strengths and weaknesses. If there are comments that you don't understand, or don't agree with your tutor will be able to discuss these with you.

#### **2.5.4 Monitoring**

Assignments marked by module tutors are monitored to ensure a reasonable uniformity of marking standards and an adequate level of teaching comments. Throughout the year some

of the assignments marked by each tutor are checked by the module team. If you are submitting online this shouldn't cause any delay in returning your marked TMA. However, if you submit on paper and your assignment is selected for monitoring, it will need to be photocopied to be checked by the module team, and its return may be delayed by up to two days. The Assessment Handling Operations office (contact details are at the end of this Handbook) will be able to tell you if this has happened. If you need your tutor's comments on it to enable you to begin your next TMA, ask your tutor to send a copy of them direct to you.

These photocopies are treated as confidential and are destroyed at the end of each year.

### **2.5.5 Late return of marked TMAs**

Your tutor is expected to mark and return your TMA within 10 working days of the cut-off date. Working days do not include weekends, bank holidays in UK nations or University closure days. If you have submitted your TMA online, once your tutor has marked it, you will receive an email telling you that it is available to collect.

If you have submitted your TMA on paper, your tutor will send it to Assessment Processing and it will be returned to you within 24 hours of receipt, so you should expect to receive it back within three weeks of the cut-off date. If you have not received your marked assignment by this time, you should contact your tutor in the first instance. If you receive no response from your tutor, you should then contact your Student Support Team.

### **2.5.6 Querying a TMA score**

If you want to query the score awarded for a TMA, you must return the assignment to your tutor, stating the grounds on which you're querying the score, within fourteen days of the date of return on the TMA form (PT3). If you don't do this, the assignment can't be sent on appeal for re-marking. The query should always be sent to the tutor who marked the assignment, not to your Student Support Team, the Assessment Processing Centre, module team chair or anyone else.

If you're not satisfied with your tutor's response, you have the right to appeal. You should forward the assignment to the Student Casework Office (address at the end of this Handbook), together with the related correspondence from your tutor, the grounds for your appeal and any other relevant information, to arrive within twenty-eight days of the date of notification of your module tutor's decision. The Student Casework Office will acknowledge receipt of your documents within three days of their arrival, telling you which delegated authority of the University has been asked to reply direct to you.

Don't assume that a query or the subsequent appeal will result in an increase to your original score. Scores often remain unchanged, and they can be reduced. You may not resubmit a revised assignment to try to improve the score.

If your module does not have an examinable component and your final TMA has been marked by someone other than your tutor, to appeal against the score you should send your appeal directly to the Student Casework Office (contact details at the end of this Handbook) with a letter outlining the grounds for your appeal. You must do this within fourteen days of the return of your assignment.

For Level 1 modules with continuous assessment only, please see [Appendix 3](#)

### **2.5.7 Modules without tutors**

A small number of modules do not allocate personal tutors, but provide support through study advisers or online conferencing. If you are studying this type of module and you want to query a TMA score, you should forward the assignment to the Student Casework Office (address at the end of this Handbook), together with: a note saying that your module does not provide a personal tutor; the grounds for your appeal; and any other relevant information; to arrive within twenty-eight days of the date of notification of your TMA score. The Student Casework Office will acknowledge receipt of your documents within three days of their arrival, telling you which delegate authority of the University has been asked to reply direct to you.

### **2.5.8 Keeping copies of your TMAs**

You are advised to keep a copy of your TMAs until after you receive your module result. If you have submitted your TMAs online, these will be available for you to download until 30 days after your module has finished. At this point, your access to your TMAs will be removed. Therefore, you should ensure that you download them before the end of the 30-day period. You should also consider backing up your files in case of PC failure or file corruption. See the article on [Safe and secure computing](#) on the Help Centre for more information. As the system is regularly cleared down due to the volume of submissions, University policy does not permit the retrieval of TMAs on your behalf.

## **2.6 Submitting CMAs**

It is important to remember that a CMA must be your own work just as a TMA must be (see [Appendix 1](#)). Your module may require you to submit CMAs using a CMA form, or give you the option of completing the CMA online. Some modules use interactive CMAs (referred to as 'iCMAs'). You should read your module materials carefully to make sure you know which type of CMAs are used by your module.

### **2.6.1 Online CMAs**

If you submit your CMA online, you must make sure you have completed it by midday (UK local time) on the cut-off date given in your Study Planner. However, there is a 12-hour grace period so any CMAs received before midnight on the cut-off date will still be accepted, but we strongly recommend that you do not leave electronic submission of your CMA to the last minute as network traffic may be heavy and may delay receipt of your work by the University. We also recommend that you keep all submission receipts.

### **2.6.2 iCMAs**

You access iCMAs for your module through a link on your module website. iCMAs can be set up in a number of different ways and will either give feedback after you answer each question or provide feedback for all questions after the cut-off date. Some iCMAs let you have more than one attempt at a question but give you a lower score for second and subsequent attempts. Most iCMAs will not give you a score on completion but you will be given your score and feedback on the iCMA after the closing date. You must make sure you have completed your iCMA before midday (UK local time) on the cut-off date, and that you have clicked the 'submit' button. If you don't do this, you risk your iCMA not being accepted by the University. However, there is a 12-hour grace period so any iCMAs received before midnight on the cut-off date will still be accepted.

You will not necessarily be given exactly the same questions as other students, so if you want to query a point with your tutor remember to make a note of the question you were asked.

### 2.6.3 CMA forms

Before the first computer-marked assignment is due you'll receive a supply of CMA forms and envelopes that must be used when answering and submitting the assignments if you are submitting on paper.

The form has two parts, with instructions telling you how to fill in each. Complete both parts as instructed, using an HB pencil. Follow the printed instructions carefully for each question. Be sure to draw a firm horizontal line through the character in a cell, without going outside the boundary. If you want to change an entry, pencil in the coloured part of the cell. If you damage the surface of the form, start afresh with a new form. Don't skip a question – if you can't answer it, leave its answer cells blank and pencil through the '?' cell. If you feel that the question is unsound pencil across cell 'U' as well as the answer you believe to be correct. You would not be penalised for selecting 'U'.

Before sending in your CMA form, check carefully that:

- you haven't made an error in transferring your answers from the assignment booklet to the CMA form;
- you've completed all of Part 1 of the form correctly by writing your name, assignment number etc. in the left-hand box, and that you've correctly recorded your personal identifier and assignment number by pencilling through the cells in the other two sections in Part 1. Errors in this part of the form will make the document reader reject your form, causing delay in recording your assignment score and sending it to you.

Carefully fold the form inward, along the dotted line, put it in the envelope provided, and write your name and personal identifier on the flap of the envelope.

### 2.6.4 Sending in your CMAs

You should send your CMAs to Assessment Processing at Walton Hall, not to your tutor. Use the envelopes provided. The cut-off date given in the Study Planner for your module is the last date by which your CMA must reach Assessment Processing. It will not be marked if it arrives after this date. **No extensions are allowed for CMAs so please don't ask your tutor for an extension.** Don't send in a CMA to arrive earlier than two weeks before the cut-off date, because (a) the computer won't be set up to mark it, and (b) there may be an amendment to the assignment published in a Stop Press notice.

You are strongly advised to:

- post your CMA at least three days before the cut-off date
- use first-class post
- where possible, obtain proof of posting (available free from post offices in the UK)
- keep a copy of your CMA.

If you are studying outside the UK, you should consider sending your CMA by registered post or include a statement of the date sent so that, if necessary, it can be checked against the postmark. For technical reasons we can't accept faxed CMAs for marking.

### **2.6.5 Late submission or late receipt of CMAs**

CMAs that reach the University after the cut-off date will not be marked, both for technical reasons and because model answers or other information about the CMA may have already been sent out to other students. If you were not able to submit a CMA on time because of serious special circumstances, you should consider submitting special circumstances information to the Module Result Panel, see Section 2.9.

If you have proof that you sent it by first-class post before the cut-off date, or if you have your submission receipt showing that your online CMA or iCMA was submitted before midnight (UK time), you should write to the Manager, Assessment Processing and ask for it to be marked. The address is at the end of this Handbook. Enclose your proof of posting keeping a copy for yourself. If we do not already hold your completed CMA, you will need to complete a new form duplicating your original responses.

