



University
Centre
Somerset

Part of Bridgwater & Taunton College



Student Handbook

Academic Year: 2020-21

*The Information provided in the handbook is correct at the time of publication.
September 2020*

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1. Welcome and introduction

On behalf of the staff team at Bridgwater & Taunton College I would like to offer you a warm welcome. We very much hope that you will enjoy your time with us and will be encouraged to take full advantage of the opportunities available to you as a student within the University Centre Somerset.

You and your colleagues have been accepted onto the programme on the basis of your creative ability and potential. We look forward to supporting and facilitating you to embark on new journeys and challenges, as you join a 150 year history of education at the College.

The programmes at Bridgwater and Taunton College have a reputation for the particularly high level of creativity and professionalism of its students.

Our new HE centre also provides a hub where you will be able to access study resources, guidance and interact with other HE students, under the newly created University Centre Somerset, the focal point for HE across the college.

I would like to wish you an engaging, stimulating and successful period of study with us and look forward to the opportunity to see and discuss your work with you as your studies progress.

2. Academic calendar

Autumn Term 2020	
Induction: w/c 14 September 2020	
Start of term: Monday 21 September 2020	End of term: Thursday 17 December 2020
Reading week: Monday 26 October 2020 – Friday 30 October 2020	
RAG Day: Thursday 17 December 2020	

Spring Term 2021	
Start of term: Monday 4 January 2021	End of term: Friday 2 April 2021
Reading weeks: Monday 15 February 2021 – Friday 19 February 2021	
Easter Holidays: Monday 5 April 2021 – Friday 16 April 2021	

Summer Term 2021	
Start of term: Monday 19 April 2021	End of term: Friday 25 June 2021
Reading week: Monday 31 May 2021 – Friday 4 June 2021	
Bank Holiday: Monday 3 May 2021	

The College is open throughout the year, with the exception of the Christmas period shown above and Bank Holidays.

The dates shown above signify principal teaching and learning dates, key administrative times and College closures.

4.1 Keeping in Touch

If we need to get some information to you, we'll most likely do one of the following (if not all four):

- Send you an email
- Put a sign on the programme noticeboard
- Speak to you in a tutorial or lecture session
- Put the info on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Blackboard
-

In order to make sure you don't miss anything, it's worth keeping a regular eye on all of these places. That way, you can be confident you're up to date with the latest news.

4.2 Course Content

Course material is located on the College VLE, also known as Blackboard and Sharepoint. The VLE is also home to the HE Info Hub where you will be able to find your course handbooks, a copy of the policies governing your programme alongside study skills support for HE courses.

4.4 Contacting staff

From time to time, you may want or need to see a member of academic staff – to discuss your progress, say, or ask a question. The best way to set this up is by sending an email, leaving a note in their pigeon hole or giving them a call. All of our staff are very approachable, and care deeply about your success. So don't be afraid to get in touch.

4.5 Support staff

The administrative team for your course is located in the *Main Atrium Building*. Contact them during normal business hours using the details below.

Name	Role	Tel	Email
HE Quality Team	HE Quality		<i>HE@btc.ac.uk</i>

5.1 Induction arrangements

At the start of your course, you will have an induction week. A full programme is provided, which will include:

a) Enrolment

You will be notified when you are required to enrol. This is normally at a specified time during the first week when you will be asked to complete relevant forms. At enrolment you will be issued with a copy of the College Student Handbook and subsequently you will receive your College ID card. You must wear this at all times when on College premises.

b) Academic Induction

- Welcome and introduction to the team tutors
- What it means to study at degree level
- Developing independent learning skills
- Programme-specific information, including timetables, programme content, module descriptors, project briefs, module delivery, module feedback and arrangements for the preparation of your dissertation
- College induction talk
- The role of Learning Support
- Tutorial times - a short introductory tutorial with your year tutor

- c) Induction to the College Environment
- A tour of the library/learning resource centre and an introduction on how to use the facilities, including the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and student portal
 - Fire evacuation procedure
 - Health and Safety

5.2 Attendance requirements

Studying for a degree is a great opportunity, and it's one that we want you to grasp fully. As a result, we expect you to attend timetabled sessions wherever possible. If you do not attend, you could miss activities such as skills workshops, assessed presentations and group work, thereby hampering your chances of success and also that of your peers. Please take your responsibility to attend college sessions seriously.

As a general rule, we expect you to be available every week of term. So please make sure you only arrange to go away during the College holidays. Opportunities that arise to enhance your practice outside of College are encouraged and can be negotiated with your Programme Leader.

What happens if I can't attend class?

If you're too ill to attend class, you should send your apologies to your tutor via email or telephone before 9am on the day and ensure you catch up on the work you have missed as soon as possible.