## **2.7 Marking CMAs**

If you submitted your CMA on paper, you will be sent a computer-generated feedback letter once it has been marked. For a formative assignment, it will be produced as soon as possible after the CMA reaches the University; for a summative assignment the letter will be produced after the cut-off date. You should receive it within ten days of the CMA's cut-off date. The letter will show the score recorded for you and a table giving the distribution of scores for all the students who submitted the assignment. At the discretion of the module team there may also be information about individual questions, such as how many correct, partially correct or incorrect answers you gave, and a table of correct responses for all questions, showing which you got wrong.

If you submitted your CMA electronically, your score and feedback should be available on StudentHome (unless it forms part of the end-of-module assessment in which case feedback will be provided on paper only). For some iCMAs feedback is given on completion of each question. For others, you may be given access to the set of correct answers after the cut-off date.

### **2.7.1 Non-receipt of CMA scores**

If you don't receive your CMA score within ten days of the cut-off date, or if you want to query your score, you should email the Manager, Assessment Processing or, if you prefer, you may write to or telephone the CMA Team (contact addresses and phone numbers can be found at the end of this Handbook). If you want to clarify any academic aspect of your CMA, ask your tutor.

## **2.8 Substitution**

All your summative assignments are used for assessment, so you get credit for each one you submit and your overall continuous assessment (OCAS) score is always calculated on the basis of the weighted average of all the summative assignments on the module, not simply the average of those you complete. It is therefore in your interest to send in work for every assignment. But sometimes submission may not be possible, or you may not be able to



complete all the assignments to your usual standard, perhaps because of illness or some other good reason.

So as to reduce the impact of a dip in assignment scores and to encourage you to attempt all the assignments, some modules allow your original score for a set number (published in advance) of their summative assignments to be replaced (or 'substituted') by a higher score derived from your assessment scores throughout the module.

Certain assignments that are considered especially important are not eligible for substitution and not all modules allow substitution. The summary of the module assessment strategy available via your StudentHome module page will tell you whether your module allows it or not, and to which assignments it can apply. Substitution only takes place if it's to your advantage and is applied automatically if your module allows it. There's no need to ask to have scores substituted.

It is important to note that the calculation of the substitution score(s) is not simply an average of the scores achieved for your other assignments. The calculation we use is intended to encourage you to submit all assignments. Submitting part of an assignment and achieving a low score will still benefit your OCAS more than not submitting the assignment at all. This may also in turn affect your final module result and potentially the classification of your final qualification. You should consider this carefully before deciding not to submit a substitutable assignment.

If you have had an assignment score reduced because of a disciplinary penalty, this assignment will not be eligible for substitution.

**For more information about how substitution works please see [Appendix 2](#).**

## **2.9 Special circumstances affecting continuous assessment**

If any special circumstance has **seriously** affected your performance in continuous assessment (including CMAs or residential school work if your module has any), you can ask for the Module Result Panel to be told about it when they determine your final module result.

This arrangement is intended to make MRPs aware of matters of a **serious** nature that interfered with your ability to study over a total period of **four weeks or more**. The four main categories of special circumstance information that the University considers serious are:

- serious disruption of studies caused by the University (such as continual delay in receiving module materials, exceptionally late return of tutor-marked assignments)
- serious and prolonged illness (yourself or a member of your immediate family)
- serious disruption of personal life (such as bereavement)
- difficulties caused by a disability or additional requirement, for which you feel that any adjustments made by the University were not appropriate

The Module Result Panel will use the information only to your benefit, usually if your result is borderline. Only limited weight can be given to it. MRPs have generally given no weight to such circumstances as moving house, pressure of work, change of employment or normal pregnancies. So before you decide to go ahead, please consider carefully how far your special circumstances really have affected your performance in continuous assessment.

You should note that Module Result Panels will only consider information that is submitted within the deadlines outlined below and prior to your module result being determined. **You cannot wait until you receive your module result and then decide to ask for special circumstances to be taken into account retrospectively.**

### **2.9.1 To report special circumstances relating to continuous assessment**

Special Circumstances relating to continuous assessment should be reported to the University using the [webform](#).

You must complete the online process of notifying the University of your Special Circumstances plus relevant third party evidence **no later than 14 days** after the published cut off for your final piece of continuous assessment (i.e. TMA or CMA, whichever is later). Submissions received outside of these timeframes will not be considered unless you can provide evidence that you were prevented from meeting the deadline by circumstances outside of your control. Supporting evidence can either be submitted electronically or in hardcopy as instructed by the online submission tool.

If you want to submit special circumstances relating to continuous assessment, you must ensure that you meet the above deadline, even if you are applying for postponement of the exam.

### **2.9.2 If you have a disability or additional requirements**

If you think that your disability, specific learning difficulty or medical condition has seriously disadvantaged you in your continuous assessment, it's in your own interest to complete a special circumstances submission.

Information about your condition that you've given the University or your tutor will not be brought to the attention of the Module Result Panel. The only information they will have will be that submitted using the special circumstances process.

### **2.10 Posting assignments on websites**

Posting your own assignments and/or tutor comments on an Open University forum or on any other website is not allowed unless you are required to do so as part of your assignment or you have received written permission from the Module Team Chair. Advertising assignments for sale is also not allowed (see Good academic practice and plagiarism in Section 2.3.2., Appendix 1 and the [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#)).

## **Section 3 End-of-module assessment tasks**

### **3.1 Examinable components**

The examinable component may be an exam, it may be a piece of work such as a dissertation, a project or portfolio, or it may include both an exam and other work. It may be written or oral. To pass the module, or to achieve a particular grade of pass, you must usually attain minimum scores on **both** the examinable component **and** the continuous assessment elements. Your result is **not** determined by an averaging of the two components. More information may be available on your module website.

If you do not participate in the examinable component by attending the exam or submitting the end-of-module assessment, you will not be able to pass the module. You will not be offered another opportunity to complete the module unless you have made formal arrangements to defer completion of your module (see section 1.6) or have had a postponement of your exam or end-of-module assessment formally approved by the University (see Section 3.3 to 3.7).

If you do not reach a pass standard in the examinable component element of the assessment, but have satisfied the other module requirements, including successful completion of continuous assessment and any residential school requirement, you will normally be offered one opportunity to resit or resubmit the examinable component. For postgraduate modules, you will also need to have met a minimum score in the examinable component. See section 4.6 Resits and resubmissions.

## **3.2 Exams**

If your module has an exam, this will usually be hand-written and will usually last three hours. The question paper will almost always be an unseen one, but you'll receive a specimen paper with your module materials so that you can familiarise yourself with the appearance of the question paper, what you'll be asked to do and the kind of questions you're likely to find. For some modules you may be able to get copies of past exam papers from the Open University Students Association (OUSA). Contact details are at the end of this Handbook.

Exam periods are the dates between which the University holds its exams. For any given presentation of a module, the exam takes place in the exam period immediately after the formal teaching has ended. If you are currently studying a module and are unsure when the exam is going to take place, you can find information on the [Help Centre](#).

You will receive notification of your exam centre allocation on StudentHome before your exam. We will email you to tell you when these details are available. If you don't have a registered email address we will send you the details in a letter. If you haven't been told your allocation by 6 weeks before the exam (or 2 weeks before for resits), or if you have any queries about your exam allocation, contact your Student Support Team. If you are taking your exam outside the UK please see Section 3.3.8.

## **3.3 Exam arrangements**

### **3.3.1 Exam dates**

The exam period applicable to your module will be published on the [Help Centre](#) before the start of each module presentation. You should not plan any holiday or other commitments that coincide with this period. If you are unsure when your exam will take place you can also find this information on your StudentHome page.

### **3.3.2 Exam centres and allocation**

We will contact you before your exam with details of your centre allocation and the Exam Arrangements booklet. If you want to change to another centre you should contact your Student Support Team as soon as you receive the details of your exam. The list of [available exam locations](#) and [deadlines for asking to change](#) are on the Help Centre. We can only allocate you to a different exam centre if you contact us by the deadline date. If you're

changing your address, you must contact your Student Support Team immediately you know your new address and ask for reallocation.