5.3 Personal tutoring

As part of our commitment to your wellbeing, you'll be allocated with a Personal Tutor who will guide you throughout your time at College. Their job is to help with your academic work and provide personal advice and counsel when you need it.

Personal Tutors have a particular role for first-year students, because they help you to manage the transition into university life.

A further aspect of the role is helping prepare you for life beyond your degree. Your Personal Tutor will help you think about the career you wish to pursue, and chart your progress throughout your studies so that you have a good sense of your likely performance when you're applying for jobs. They can also provide references to support job applications, and help you deal with any problems that occur during your time at College.

To ensure there is ample opportunity for you to establish a rapport with your Personal Tutor, we schedule in regular meetings with them throughout the term.

5.4 Study skills

Making the transition to university-level study

When you study for a degree, you are expected to take a great deal of responsibility for your own work. This is a significant difference between university and school or college, and sometimes takes a bit of getting used to.

To help you make the transition, our teaching staff provide a range of learning opportunities that will increase your knowledge and equip you with the skills to pursue independent study. These include lectures, group work, discussions, student-led activities, simulations, working with technology, practical scenarios and directed study.

Whatever activity you're engaged with, the one way to ensure it enhances your performance is to engage with it fully. We want you to work in partnership with your teachers and lecturers so that you do as well as you possibly can.

With that in mind, we encourage you to take responsibility for developing the required knowledge and skills to succeed in your degree. If you do this, we commit to giving you the best possible support in realising your ambitions.

You'll soon find that degree-level study challenges your time-management and prioritisation skills in new ways. You'll have to make time to study at home and ensure you are organised enough to meet deadlines for assignments.

To give you a sense of the likely time commitment you'll need to make during your degree, an average 20-credit module requires a total student effort of 200 hours. Discount the time when you're in lectures, seminars or workshops, and you'll see that there's a considerable onus on you to use your time constructively.

For most students, this is a great advantage of studying at university. It frees your time, so that you can study at your own pace and in your own way. Even better, it gives you the opportunity to make new discoveries and connections for yourself, thereby firing your imagination and putting you in control of your learning.

Experiencing difficulties?

That said, some students find it harder than others to move to degree-level study. If this is you, don't panic. It doesn't mean you're not as clever as your fellow students, or that you won't end up being every bit as successful.

It just means you need some support to develop the skills and dispositions needed to succeed at this level. We're here to provide just that support, so please contact your Personal Tutor, who will help you identify what's needed. This may include study skills mentoring, or accessing help from the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) or HE Study Centre.

Study skills support - LRC

New HE students have the opportunity to complete our HEADstart programme (Higher Education Academic Development), which will develop the skills required to confidently succeed at university level studies. The core modules are:

Using LRC resources (via Blackboard)
Partner University resources
Plagiarism
Referencing
Evaluating resources
Research skills

In addition, the Learning Resources Services (LRS) offers sessions that help you with study skills and research. Group sessions are organised by your lecturers, but you can arrange individual appointments to help with the following areas:

- The Harvard and Numeric referencing systems
- Academic writing skills
- Essay structure
- Searching the Heritage library catalogue
- Searching e-books
- Searching other academic electronic sources – databases, e-journals, e-newspapers, company/market research reports
- Searching the Internet
- Searching strategy (Boolean operators, search strings)
- General research sessions (using various information sources from printed to electronic and audio-visual)
- Advanced study skills/research (conducting a literature search and literature review)
- Using Turnitin plagiarism detection service
- Being an effective learner (critical thinking skills, information dissemination, writing skills), etc.

A dedicated study skills area is available on the BTC Libraries link on Blackboard. The libraries at all our campuses stock a good range of study skills books, details are available via the Heritage library catalogue <http://heritage/HeritageScripts/Hapi.dll/search1>

5.5 Careers advice

Preparing for your future

As a graduate, the world is your oyster when it comes to careers. You could work in the public, private or third (charity) sectors, in the UK or overseas.

As part of your learning and growth at Bridgwater and Taunton College, we encourage you to consider your career options at an early stage in your studies. We'll help you to find a pathway that makes the very best use of your skills and aptitudes, and provide you with the educational opportunities to pursue it.

The Information and Guidance Team offers information, advice and guidance that will help you make the right choice for your future. This includes:

- A wide range of up-to-date information on courses, careers, working/study abroad, voluntary work, grants and finance
- Help with CV writing, interview preparation, interview techniques and careers-related topics
- A current job vacancies board
- Comprehensive computer packages designed to help with course and career choices
- Individual and confidential careers interviews with the Information and Guidance Team or Careers Advisors
- A dedicated Information and Guidance and Student Support area where you can access information and explore alternative sources of funding, as well as researching qualifications available and finding out more about the facilities at College

Further guidance is available from the Info, Guidance & Careers Advice Team, details of which can be found at this link <http://www.bridgwater.ac.uk/college-information.php?category=107>

5.6 Counselling and student welfare: it's good to talk

Support on non-academic-related issues

We want you to thrive during your time at College. That means providing all the support you need, not just with your studies but with every aspect of your life.

For example, we provide support to help reduce your stress, help you manage your money and, if relevant, get used to living away from home. We also help you manage the fine balance between study and family or work commitments.

If you need more specific help, or there's a particular issue that's worrying you, contact your Personal Tutor or the Helpzone Team, who will put you in touch with someone who can support you.

5.7 Support for students with special needs and long term health conditions

The College is aware that disability covers a wide range of impairments and strives to ensure that its provisions and structures takes into account, as far as possible, the full range of needs that disabled students have.

If you have a disability or long term health condition, Bridgwater and Taunton College is committed to helping you make the most of your time studying with us. We are conscious that no two people are the same and strive to make provision for your precise needs.

Here are some of the ways that we support people with disabilities during their time at College:

- Ensuring access to the physical environment (both facilities and equipment)
- Providing adequate and accurate information for students both prior to joining and while at College
- Disability awareness workshops are held as part of the College staff development programme

Our Learning Support Team provides individualised support that is tailored to your needs. So whatever your disability, learning difficulty or additional needs, please tell us as soon as possible. You can do this by completing a Student Disclosure Form in your first meeting with your Personal Tutor, or at the Helpzone. Once you submit this document, a Learning Support Tutor will be in touch to discuss your needs privately.

In these ways, we do everything in our power to help you flourish in your time at Bridgwater and Taunton College.

Other support

Here are some of the other ways that we help you to fulfil your potential while at College:

- We provide detailed feedback on assessed work, helping to develop your knowledge and understanding
- Tutorials – many subjects have timetabled tutorials where work can be discussed with subject tutors. You can also arrange to meet tutors at other times to discuss your progress
- The College Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and email. Some staff use these to initiate discussions and set up learning support groups for their modules, ensuring you can keep thinking together, even when you're not in lectures
- Electronic learning. We provide access to eBooks, electronic journals and research papers as well as resources such as eBook readers and laptop computers
- Learning packs. Some modules use learning packs for you to work through in your own time. These include exercises to consolidate your learning, helping you to manage your home study and develop your knowledge
- The College HE Study Centre and periodicals room, located on the second floor of the main College building. A professional librarian and learning resource assistants are available to help you in these places. Full details of how to access these resources are available via your course tutors, your Personal Tutor and our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

5.8 Financial advice and support.

If you need help with your finances, go to Student Services area which are available on the both Taunton and Bridgwater Campuses. Our staff will be able to advise and support you.

4. Opportunities for Professional Development Planning (PDP)

For the purposes of this Handbook, Professional Development Planning (PDP) is defined as:

“a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their educational and career development” (QAA, 2002, Policy Statement on a Progress File for Higher Education)

The level of engagement and what you get out of your period of higher education is your choice. You have responsibility for your own learning.

Taking stock of your position and setting goals in all areas of your life is a crucial step, but in order to maximise your potential you must be clear about how you can transfer the skills and knowledge you have acquired into other situations. You must learn to be able to communicate your unique skills and abilities.

The programme specification and module specifications included in your programme quality handbook detail the range of skills and abilities that you will have acquired should you succeed in passing the course.

Our online guide to Professional Development Planning is available on the HE Info Hub, accessed via Blackboard. It guides you through the process just described, helping you to consider where you are and where you want to be.

7. Work placement information

7.1 Rationale

The importance of your Work-Based Learning (WBL) placement

Work-Based Learning (WBL), sometimes known as Professional Practice, is a defining feature of a Foundation Degree. It involves students spending time in a real-world working environment, bringing the knowledge they're garnering in their studies to bear in a professional context.

At Bridgwater and Taunton College, students undertake WBL in a variety of places, relevant to their degree programme. You might spend time in a design studio, for example, or as a career in a hospital. Whatever you end up doing, it will be a valuable opportunity to establish yourself in a working environment, and gain experience of the professional world.

In addition to completing placements in work environments, you'll be given live industry-focused projects to complete. As a result of these activities, you will always be encouraged to ground your academic learning in a practical context. This is one of

the things that will give you an edge when it comes to seeking employment, because you'll already understand the world of work, and be comfortable operating within it.