It's your responsibility to make sure that you attend the right session and the right centre. Misreading your allocation won't entitle you to another exam opportunity or to have extra time if you arrive late.

### **3.3.3 If you have a disability**

If you have declared a disability to the University, we will automatically provide you with a link to information about adjustments to exam arrangements. We will ask you to complete a [request form for exam arrangements](#) to tell us if you need any additional arrangements for you to be able to take your exam. You must ensure that you complete this form within the given deadline. If you do not do so, we may not be able to make the arrangements you require, and you may need to attend a main exam centre or your exam may need to be delayed, which could affect the planning of your chosen qualification. Our website has lots of information on [services for disabled students](#).

Additional exam arrangements will be agreed on the basis of evidence of need, and you may not be able to have all the arrangements you ask for. If you feel you have grounds for appeal about the arrangements made for your exam, you must write to the Student Casework Office within twenty-one days from the date of the reply to your original request, stating the grounds for your appeal.

When the Module Result Panel meets to award your results, it will have brief factual details of any additional arrangements we have made for your exam. The script marker is not made aware of any disability or additional requirements that you may have reported to the University, nor of any additional arrangements put in place for you. This is so that the Panel has a baseline and independent assessment of the academic merit of the script as presented.

### **3.3.4 If you're ill or have additional requirements**

If you're ill at the time of the exam or you have additional requirements, it may be possible to take your exam at home or in hospital. If you have caring responsibilities (for example, breastfeeding a newborn baby or caring for a disabled dependant) that make it difficult or impossible for you to take your exam at an exam centre, you may be able to take your exam at home. Please see the Help Centre for more information about [caring responsibilities / pregnancy and your exam](#) and [exam arrangements if you are ill or injured](#).

Please consult your Student Support Team to discuss whether or not additional arrangements can be made for you or whether other arrangements such as deferral or postponement of your exam may be appropriate. Contact should be made as soon as possible, or no later than 6 weeks before the exam, so that options can be discussed with you in good time.

If your personal circumstances (such as a medical condition) prevent you from taking the exam in ordinary conditions, we may be able to adapt aspects of it to suit your needs. Your Student Support Team can give you a Meeting Your Assessment Needs booklet and a facility request form to complete and return.

Additional exam arrangements will be agreed on the basis of evidence of need, and you may not be able to have all the arrangements you ask for. If you feel you have grounds for appeal about the arrangements made for your exam, you can find out more information about how to do this in the University's [Complaints and Appeals](#) procedure.

### 3.3.5 Exam rules

When you receive your exam allocation you'll also receive details of the [Exam Arrangements](#) booklet that explains how the exam will be conducted and tells you what materials you'll need and what you'll be allowed to take into the exam room. You must read both the **general** and the **module** exam rules that apply to your module carefully and be sure to abide by them.

### 3.3.6 Identification

You must bring an acceptable form of identification (ID) with you to the exam centre.

**Acceptable forms of identification are:**

- photo driving licence
- passport
- national identity card
- Irish Public Services Card

If you do not have one of the above, you can use photographic identification, but this **must be** accompanied by a **debit or credit card** as proof of signature. Acceptable forms of photo ID are:

- CitizenCard
- Validate UK card
- Blue Badge permit
- Scottish National Entitlement Card
- Northern Ireland Electoral Identity Card

**No form of photographic identification is acceptable without accompanying proof of signature.**

If you are a member of the UK forces sitting your exam within a BFPO base, your military ID will be accepted as proof of identity.

It is **vital** that you provide identification in the required format at the start of your exam. The [Exam Arrangements booklet](#) contains up to date information about any additional documents which will be accepted. Don't forget to take it with you because if you haven't got identification **your result can't be released** until your identity has been confirmed. Your invigilator will ask you to complete a Candidate Identity Certificate statement at the exam then you might also need to take valid ID to a solicitor or notary for verification, which you'll have to pay for. We'll contact you after the exam to confirm if you need to visit a solicitor or notary for ID verification and the deadline for doing this. Please note that even if you provide identification soon after the exam has taken place your result may still be delayed.

There may be occasions at exams when a student wearing a full or partial face/head covering will be required to remove such items of clothing in order to verify their identity against the photo ID they are required to bring. This will be done in a courteous and appropriate manner in private and by a person of the same sex. For example if you are a Muslim woman wearing a hijab with a veil covering your face your identity will be checked by a female invigilator in a private room after the exam.

### 3.3.7 Exam scripts

Like many UK Universities, The Open University presents exam scripts to script markers anonymously. Candidates' names are removed from the scripts, which are then identified throughout the marking process by a barcode.

This doesn't apply to projects, dissertations or other kinds of examinable work, which have different marking arrangements.

### 3.3.8 Exams outside the UK

A list of established exam centres for each exam period can be found on the [Help Centre](#).

If you live outside the UK, Republic of Ireland or Central Europe and are unable to attend one of the listed established centres, you can apply for an exam at an alternative venue providing your completed request form and fee are received before the deadline shown via the link below.

We will do our best to arrange an exam within a reasonable travelling distance. We cannot guarantee this service, however, and also reserve the right to refuse or withdraw an exam at a non-established centre if the arrangements fall short of the required standard.

**If you want to take an exam at a non-established centre outside the UK, please read the information on the [Help Centre](#). This page has a downloadable copy of the form which needs to be completed, the deadline for application, and details of the non-refundable fee which is payable for each exam request.**

Even if you've taken such exams before, you must make a separate application for each exam period and each exam you are taking within that period. If you are offered a resit exam, we will let you know the deadline for the application for your resit.

The key deadline dates for requesting exams outside the UK are available on the [Help Centre](#).

We are unable to deal with late requests because of the time it takes to make the arrangements. If you're posted abroad at very short notice and can't meet the date, you can either:

- Defer completion of your study to the next taught presentation of the module. Please refer to the University's Deferrals and Withdrawals policy available from the [Assessment Section of Essential Documents](#) for more information
- Apply to postpone your exam to the next available exam period on a discretionary basis. You will be required to provide third party documentary evidence to support a discretionary claim. Your [Exam Arrangements booklet](#) will provide you with full details of how to make an application for discretionary postponement.

### 3.4 Absence from exams

If you fail to attend the exam and do not contact the University to arrange a formal deferral or postponement, you will be issued with a Fail: No Resit/No Resubmission module result. You will not be allowed another opportunity to complete the exam, and will not be eligible to repeat study of the module at a reduced fee.

#### 3.4.1 Deferral

For the majority of modules offered by the University, you can choose to defer completion of your module. If you want to delay sitting your exam, you may be able to deregister and then register on the next available presentation to complete your module. This process is called deferral. If you defer, you may be able to carry the assignment scores you have already completed over to your deferred presentation. If you carry scores forward, we refer to this as Assessment Banking. You may apply for deferral at any point up to the last working day before the date of the exam for your module. You cannot apply for a deferral if you have already been granted a previous deferral or postponement on the same module, or if you are taking a resit exam.

See our website for more information about the [University's Deferral and Withdrawal policy and Assessment Banking](#).

You will need to receive, and acknowledge that you have received, individual advice before a deferral can be approved, so you must contact your Student Support Team if you are considering a deferral.

#### 3.4.2 Discretionary Postponement

If you cannot attend the exam due to circumstances beyond your control, such as illness or bereavement, you may be permitted to postpone the exam to the next opportunity for your module. You will need to provide third party documentary evidence of the circumstances which are preventing you from attending. This process is called Discretionary Postponement.

If you want to apply for a postponed exam you can do this using the [webform](#).

To be eligible for postponement you **must** contact the University before midnight (UK local time) on the working day following your exam or provide evidence that you were prevented from meeting this deadline by circumstances outside of your control. Within 14 days of making your request you must provide third party documentary evidence confirming the reason for being unable to attend, unless there is a valid reason why this timescale cannot be met.

Applications cannot be accepted by telephone. If you require advice or guidance about making a request for postponement, you should contact your Student Support Team.

Applications which are not supported by independent documentary evidence confirming that you were unable to attend the exam for the reason stated will not be agreed. If you were ill, there must be a medical certificate for the period concerned, signed by a certified medical practitioner. If your reason was a business commitment, your employer must supply a letter on headed paper to confirm your unavailability. Supporting evidence can either be submitted electronically or in hardcopy as instructed by the online submission tool.