The skills you'll develop through WBL

Here are some of the skills that you'll have at the end of your degree, thereby enhancing your appeal among prospective employers:

- Career management skills: *e.g. preparing effectively for the recruitment and selection process*
- Skills in lifelong learning: *e.g. reflecting critically on academic, personal and professional development, identifying and articulating achievements and planning for the future*
- Business and organisational awareness: *e.g. understanding changing working practices, including self-employment, with particular reference to the professions and sectors relating to your programme of study*
- An international outlook: *e.g. understanding the attributes and breadth of outlook appropriate for working in a global economy*

7.2 Criteria and approval processes for suitable placements

We negotiate a number of placements with employers each year, ensuring there are plenty of opportunities for all of our students. In addition, you may like to set up your own placement, drawing on contacts you make in your chosen industry. If you choose to do this, the College will approve the placement, ensuring it is suitable and safe, as well as providing a realistic opportunity for you to meet your programme learning outcomes.

To ensure your wellbeing while you are on placement, the College undertakes a full risk assessment and assurance check of your prospective host. We also make sure your employer understands the responsibility they have to look after you and help you continue to develop in the workplace.

It is essential that you discuss any proposed work placement with your Personal Tutor or a member of teaching staff. That way, we can ascertain its suitability, then you can get on with setting it up.

7.3 Responsibility for finding and arranging placement

It is your responsibility to accrue appropriate industry experience during your studies, and to establish links with relevant employers in your chosen field. But we'll support you every step of the way, and have a number of established partners to whom we regularly send students. You won't be alone, therefore, thanks to our advice and assistance in what could turn out to be one of the most significant experiences of your life.

7.4 Student responsibilities

When you go on your work placement, it's important to remember that you represent Bridgwater and Taunton College and the Open University. We therefore expect the highest standards of behaviour from you, thereby ensuring you project a professional, courteous and conscientious image. This will also benefit you, by enhancing your appeal with a potential employer, and helping you establish a good reputation.

7.5 Supporting and feedback arrangement

You'll be allocated a College-based supervisor for every placement that you undertake. Their role is to provide a single point of contact, both for you and your host. So if either of you have any problems, your placement supervisor is the first port of call.

5. Facilities and Services

If you've visited Bridgwater and Taunton College, you'll know that we have outstanding facilities and services. For further details, please look at the UCS website www.somerset.ac.uk

6. Brief explanation on the role of Award Assessment Boards and External Examiners

Award Assessment Board

The Award Assessment Board considers and confirms the marks for formal assessments, and records the resulting degree classifications. This is where your performance in modules, and in your overall qualification, is formally verified.

Any marks given by tutors in advance of the Award Assessment Board must be treated as provisional. They only become final marks once approved by the Board.

External Examiner

Every Higher Education provider has to submit its marking to an External Examiner. This is usually an academic from another institution, who has relevant subject knowledge and is an experienced marker and assessor in your field.

Their role is to ensure the rigour, quality and consistency of marking, and compare it with other institutions. That way, we – and you – can be confident that the mark you receive withstands scrutiny at a national and international level.

The External Examiner's job is straightforward. They read a sample of all marked work in any given award. They usually do this during a twice-yearly visit to College, when they review work and offer comments about its grading. They then report to the Award Assessment Body, verbally and subsequently in writing, identifying areas for improvement and confirming the accuracy of the tutors' marking.

Programme Leaders then write a response to this report, and identify steps being taken to meet the External Examiner's recommendations.

For further information on the role of the External Examiner go to...

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/B7.pdf>

11. General reading list

• Texts for Study Skills

Cottrell, Stella. (2013) *The Study Skills Handbook*. 4th edn. London: Palgrave
Neville, Colin. (2010) *The Complete Guide to Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism*.
Maidenhead: OU Press
Pears R and Shields G (2016) *Cite Them Right: the Essential referencing guide*. 10th
ed. London: Palgrave
Williams, G. (2014) *How to Write About Contemporary Art*. London: Thames and
Hudson

• Texts for Personal Development

Amos, J. (2004). *Handling tough job interviews*. (2nd ed). Oxford: How To Books
Limited.
Cottrell, S. (2003). *Skills for success: the personal development planning handbook*.
London: Macmillan.
Hind, D. and Moss, S. (2005). *Employability skills*. Sunderland: Business Education.
Van Emden, J. and Becker, L. (2003). *Effective communication for arts and humanities
students*. London: Macmillan.
Weintraub, L. (2003) *Making Contemporary Art: How Today's Artists Think and Work*.
London: Thames and Hudson

Appendices

Appendix A - Assessment and progression regulations

i. Identification of all elements of assessment, including type, volume weighting and timings of assessment

Types of assessment

We use a mix of course work and examinations to assess your performance throughout the year. In order to receive your award, you must pass all of your assessed work.

The precise type of assessment you'll undertake varies from module to module. Your lecturers will give you clear guidance about the methods used, and they could include any of the following:

- Studio-based projects and creative briefs
- Coursework: research journals, blogs, sketchbooks, reports, reviews (which may also be peer assessed), essays, reflective logs
- Case studies – gallery / exhibition reviews
- Student presentations
- One-to-one and group critiques
- Exams

Whatever method is adopted, you'll be given clear assessment criteria, so that you know exactly what's expected of you.

Please note that, until the Award Assessment Board confirms your marks, they are all provisional.

ii. Submission of Coursework

You'll be given a deadline for every assignment, and you must hand your work in by that date or receive a penalty.

Work should be submitted in the studio or to your Administration Office, who will give you a signed receipt.

iii. Assessment Rationale and Assessment Methods

If you want detailed guidance about the assessments you're undertaking, you should refer to the *Bridgwater and Taunton College Academic Regulations for Open University Validated Awards*. These apply without exception and further details can be obtained from your Programme Leader. Alternatively, a copy of the regulations is kept in the HE Study Centre for your reference.

Calculating marks

An overall mark for each module is calculated on the basis of an average of marks for every assessed piece of work you submit. Note that each piece of work will be weighted, so some may make a larger contribution to your overall mark for a module than others.

iv. Minimum pass marks for modules

The pass mark for all modules that you'll study is set at 40%. You need to achieve this in every module, and across your degree as a whole.

If you fail a module, you will be asked to resubmit the assessment/s that you failed. In the case of examinations, that requires a re-sit at a later date. The maximum grade awarded for resubmissions/re-sits is 40%.

v. Rules governing extensions to submission deadlines

It's important that you have a good reason if you require an extension for a piece of course work, or want to miss an examination.

Extensions cannot be granted by your lecturers or the Programme Leader. Instead, you must submit an Extenuating Circumstances form (see section xvii below), with valid independent evidence to support your case. It will then be considered by a special panel, who will reach a judgment.

For more details, please ask your Programme Leader or lecturer, or refer to the *Bridgwater and Taunton College Academic Regulations for Open University validated awards* regulations, available on the VLE or in the HE Study Centre.

vi. Penalties for late submission or non-submission of work

If you are late or fail to submit an assignment, or miss an exam, a penalty will be applied. The College's regulations states that any course work handed in after the deadline has passed will automatically receive a mark of zero. If, however, you can make a case that extenuating circumstances contributed to the late submission, the grade may be reinstated.

For more information about extenuating circumstances, see section xvii, below.

vii. Process for requesting deferral of modules

Your Programme Leader and tutors will be able to advise you further on rules surrounding deferrals. For more information, please refer to the *Bridgwater and Taunton College Academic Regulations for Open University validated awards*, either on the VLE or in the HE Study Centre.

viii. Assessment of work-based learning, where applicable

Not applicable for this programme.

ix. Assessment of presentations and performance, where applicable

Presentations and/or performances assessment

All presentation materials (PowerPoint presentations / PDF documents) will be submitted at the same time.

Please note: where student presentations take place over a number of days to ensure there is not an unfair advantage of the latter presentation all work is submitted at the same time and closed groups of students make up the audience of the presentations.

x. Definitions and consequences of academic misconduct, including plagiarism

xi. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious matter, and the punishments are severe. It involves passing off someone else's work or ideas as your own. If you do this, you could fail your module, or even be asked to leave your course.

That makes it very important to use appropriate referencing in your work, whether you're quoting from a book, journal or the internet.

The following extract is based on a *Learning and Study Skills Leaflet*:

“Plagiarism not only refers to copying work from another student or author. It also refers to copying creative work, audio-visual material, software programmes and written work.

Furthermore, it includes the unacknowledged use of other authors' concepts, theories, research findings or novel ideas.

Clear acknowledgement of the source of your material is required for any direct usage of written material, and includes material from electronic academic journals, downloaded documents or another person's web site. You must seek permission if you wish to use artwork, graphics or other images you find on the Internet. Always assume that copyright applies even if the web site is in another country.”

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Submitting work that is drawn in whole, or in part, from other sources without appropriate acknowledgment
- Submitting work that has been prepared by someone else, purchased or otherwise, and passing it off as your own
- Submitting work that is identical or very similar to work submitted by other students
- Submitting work that has already been submitted elsewhere

Reasons not to commit plagiarism

There are good academic reasons not to commit plagiarism. Here are some of them:

- When you submit work for an assignment, you need to be responsible for the facts and ideas that you use. By citing your sources you are providing evidence of these facts and ideas. That means you can show what your ideas are based on, and where they came from
- You need to demonstrate that you have understood the material and developed your own conclusions from the material you have read or information you have heard.