You must apply for a postponed exam as soon as you are aware that you are unable to attend the exam, and before midnight (UK local time) on the day following your exam. We will respond to you with a decision as quickly as possible and will try to ensure that you receive a response before the date of your exam. However, this may not always be possible if you have made your request immediately before the date of your exam, or if there are a very high number of applications received. This is because the discretionary postponement process is not an automatic one; requests need to be individually considered and, depending on the circumstances, may need to be considered by the University's Assessment Exceptions Group.

If you do not attend the exam and you have not had an application for postponement formally agreed in advance, you must consider the possibility that your application will not be approved. If this happens, you will normally receive a Fail: Absent module result and have to re-take the whole module in order to obtain credit.

You must complete your module within 13 months of the original exam opportunity. So, if you postpone your exam and then fail it, you will not normally be eligible for a resit exam if that exam falls more than 13 months after the original exam opportunity. You should check with your Student Support Team if you are unsure how this may affect your study.

### **3.4.3 Elective Postponement**

If you are offered a resit which is scheduled within twelve to sixteen weeks of your original exam period, you can elect to postpone this 'early' resit exam to the next available opportunity. See Section 4.6 Resits and Resubmissions.

## **3.5 Special Circumstances relating to exams**

### **3.5.1 Special circumstances affecting exams**

If you believe that your exam performance was affected by a serious matter that occurred during the exam or in the twenty-one days immediately before it, you can ask us to take that into account when your module result is determined.

You should report only circumstances of a **serious** nature, occurring in the three weeks up to and including your exam date. The four main categories of special circumstance that the University considers serious are:

- the death or critical illness of a dependant or close relative
- a severely debilitating illness during most of the revision period or the exam
- the loss, due to circumstances beyond your control, of more than 10 minutes of exam time (you should also have brought this to the attention of the invigilator so that it is included in the report of events and conditions during the exam)
- difficulties caused by a disability or additional requirement, for which you feel that the University's adjustments were not appropriate.

This information will be used only to your benefit, but the Module Result Panel can give only limited weight to it.



You should only report special circumstances relating to the examinable component if you have attended the exam. The form cannot be used to report absence or to request formal deferral or postponement.

You must decide at the time of the exam if you intend to submit special circumstances information and notify the University within the timescales below. You should note that Module Result Panels will only consider information that is submitted within the deadlines outlined below and prior to your module result being determined. **You cannot wait until you receive your module result and then decide to ask for special circumstances to be taken into account retrospectively.**

Special Circumstances relating to exams must be submitted for each module. If you are subsequently offered a resit opportunity and are still affected by similar circumstances you must submit another special circumstances form for the exam. The information in an exam-related special circumstances form does not roll over to a resit or other module exams.

### **3.5.2 Reporting special circumstances**

Special Circumstances relating to your exam should be reported to the University using the [webform](#).

You must complete the online process notifying the University of your special circumstances before midnight (UK local time) on the day following your exam. Supporting evidence must then be submitted to the University within 14 days of your special circumstances submission. Submissions received outside of these timeframes will not be considered unless you can provide evidence that you were prevented from meeting the deadline by circumstances outside of your control. Supporting evidence can either be submitted electronically or in hardcopy as instructed by the webform.

You must submit special circumstances yourself – information submitted by tutors or invigilators won't be accepted.

If serious circumstances (such as hospitalisation immediately after the exam) prevent you from notifying the University of your special circumstances within the stipulated deadline and/or submitting evidence within fourteen days, it may be accepted, at the University's discretion if you provide appropriate evidence of the reasons for the delay. If your reasons for late submission are not acceptable or supported by evidence, or if the Module Result Panel has already held its award meeting, they will not be accepted. You will be notified of this in writing.

The special circumstances information you provide should be supported by evidence such as a medical certificate, otherwise it may not be considered. If you submit evidence by post, you must keep proof of posting. If you submit it electronically you should keep a copy of the email sent.

### **3.5.3 If you have a disability or additional requirements**

If you think that extra time or other arrangements the University made for your exam haven't adequately compensated for your disability, specific learning difficulty or medical condition, you should ensure that you submit special circumstances explaining this. The Module Result Panel will be informed of any special arrangements that have been made for you. However, information about your condition that you've given the University or your tutor will not be

brought to the attention of the Module Result Panel. The only information they will have will be that submitted using the special circumstances process.

### **3.5.4 Special circumstances and your module result**

If you submit Special Circumstances at the appropriate time, this will be reported on your result notification. In some cases, especially if you are completing an 'early' resit, your result may need to be delayed whilst your special circumstances information is received and considered.

## **3.6 Modules with other examinable work**

If your module requires you to submit a piece of examinable work or EMA in place of, or as well as, an exam, it will have a published cut-off date by which it must reach the University. You'll be told the arrangements for submitting it, and a link to the booklet [Submitting Examinable Work](#) will be sent to you about four to six weeks before your submission date. You should read the booklet carefully – it will give you full details of how to submit your work, what to do if special circumstances have affected it, or what to do if you cannot submit the work before the cut-off date.

### **3.6.1 Keeping copies of your EMAs**

You are advised to keep a copy of your EMA until after you receive your module result. If you have submitted your EMA online, these cannot be accessed again after the cut-off date. You should also consider backing up your files in case of PC failure or file corruption. As the system is regularly cleared down due to the volume of submissions, University policy does not permit the retrieval of EMAs on your behalf.

## **3.7 Late submission of examinable work**

Your module materials and StudentHome will tell you the date by which your examinable work must be received by the University. The formal deadline on this cut-off date is noon (UK local time). The University operates a 12 hour grace period, which means that work received before midnight (UK local time) on the published submission date will be considered to have been received on time.

Examinable work submitted up to 24 hours late (00.00 to 23.59) will be accepted for marking. As a penalty, the task score will be reduced by 10% points, or to bare pass level, whichever gives the higher score. As an example, where the pass level is 40, a score of 59 would become 49, 45 would become 40, and a score of 35 would remain unchanged. If you have submitted late, you may submit Special Circumstances, see section 3.5. In some cases, especially if you are completing an 'early' resubmission, your result may need to be delayed whilst your late submission and/or special circumstances information is received and considered.

You should refer to the [Submitting Examinable Work](#) booklet for further details.

Examinable work received after the 24-hour penalty period will not be accepted for marking, and you will be considered to have not submitted.

### **3.8 Non-submission of examinable work**

If you fail to submit any examinable work before either the cut-off date or the end of the 24-hour penalty period and do not contact the University to arrange a formal deferral or postponement, you will be issued with a Fail: No Resit/No Resubmission module result. You will not be allowed another opportunity to submit your EMA, and will not be eligible to repeat study of the module at a reduced fee.

#### **3.8.1 Deferral**

For the majority of modules offered by the University, you can choose to defer completion of your module. If you want to delay submitting your EMA, you may be able to deregister and then register on the next available presentation to complete your module. This process is called deferral. If you defer, you may be able to carry the assignment scores you have already completed over to your deferred presentation. If you carry scores forward, we refer to this as Assessment Banking. You may apply for deferral at any point up to the last working day before the EMA submission date for your module. You cannot apply for deferral if you have already been granted a previous deferral or postponement on the same module, or if you are resubmitting the EMA.

Please see our website for more information about [the University's Deferral and Withdrawal policy and Assessment Banking](#).

You will need to receive, and acknowledge that you have received, individual advice before a deferral can be approved, so you must contact your Student Support Team if you are considering deferral.

#### **3.8.2 Discretionary postponement**

If you cannot make a late or even partial submission of examinable work due to circumstances beyond your control, such as illness or bereavement, you may be permitted to postpone your submission to the next opportunity for your module. You will need to provide third party documentary evidence of the circumstances which are preventing you from submitting. This process is called Discretionary Postponement.

If you want to apply for a postponed submission you can do this using the [webform](#).

To be eligible for a postponement you must contact the University before midnight (UK local time) on the working day following your examinable work submission cut-off date or provide evidence that you were prevented from meeting this deadline by circumstances outside of your control. Please see section 6.4 of the [Submitting Examinable Work booklet](#) for further information about the criteria for discretionary postponement. Within 14 days of your postponement request you must provide third party documentary evidence confirming the reason for being unable to submit within stipulated deadlines, unless there is a valid reason why this timescale cannot be met.

If you were ill, this must be a medical certificate for the period concerned, signed by a certified medical practitioner. In cases of bereavement an original of a death certificate is not required, a photocopy is acceptable. In circumstances where a death certificate is not available an obituary notice or funeral service card is acceptable. Applications which are not supported by independent documentary evidence confirming that you were unable to submit your examinable work for the reason stated will not be agreed

You must apply for a postponed EMA as soon as you are aware that you are unable to submit your examinable work, and before midnight (UK local time) on the day following your published EMA submission date. We will respond to you with a decision as quickly as possible and will try to ensure that you receive a response before your EMA cut-off date. However, this may not always be possible if you have made your request immediately before the EMA cut-off, or if there are a very high number of applications received. This is because the discretionary postponement process is not an automatic one; requests need to be individually considered and, depending on the circumstances, may need to be considered by the University's Assessment Exceptions Group.

Applications cannot be accepted by telephone. If you require advice or guidance about making a request for postponement, you should contact your Student Support Team.

If you do not submit any examinable work and you have not had an application for postponement formally agreed in advance, you must consider the possibility that your application will not be approved. If this happens, you will normally receive a Fail: No Resit/No Resubmission module result and will have to retake the whole module in order to obtain credit.

### **3.8.3 Elective postponement**

If you are offered a resubmission which is scheduled within twelve to sixteen weeks of your original submission date, you can elect to postpone this 'early' resubmission to the next available opportunity (see section 4.6.2).

## **3.9 Special circumstances relating to other examinable work**

### **3.9.1 Special circumstances affecting other examinable work**

If your module's examinable component includes (or consists of) work other than an exam and some serious circumstance affected you in the three weeks before the cut-off date, you can ask us to take it into account when your module result is determined.

You should report only circumstances of a **serious** nature, occurring in the three weeks up to and including your cut-off date. Categories of special circumstance that the University considers serious are:

- the death or critical illness of a dependant or close relative close to the submission date
- a severely debilitating illness
- difficulties caused by a disability or additional requirement, for which you feel that the University's adjustments were not appropriate.

This information will be used only to your benefit, but the Module Result Panel can give only limited weight to it.

You should only report special circumstances if you have submitted your end-of-module assessment. **The form cannot be used to report an absence or to request a formal deferral or postponement.** It is especially important that you submit special circumstances within the deadlines outlined below if you have only been able to make a partial submission.

You must decide at the time of submission of your work if you intend to submit special circumstances information and notify the University within the timescales below. You should note that Module Result Panels will only consider information that is submitted within the deadlines outlined below and prior to your module result being determined. **You cannot wait until you receive your module result and then decide to ask for special circumstances to be taken into account retrospectively.**

Special Circumstances relating to examinable work must be submitted for each module. If you are subsequently offered a resubmission opportunity and are still affected by similar circumstances you must submit another special circumstances form for the examinable work. The information in an examinable work-related special circumstances form does not roll over to a resubmission or other module submissions.

### **3.9.2 Reporting special circumstances**

Special Circumstances relating to your examinable work submission should be reported to the University using the [webform](#).

You must complete the online process notifying the University of your Special Circumstances before midnight (UK local time) on the day following your examinable work submission cut-off date. Supporting evidence must then be submitted to the University within 14 days of your special circumstances submission. Submissions received outside of these timeframes will not be considered unless you can provide evidence that you were prevented from meeting the deadline by circumstances outside of your control. Supporting evidence can either be submitted electronically or in hardcopy as instructed by the webform.

You must submit special circumstances yourself – information submitted by tutors won't be accepted.

If serious circumstances (such as hospitalisation immediately after your submission) prevent you from notifying the University of your special circumstances within the stipulated deadlines and/or evidence within fourteen days, it may be accepted, at the University's discretion if you provide appropriate evidence of the reasons for the delay. If your reasons for late submission are not acceptable or supported by evidence, or if the Module Result Panel has already held its award meeting, they will not be accepted and you will be notified of this in writing.

The special circumstances information you provide should be supported by evidence such as a medical certificate, otherwise it may not be considered. If it is submitted by post, you must also obtain and keep proof of posting.

### **3.9.3 If you have a disability or additional requirements**

If you think that your preparation of your end-of-module assessment has been affected by your disability, specific learning difficulty or medical condition, you should ensure that you submit special circumstances.

Information about your condition that you've given the University or your tutor will not be brought to the attention of the Module Result Panel. The only information they will have will be that submitted via special circumstances.

### 3.9.4 Special circumstances and your module result

If you submit Special Circumstances, this will be reported on your result notification. In some cases, especially if you are completing an 'early' resubmission, your result may need to be pending or delayed whilst your special circumstances information is received and considered.

## Section 4 Module results

### 4.1 Assessment strategies

The assessment tasks set for students studying Open University modules are usually organised into two assessment components – these are the continuous assessment component, discussed in Section 2, Assignments, and an examinable component, explained in Section 3, End-of-module assessment tasks. Your performance in these two components is used in the determination of your overall result.

### 4.2 Determining results

The following information is taken into account in the determination of your module result:

- your assessment record
- your overall continuous assessment score (OCAS)
- your overall examinable component score (OES)
- the weighted average of OCAS and OES (Rank)
- your performance in any compulsory activities (e.g. residential school and assignments with thresholds)
- information about any special circumstances that have seriously affected your performance
- University policy on assessment and the determination of results including the assessment strategy for the module (you can find the assessment strategy for your module on the module website)

#### 4.2.1 Modules with two summative components of assessment

In deciding module results the Module Result Panel will establish thresholds for performance levels in three elements for each result i.e. threshold values in OCAS and OES and in the overall weighted average of OCAS and OES (called 'rank'). Your result will be that for which your OCAS, OES and overall weighted average score meet all three threshold performance levels. N.B. Your module result will **not** be determined solely on the basis of your overall weighted average score.

You must achieve a score of at least 40 for your continuous assessment and at least 40 for your examinable component to guarantee a pass result. You must also pass any threshold on any part of the assessment that is specified in your module rules (see Thresholds in Section 4.4).

#### **4.2.2 Modules with one summative component of assessment**

Within this group of modules there are some which have a formative component in addition to the summative one. Where this is the case, you need to achieve a specified threshold level of performance in the formative component as well as the summative one to be considered for a pass result although your performance in the formative component will not otherwise contribute to the grade of pass. You will be informed of the thresholds that apply in the assessment strategy summary available via your StudentHome module page.

Results are determined from the (weighted) average of all the summatively assessed work, at least one part of which will be available for scrutiny by the Module Result Panel at its Award meeting. Some modules may require a minimum score in excess of 40. If this applies to your module it will be stated in the assessment strategy summary available via your StudentHome module page.

On some modules students who fail can be allowed to resubmit part of the assessment (usually the final assignment). To enable our systems to handle such modules, values for two components, OCAS and OES, are calculated for each student to allow us to check for eligibility to resubmit. While these values will be quoted when we issue module results, apart from this check, module results will be based on the overall weighted average score, as if the assessment only had one component.

#### **4.2.3 Modules with continuous assessment only**

For Level 1 modules with no exam and no end-of-module assessment (EMA) please refer to Appendix 3.

#### **4.2.4 Results for Resits/Resubmissions**

Module results following a resit or a resubmission are normally capped at the lowest grade of pass. See section 4.6.4.

### **4.3 Module Result Panels**

Each module has a Module Result Panel (MRP) that is responsible for recommending module results for individual students. The MRPs use their academic judgement to decide whether or not each student has reached the standard required to be awarded credit for the module.

Each MRP comprises a Chair (usually the Chair of the module team) and internal examiners (usually members of the module team).

The MRP will have each student's:

- individual summative and formative assignment scores
- overall continuous assessment score (OCAS) before and after substitution (explained in Section 2.8 Substitution)
- overall examinable component score (OES) with individual question scores and project scores
- Rank score, showing the weighted average of OCAS and OES

- residential school or Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) information, if applicable.

The MRP will also have:

- all the exam scripts or other examinable work such as EMAs and projects
- information students have provided about special circumstances that affected their work
- various statistical analyses
- information about any additional arrangements made for the exam.