Copying from textbooks, or pasting text from the internet and passing it off as your own writing, is not good enough. The emphasis should be on working with other people's ideas, rather than reproducing their words

- Plagiarism is against College regulations and you will be penalised for it. If you plagiarise, the lecturer cannot appreciate how well you understand the course, meaning they cannot give you useful advice and support to help you improve

If you are not sure about what constitutes plagiarism, consult your tutor, Programme Leader, HE Study Centre staff, or the Academic Regulations. The HEADStart Training you receive as part of your induction at the College will also provide information on how to reference correctly, your tutor will advise you when these sessions are taking place.

Using Turnitin



Turnitin is an internet-based tool that compares documents to see if there is any matching content, thereby helping you avoid inadvertent plagiarism. It checks your assignment against other documents on the internet, as well as journal articles and previously submitted works.

Because it is based entirely online, Turnitin is available around the clock. It's a great way of checking your citations and referencing, and ensuring you haven't accidentally passed someone else's ideas off as your own.

To ensure you have access to Turnitin, your tutor will provide you with a special ID and password for the programme. That gives you free use of the tool, and should help you avoid unintended plagiarism.

For more information and guidance on academic offences please consult your [OU Academic Regulations](#) or visit the [Research Hub](#) on Blackboard.

xii. Mechanisms for provision of feedback to students on performance, and the role of formative and summative assessment.

All modules offer both formative and summative assessment of work. The formative assessment (mid way) takes place two thirds of the way through each module, offering each student guidance on their progress at that point. This guidance is offered in a sustainable amount of time to allow students to address any weaknesses prior to the final submission. The summative (final) assessment takes place at the end of the module. An assessment feedback document is provided to each student (within twenty working days after the final submission of work) containing a written feedback discussing the strengths and weaknesses of each submission.

xiii. Acceptable forms of academic referencing and citation

A guide to referencing

Writing assignments means reading, researching and thinking carefully to help you form your own opinions. In addition, you must abide by copyright law, reference correctly and avoid plagiarism.

“Copyright” is a law that protects the rights of owners (authors, visual creators, editors, publishers, performers, etc.) or their representatives, to have their work used with their permission. However, for educational and study purposes a so-called “fair-dealing” rule permits you to copy a limited amount of material:

- 5% of a book or one chapter of a book
- One journal article from an issue

It is important that you reference all the sources that you have used in your academic work in order to avoid plagiarism. These sources may be printed, electronic or audio-visual materials (books/e-books, journals/e-journals, newspapers/e-newspapers, websites, DVDs, digital recordings, visual data, etc.)

You must acknowledge your sources whenever you paraphrase or summarise another person’s ideas or points, or when you quote another person’s work, or use tables, graphs, images and the like that you have found from another source.

xiv. Harvard Referencing System

When the Harvard system is used, acknowledgement of the work of others appears within the text. This should include both direct quotations and paraphrases of what you’ve read. (Note that footnotes do not need to be used with this system, but your tutor may allow you to use them to expand or qualify points in the text).

Using the Harvard System is straightforward. When referencing within your essay, you need to note, in brackets after the quotation: the author’s surname, followed by the year of publication and, for a direct quotation, the page number. For example (this is an imaginary quotation, by the way, so don’t go searching for the book in the library!):

‘I still remember Paul Gascoigne’s tears in Turin. It was a heart-breaking moment for the whole England football team.’ (Lineker, 2001:24)

Then, when you add the details of the source to your bibliography (a list of books at the end of your essay), you should include: the author’s surname and initial, the year of publication (in brackets), the full book title (in italics), the place of publication, and the publisher. Thus:

Lineker, G. (2001), *Paying the penalty: Memories from Italia ‘90*, London: FA Publishing Ltd.

Further Help

Don’t worry if this all seems rather complex. You’ll receive detailed guidance about referencing as part of your lectures. And if you need further help, just ask your tutor, or consult staff in the library or HE Study Centre. In addition, you could look at a study skills guide, of which there are plenty in the library or on the VLE.

The College strongly recommends using the following text as a reference source for Harvard Referencing:

<http://www.citethemrightonline.com/>

Pears, R. and Shields, G. (2013) *Cite Them Right: the essential referencing guide*. Ed 9. London: Palgrave Macmillan

xv. Progression regulations

Calculating final results

Your Programme Leader and tutors will be able to advise you about how your final degree result is calculated. For more information, please refer to the *Bridgwater and Taunton College Academic Regulations for Open University validated awards*, available in the HE Study Centre or on the VLE.