MRPs work within policy approved by Senate (our authority for academic matters), which sets the upper and lower boundaries for each grade (see Section 4.5, Result grades). MRPs have limited discretion to set the lower boundary for each grade of pass below that shown in the tables. This is entirely a matter for the MRP, within the policy approved by Senate, and will remain confidential to it.

Module results are determined by Module Result Panels and are recommended to a 'Cluster' Examination and Assessment Board (Cluster EAB). External Examiners attend the Cluster EAB. External Examiners are senior academics from outside the University, usually from another university or higher education institution. The Cluster EABs have a quality assurance role in reviewing and confirming the standards between modules and of the module result process as a whole.

## **4.4 Your result**

### **4.4.1 Modules with two components of assessment**

Your scores for continuous assessment and for examinable work will place you in one of the result areas shown in the tables in Section 4.5.

Whatever weighting your module gives to each assessment component in the calculation of the Rank score, you must reach the scores shown in Section 4.5 in **both** OES and OCAS to guarantee a pass at that grade.

### **4.4.2 Modules with one component of summative assessment**

Your module result will be determined from the (weighted) average of all the summatively assessed work, as shown in Section 4.2.

### **4.4.3 Special circumstances**

If your scores are lower than those shown for a grade in Section 4.5 Result grades, you might still be awarded a higher result grade if you've given evidence of compelling special circumstances that significantly affected your performance (as explained in Sections 2.9, 3.5 and 3.9). But the Module Result Panel can give only limited weight to special circumstances and you should not assume that your grade will be improved by submitting them.

When considering special circumstances, the Panel will not make any changes to the scores awarded to you, but may award a higher result grade.

This consideration will take place before your module result is finalised and reported to you. You cannot ask to have a module result reconsidered on this basis.



If you have not been awarded a pass result, but are eligible for a resit or resubmission, the Module Result Panel may decide to award a non-capped resit/resubmission result on the basis of your special circumstances. See Section 4.6 Resits and resubmissions.

Your module result notification will indicate whether special circumstances were presented to the Module Result Panel.

#### 4.4.4 Thresholds

As well as the scores shown in Section 4.5, Result grades, some modules also require you to achieve a certain score (a 'threshold') for some element(s) of the assessment in order to achieve a pass. It is therefore possible to fail such modules even if your scores are above those shown in Section 4.5. The assessment strategy summary available via your StudentHome module page will tell you if thresholds apply to your module.

#### 4.4.5 Residential school attendance

Some modules include satisfactory residential school participation or satisfactory participation in an Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) among the requirements for a pass. The module material will tell you about this.

#### 4.4.6 Resits and Resubmissions

Module results following a resit or a resubmission are normally capped at the lowest grade of pass. See Section 4.6.4.

### 4.5 Result grades

Different modules award different grades of pass. Modules may award a Pass grade only; Distinction and Pass; Distinction, Merit and Pass; or graded credit of pass grades 1, 2, 3 and 4. You can check which grades of pass are awarded for each module in [Appendix 4](#) (see separate document).

If you are studying for a degree or other qualification, your module result grades will be used to determine your final classification or grade of this award. You can access information about how classification is determined from the [Help Centre](#).

Some modules require you to reach additional thresholds for some elements of the assessment (see section 4.4). If this applies to your module, you will be told about this in your module materials and in the assessment strategy summary available via your StudentHome module page.

If you are awarded a pass grade on a resit or resubmission of a module you have previously failed, your result will normally be capped at the lowest level of pass. See Section 4.6.4 Result capping.

The following tables show the score requirements for each result grade for each type of module:

**Table 3 Pass only**

	OES		OCAS
Pass	40	<b>and</b>	40

**Table 4 Pass and distinction**

	OES		OCAS
Pass 1 (distinction)	85	<b>and</b>	85
Pass	40	<b>and</b>	40

**Table 5 Pass, merit and distinction**

	OES		OCAS
Pass 1 (distinction)	85	<b>and</b>	85
Merit	70	<b>and</b>	70
Pass	40	<b>and</b>	40

**Table 6 Fully graded credit**

	OES		OCAS
Pass 1 (distinction)	85	<b>and</b>	85
Pass 2	70	<b>and</b>	70
Pass 3	55	<b>and</b>	55
Pass 4	40	<b>and</b>	40

## 4.6 Resits and resubmissions

Most modules allow a resit of the exam or resubmission of the examinable component (OES) if you do not achieve the required standard for a pass in the examinable component but have successfully completed the continuous assessment and any threshold or residential school requirements which apply to your module. If your module has more than one task in its examinable component you will be required to participate in each task to be eligible for a resit/resubmission.

Undergraduate modules which allow a resit/resubmission do not require students to reach a threshold in the examinable component element, nor to pay a fee for the resit/resubmission; however, attendance at the exam or submission of the EMA is required. If you are offered a resit/resubmission on an undergraduate module, you will be automatically registered on a resit/resubmission presentation and this registration will be displayed on StudentHome.

Postgraduate modules will have a resit/resubmission threshold in the examinable component. The threshold that applies is shown in Appendix 4. Students on most postgraduate modules will also be required to register and pay a resit/resubmission fee. If you are offered a resit/resubmission on a postgraduate module, you will be sent an offer of registration and a registration agreement in a mailing sent shortly after your module result is released.

#### 4.6.1 Information in the Help Centre

The [Help Centre](#) details exam periods and includes information about the timing of resit exams. For modules with other examinable work, you will be informed about your resubmission date, either via StudentHome when your registration is confirmed or by email shortly after you are registered. We will also tell you whether you are required to complete a new piece of work, or whether you are required to improve your original submission.

#### 4.6.2 Elective Postponement

Elective postponement is available for students who have been offered a resit or resubmission opportunity within **16 weeks** of their original exam period or end-of-module assessment (EMA) cut-off date, and in no other circumstances. Elective postponement should not be confused with discretionary postponement (see sections 3.4.2 and 3.8.2).

You can apply for elective postponement at any point after you are registered for your resit/resubmission but you **must** request it no later than midnight of the day following your exam or EMA cut-off date. Requests received any later will not be accepted.

If your resit/submission opportunity is not within 16 weeks of your original assessment, or if you are not resitting/resubmitting, you **may not** apply for elective postponement.

If you proceed with a request and confirm that you wish to electively postpone, you cannot change your mind. You will be unable to resit your exam or resubmit your EMA until the next available opportunity which will be as much as 9 months away. This will be your final opportunity within the University timescale to complete a module and you will not be able to apply for a further postponement of the exam or EMA under any circumstances. See section 4.6.3 below.

If you are unsure whether you qualify to request elective postponement or of the impact it will have on your qualification pathway, please contact your student support team to discuss your options further. If your module has a practice element you must always seek advice before requesting elective postponement.

**PLEASE NOTE: If you submit this form and are not eligible for elective postponement, your examinable component will not be postponed. If you fail to attend your exam or submit your EMA you will fail your module.**

You will be able to check and edit the information on your elective postponement request before you submit the form.

Your result notification will confirm whether your request for elective postponement has been successful. If your notification says Fail: No Resit/No Resubmission, yet you have applied for elective postponement within the stipulated deadlines and are eligible for it, you must contact the Exams team as soon as possible.

#### 4.6.3 Resubmission rules

Rules about resit/resubmission opportunities can be found in the [Code of Practice for Student Assessment](#). University regulations only allow one resit or resubmission. No resit or resubmission will be permitted more than thirteen months after your module's first exam or submission opportunity.

If you have already completed an exam or end-of-module assessment and been awarded a resit/resubmission, you are not eligible for deferral.

#### **4.6.4 Result capping**

Your module result for the resit or resubmission will normally be capped. This means that you will only be awarded a Pass or Grade 4 Pass result, even if your module offers a range of result grades and your scores would put you in an area above this level in the tables in Section 4.5. If you submitted relevant special circumstances at the time of your first attempt at the exam or end-of-module submission, the Module Result Panel may decide to award you a non-capped resit or resubmission. If this applies to you, you will be informed about this at the point that your original module result is issued.

MRPs do not have discretion to award a non-capped result on the basis of Special Circumstances information submitted at the time of the resit or resubmission.