Once you have completed your degree, it may be possible to progress to another programme. You should discuss your individual situation with your Personal Tutor or another member of the teaching staff, who will be able to identify the opportunities open to you.

xvi. Reassessment and re-sits

Failing an assessment

Your Programme Leader and tutors will be able to advise you further on rules surrounding re-sits of exams and resubmissions of course work. For more details, please refer to the *Bridgwater and Taunton College Academic Regulations for Open University validated awards* on the VLE or in the HE Study Centre.

xvii. Extenuating circumstances

If you experience difficulties in submitting a particular assignment, you may apply to have extenuating circumstances taken into account. These are circumstances that:

- Affect your ability to attend or complete an assessment or a number of assessments
- Are exceptional
- Are outside your control
- Can be corroborated by independent evidence
- Occurred during or shortly before the assessment in question

If you want to apply for extenuating circumstances, you need to ask your Curriculum Area Administrator Office for a claim form. Fill this in and return it to the office, accompanied by independent corroborating evidence. This should be before the assignment deadline if possible, but if there is a good reason for it to be delayed, you should submit it as soon as possible after the deadline has passed.

Extenuating Circumstances claims with respect to formal examinations should be submitted no later than the Monday after the end of the formal examination week.

Examples of circumstances that would not normally be considered valid:

- Alarm clock did not go off
- Car broke down, train/bus delayed or cancelled, other public transport problems (unless you can demonstrate that you allowed adequate time to compensate for such problems as might reasonably have been anticipated)
- Childcare problems that could have been anticipated
- Accidents or illness affecting relatives or friends (unless serious, or you are a sole carer)
- Unspecified anxiety, mild depression or examination stress

- Cough, cold, upper respiratory tract infection, sore throat, minor viral infection, unless the illness was at its peak at the time of an examination, end-of-module test or in-class test and the corroborating evidence refers to the impact on your performance
- Financial problems (other than cases of exceptional hardship)
- Holidays, house moves, family celebrations or other events where you either have control over the date or may choose not to participate
- Computer problems, corrupt data, disk or printer failure or similar
- Problems with postal delivery of work (unless recorded delivery or registered mail)
- Time-management problems (e.g. competing deadlines)
- Appointments (legal, medical etc.) that could be rearranged
- Territorial Army commitments or similar (unless unavoidable)
- Sporting or recreational commitments (unless the student is representing the College in a national competition or representing his/her country in an international competition)
- De-registration

Examples of circumstances that might be considered valid:

- Hospitalisation, including operations
- Health problems
- Personal or psychological problems for which you are undergoing counselling or have been referred to a counsellor or other qualified practitioner
- Childbirth (including a partner in labour)
- Bereavement causing significant impact/effect
- Major accident or injury, acute ailments or conditions which coincide with an assessment deadline or an examination or test, or are sufficiently long-lasting to impact on a significant part of a term
- Clinical depression or other mental health problem
- Recent burglary/theft/serious car accident
- Jury Service that cannot be deferred
- Representing the College at national level or your country at international level in a sporting event
- For part-time students in full-time employment, exceptional pressure of work or permanent change of employment circumstances
- Late diagnosis of, for example, dyslexia, resulting in no support or examination provision
- Separation or divorce - student or parental (provided the facts and the effects are independently corroborated)
- Unavailability of the VLE prior to the deadline for an assignment or examination where it has been confirmed by the module leader that this would have had a material effect on the preparation for an assessment

If you are unsure about any of these areas, please consult with your Programme Leader or Personal Tutor.

For more information about extenuating circumstances, refer to the *Bridgwater and Taunton College Academic Regulations for Open University validated awards*, available via the VLE or in the HE Study Centre.

Appendix B - Appeals and complaints procedures

If you wish to appeal against a grade you've received, you need to follow a formal process. Here is an extract from the regulations, to give you more guidance.

To appeal against the decision of an Award Assessment Board, you must meet the following criteria:

- the Academic Appeals Committee is satisfied on the evidence produced by the candidate or any other person that:
- there has been a material administrative error
- the assessments/examinations were not conducted in accordance with the current regulations for the programme or special arrangements formally agreed
- some other material irregularity relevant to the assessments has occurred
- ***in most exceptional circumstances*** the candidate has established to the satisfaction of the Academic Appeals Committee that performance in the assessment was adversely affected by illness or factors which the candidate was unable, or for valid reasons unwilling, to divulge before the Award Assessment Board reached their decision. The candidate's request must be supported by medical certificates or other documentary evidence acceptable to the Academic Appeals Committee.

Disagreement with the academic judgment of an Award Assessment Board in assessing the merits of an individual element of assessment cannot constitute grounds for an academic appeal.

The Award Assessment Board will reach decisions based on marks or grades and other information related to student performance, and students' disagreement with such decisions cannot constitute grounds for an appeal.

In other words, you cannot appeal a grade just because you disagree with it. There must be some concrete reason for your appeal, such as those outlined above.

Bearing this in mind, if you decide to appeal a grade, you will need to submit a formal appeal to the Quality Improvement Coordinator in the Quality Team at Bridgwater and Taunton College by the deadlines stated in the Academic Regulations. You should not appeal directly to your tutors or the programme administrator.

To find out further details about academic appeals, please refer to the Academic Regulations and the appeal form itself.