#### **4.6.5 Failing the resit/resubmission**

If you do not achieve a pass on your resit/resubmission opportunity, you will need to study the module again if you want to be awarded credit for it. You may be able to study the module again at a reduced fee if you meet University criteria. You should refer to Section V: Fees for repeating modules, part B. Reduced fees for repeating modules in the University's [Fee Rules](#).

#### **4.6.6 If you have passed the module**

Resits and resubmissions are not allowed if you've passed the module. The only exception to this will be if you are registered for a qualification which requires you to have achieved a Grade 3 or above in order to progress and you have achieved a Grade 4. If this applies to you, the University will contact you to offer you an exceptional resit/resubmission opportunity.

#### **4.7 Getting your result**

Results are usually available about six weeks after the exam period or EMA submission date. If you have completed a resit/resubmission within twelve to sixteen weeks of your original exam period or submission date, or if you were allowed to postpone your first exam or submission to a resit/resubmission period within twelve to sixteen weeks of your original exam period or submission date, we will aim to make these results available within fourteen days.

If you submit Special Circumstances, your result may need to be delayed whilst your special circumstances information is received and considered, especially if you are completing an 'early' resit/resubmission.

Towards the end of your study of each module, your StudentHome page will give you an estimated date for the issue of module results. You will be sent an email to advise you when your module result has been made available on your StudentHome page.

Please make sure that you can access StudentHome before your results are due so that you have time to sort out any access problems.

For most modules, as well as the module result itself, you'll be given your final overall continuous assessment and examinable component scores where appropriate, and if substitution has been applied (see Section 2.8).

**No results will be given by telephone.**

#### **4.7.1 Performance profile**

Many modules provide an online 'performance profile' which is a summary of performance on each assessment 'task' in the examinable component. When your module result is released, if a performance profile is available for you there will be a link to it displayed immediately below your module result on your module record page. Clicking on this link will take you to the performance profile system.

Normally, your performance profile will only be accessible for 56 days after your final module result has been released. So if you want to keep a copy, we suggest that you either print it off or save the web page.

#### **4.7.2 Pending results**

Occasionally a Module Result Panel may not have enough information or evidence to reach a decision about the result: an assignment score or exam information delayed by script marking may be missing from your record, or the Panel may want you to take a viva voce exam (see Section 4.8, 'Viva voce exams'). In these cases you'll be given a 'pending' result, and we will take urgent action to provide the Panel with the information it needs. We aim to release your final result within six weeks of your pending result but it may take longer in some cases.

### **4.8 Viva voce exams**

Viva voce exams are offered at the discretion of the Module Result Panel – you can't ask to be given one. They enable the Panel to obtain additional information so that it can reach a decision about a candidate who, for example, is on a borderline between two results.

These exams are conducted by a member of the University's academic staff. The Panel decides on the format of the exam - it may be written, oral or both. Arrangements to do with the viva voce exam will be sent to you separately from your module result.

### **4.9 Module result checks**

Since Module Result Panels are responsible, on behalf of the University Senate, for determining students' results, their decisions are final. There's no right of appeal to any other University body against the academic judgement of the MRP. Careful checks are made at every stage of the award process to make sure that the Panel's decisions rest on full and accurate information.

Please read the information in this handbook about how module results are determined before you request a module result check. Your module result page on StudentHome will include a link to frequently asked questions about module results.

If you have evidence that an error has been made in determining your result, such as a missing TMA score or if you have evidence that you submitted special circumstances that are not recorded on your student record, you can query your result by completing a module

result check form and sending it, along with the appropriate evidence, to arrive **within four weeks of the date of the release of your module result**. Module result checks can't be dealt with by telephone. You can access a module result check form from StudentHome or the [Help Centre](#).

You should carefully read the guidance provided before deciding to submit a module result check. The chances of your module result being incorrect are extremely small. University policies and procedures do not permit the following:

- the return of exam scripts or other examinable work to students
- remarking/reconsideration of the examinable component or the continuous assessment of a module
- acceptance of late TMAs
- challenges against academic judgements
- an appeal made by another person on your behalf.

It is not possible to obtain more detailed information about your performance in the examinable component.

#### **4.10 Formal module result appeals**

##### **4.10.1 If you have evidence that an error has been made you should first request a module result check (see section 4.9 above).**

If you are not satisfied with the response you have had to your module result check you may request a review by the Senate Academic Appeals Review Panel. For an review to be accepted for consideration it is necessary for the case to be based on information or evidence that the decision was determined in an inappropriate way; for example on incorrect information or information that was less full than it should have been at the time. Your discontentment with the outcome of the module result check response is not evidence of any procedural irregularity concerning the way in which the decision was made.

If there's evidence that your result was awarded improperly and your case is upheld, the Module Result Panel will be asked to reconsider your result.

##### **4.10.2 To make an appeal**

If you feel you have grounds for review, refer to the Complaints and Appeals section of the Help Centre for more information on the grounds for a review and how to submit appeal within twenty-eight days of the date of your module result or of the reply to your module result check.

The Student Casework Office will acknowledge receipt of your documents within three days of their arrival, telling you which delegate authority of the University has been asked to reply direct to you.

#### **4.11 Aegrotat credit**

Exceptionally, if for medical reasons you are unable to complete your module, the University may consider awarding aegrotat credit under a code of practice approved by the Senate.

Such exceptions are limited to students who are permanently unable to continue their studies for medical reasons, are registered for the final module that would complete (no more than 20% towards) a qualification, and have been assessed on at least part of the module. You should contact your Student Support Team if you wish to consider making an application for aegrotat credit.

## Summary of changes

### Subjects updated in January 2014:

Student Support Team contact information; what information is available to script markers / Module Result Panels of any disability or additional requirements.

### Subjects updated in September 2014:

Submission of TMAs; consequences of failing a compulsory threshold; the need for appropriate identification at the start of exams; requests for exams outside the UK; where to find details of discretionary postponement criteria; undergraduate eligibility for resit/resubmission.

### February 2015

1. Introduction - Addition of significant changes to this publication:
  - Requirement to provide photo identification
  - Change to deadline for elective postponements.
2. Change of name of Assignment Handling Office to Assessment Handling Operations.
3. Section 2.6.3 CMA forms – what to do if students feel a question is unsound.
4. Section 2.7 Marking CMAs – additional information about when students would receive feedback on their iCMAs.
5. Section 3.3.3 If you have a disability - clarification on process for additional exam arrangements after a disability is disclosed by a student.
6. Section 3.3.6 Identification:
  - The OUSA card is no longer an acceptable form of ID for exams;
  - If ID is not shown at the exam, it would normally be expected that students travel to their local or national OU office at their own expense to present the evidence;
  - Their module result will be pended until this requirement is satisfied;
  - If the requirement is not satisfied, a fail result will be issued.
7. Sections 3.5.3 and 3.9.3 If you have a disability or additional requirements - confirmation that only information provided in special circumstances form will be passed to the Module Result Panel.
8. Section 3.8.2 Discretionary postponement - clarification on process for requesting a discretionary postponement.
9. Section 3.9.1 Special circumstances affecting other examinable work - reinforcement of deadline for submitting special circumstances.
10. Section 4.6.2 Elective Postponement - change to deadline for students to notify University – it is now before midnight of the day following the exam.



## **November 2015**

In November 2015 some changes were made to the Assessment Handbook.

### **Who is affected?**

OU undergraduate and postgraduate students on taught modules must follow these regulations, unless you are studying on our Initial Teacher Education Programme.

### **What has changed?**

1. Section 1.6 - Clarification of number of weeks to resit/resubmission whereby a student may request an elective postponement.
2. Section 2.1.2 - Advising students that we are unable to provide copies of assignments.
3. Section 2.3.3 – Confidentiality of assignments now includes ‘other assessments’ as well as ‘assignments’.
4. Section 2.4 - Refers students to the HelpCentre instead of previous Appendix 2 for information about submitting assignments.
5. Section 2.4.2 - Clarification about submitting a second instalment of a TMA.
6. Sections 3.3.6 - Clarification about ID requirements at exam centres.
7. Section 3.6.1 - New section on ‘Keeping copies of your EMA’.
8. Section 3.7 - Removal of information about extensions to EMAs.
9. Section 4.3 - Introducing future changes to the way in which module results will be determined.
10. Section 4.6.1 - Clarification on wording relating to information on HelpCentre about resits and resubmissions.
11. Section 4.6.2 - Addition of considerations to make before choosing to electively postpone a resit/resubmission.
12. Section 4.9 - Changes to terminology and procedure to request a check of a module result.
13. Section 4.10 - Changes to procedure for making a formal module result appeal.
14. Section 4.10.2 - Information about time limit for making a formal module result appeal.
15. Appendix 2 (previous) - Removal of previous Appendix 2 (Submitting assignments). Students instead referred to relevant section of the Help Centre.
16. Appendix 3 - Addition of new information about the modules which will start with the new results awarding structure in October 2016.

## April 2017

In April 2017 some changes were made to the Assessment Handbook.

1. Section 1.2 – Added information about modules with one component of assessment.
2. Section 1.6 – Clarified that deferral can not be applied for on a resit or resubmission.
3. Section 2.5.6 – Corrected timescale for querying a TMA score and reference to Appendix 3.
4. Section 2.5.7 – Removed section about querying a score for a final TMA as this is the same as for any TMA.
5. Section 3.2 – Additional information given about notification of allocation.
6. Section 3.3.4 – Added a link to the Complaints and Appeals procedure.
7. Section 3.3.6 – Change of process for having identification verified by a notary in the event acceptable ID isn't brought to the exam centre.
8. Section 3.4.2 – Additional information provided about timescale for a response.
9. Section 3.6.1 – Corrected guidance about saving or downloading a copy of the EMA as it cannot be accessed from the eTMA system after the cut-off date.
10. Section 3.8.2 - Additional information provided about timescale for a response.
11. Section 4.3 – Updated information about revised process of awarding module results.
12. Section 4.6.2 – Improved guidance on Elective Postponement policy and process.
13. Section 4.8 – Updated information about Viva Vice exams.
14. Section 4.11 – Confirmation that aegrotat credit cannot count for more than 20% towards a qualification.
15. Appendix 3: Additional information for students studying Level 1 modules with continuous assessment only

## 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 Practice](#) website. 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 exams 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, as described under [Code of Practice for Student Assessment](#) SA 1.6 and [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#) SD 4.3.

# Appendix 2 - Substitution: how it works

## How it works

Substitution involves up to three stages:

1. A check is made to see whether any of your assignment scores are eligible for substitution. This is done by finding which substitutable assignments (if any) have a score lower than your overall continuous assessment score based on your actual assignment scores (also known as your Preliminary Overall Continuous Assessment Score (POCAS)). If none of your assignment scores are lower than your POCAS, there is no need to progress to stages 2 and 3: substitution will not take place because it will not benefit you
2. A decision is made on which of the assignments identified by the check in Stage 1 should be substituted. It isn't always simply a case of picking the one(s) with the lowest score.
3. For each assignment chosen in Stage 2, the original score is replaced by the average of the original score and your POCAS.

## Example

Here, we show the effect of substitution for a student on a module whose continuous assessment consists of eight tutor-marked assignments, all equally weighted, Substitution is allowed for two assignments excluding TMA 03.

The weighted average of the student's assignment scores (ie the POCAS) is 61.25%.

**Table 7 Scores before substitution**

									POCAS
TMA no.	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	
Max. mark	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Student's scores	80	55	50	75	90	0	60	80	61.25

For each of the substituted assignments, the new score is the average of the POCAS (in this example 61.25) and the original score for the assignment.

TMA's that are not eligible for substitution will be excluded. If there are several assignments eligible for substitution, the system will automatically select the combination that gives the biggest increase in OCAS.

In this example, TMA03 is not eligible for substitution. TMA's 02, 06 and 07 all have scores lower than the POCAS. Substitution has been applied to TMA's 02 and 06 because this leads to the biggest increase in OCAS for the student. The final score for TMA 02, which had an original score of 55 is much higher than the final score for TMA 06, for which the original score was zero. The overall effect of substitution in this case is to raise the overall continuous assessment score from 61.25% to 65.47%. OCAS is then rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Table 8 Scores and substitution**

									OCAS
TMA no.	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	
Max. mark	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Revised scores	80	58.13*	50	75	90	30.63*	60	80	65.47

\*Substituted scores

You can assess the potential impact of substitution on your overall continuous assessment score (OCAS) by using the Assessment Calculator (if it's available for your module) on the module page of [StudentHome](#).

The calculator will allow you to estimate scores for TMAs which you have not yet submitted.

## **Appendix 3 - Additional information for Level 1 modules with continuous assessment only**

**Additional information for the following modules where they are assessed by continuous assessment only (TMAs and iCMAs). Presented from 16J: E102, L161, L192, L193, L194, L195, L197, S111, T192 and W101. Presented from 17B: B100**

The information in the Assessment Handbook is applicable to these modules, but some further specific detail which takes precedence is given below.

1. Along with the majority of modules offered by the University, you can choose to defer completion of your module. You may apply for deferral at any point up to the last working day before the final TMA submission date for your module. You cannot apply for deferral if you have already been granted a previous deferral or postponement on the same module or if you are resubmitting your final TMA. The same conditions apply as given in section 3.8.1 of this Assessment Handbook.

You can find more information about the University's Deferral and Withdrawal policy and Assessment Banking at:

[www.open.ac.uk/students/charter/essential-documents/assessment](http://www.open.ac.uk/students/charter/essential-documents/assessment)

2. If you cannot submit your final TMA due to circumstances beyond your control, such as illness or bereavement, you may be permitted to postpone your submission. You will need to provide third party documentary evidence of the circumstances which are preventing you from submitting. The same conditions apply as given in section 3.8.2 of this Assessment Handbook.
3. The final assessment for these modules is a TMA. The score for your final TMA will not be sent to you until it has been considered by the Module Result Panel that is responsible for determining the module result. The same conditions then apply as given in section 4.9 of this Assessment Handbook.
4. If your module offers a resubmission opportunity this will apply to the final TMA. The same conditions apply as given in section 4.6 of this Assessment Handbook.

## Contact information

### Student Support Teams

You can contact your student support team by using the 'Your contacts ...' panel in the [HelpCentre](#).

### Central offices and departments

The address for mail that is not directed to a particular office or department is:

The Open University  
Walton Hall  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 6AA  
Phone +44(0)1908 274066  
Fax 01908 653744  
Website [www.open.ac.uk](http://www.open.ac.uk)  
Evening advice line 0870 333 1444

### Assessment Processing

The Open University  
PO Box 721  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 6ZU  
Phone +44(0) 1908 655291  
Email [assignments@open.ac.uk](mailto:assignments@open.ac.uk)

### Policy Exceptions and Academic Conduct

The Open University  
PO Box 83  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 6BF  
Email [disc-post@open.ac.uk](mailto:disc-post@open.ac.uk)

### Exams team

The Open University  
PO Box 720  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 6ZQ  
Phone +44(0)1908 858312  
Email [examinations@open.ac.uk](mailto:examinations@open.ac.uk)



### **Student Casework Office**

The Open University  
PO Box 5155  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 6YJ  
Phone +44(0)1908 659535  
Email [StudentCaseworkOffice@open.ac.uk](mailto:StudentCaseworkOffice@open.ac.uk)

### **Data Protection Coordinator**

The Open University  
PO Box 497  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 6AT  
Email [Data-Protection@open.ac.uk](mailto:Data-Protection@open.ac.uk)

### **Disability Resources Team**

The Open University  
Hammerwood Gate  
Kents Hill  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 6BR  
Phone +44(0)1908 653745  
Email [disabled-student-resources@open.ac.uk](mailto:disabled-student-resources@open.ac.uk)

### **Open University Students Association (OUSA)**

Phone +44(0)1908 652026  
Fax 01908 654326  
Email [ousa@student.open.ac.uk](mailto:ousa@student.open.ac.uk)  
Website [www.open.ac.uk/ousa](http://www.open.ac.uk/ousa)

### **Student Recruitment**

Phone +44(0)300 303 5303  
Fax 01908 654914  
Email from [www.open.ac.uk/contact](http://www.open.ac.uk/contact)

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