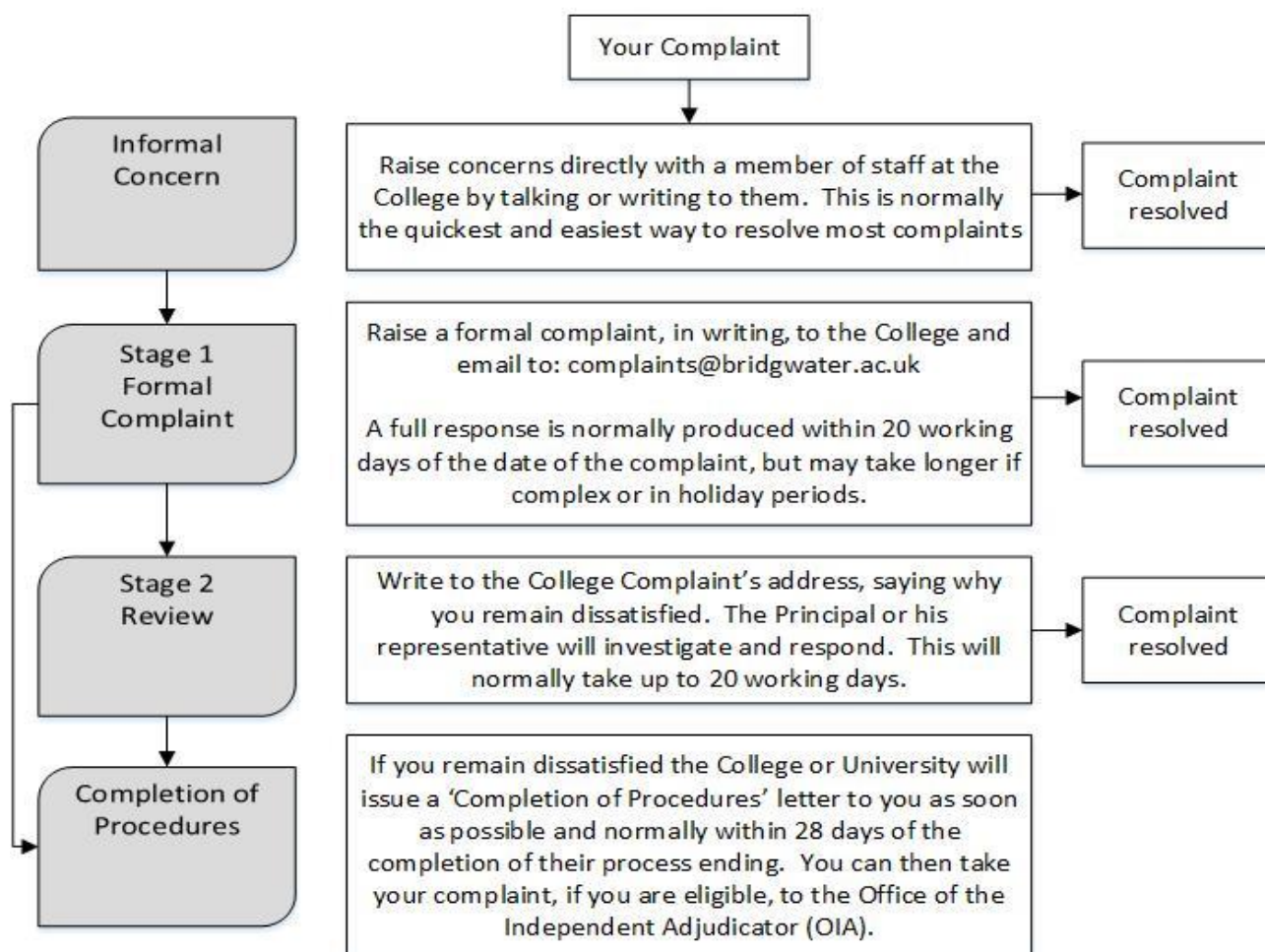
Complaints

We greatly value student feedback, and have procedures and policies in place to ensure your views are heard. If you have a particular concern, we hope to deal with it informally in the first instance, either via your tutor or Programme Manager or through the Student Representative/Learner Voice system.

If your problem is not resolved to your satisfaction, or if you believe that your concerns are not being addressed then you may wish to submit a complaint to the Quality Team by emailing complaints@btc.ac.uk

Here's an overview of the system in place for dealing with formal complaints:

Complaints procedure for Higher Education Student Complaints



Please note the complaints procedure is accurate at the time of printing / publication and is subject to review every three years or as required. Therefore please refer to the OU Academic Regulations on the College's website for up-to-date information.

<https://www.somerset.ac.uk/about-us/wider-information-set/>

Appendix C - Determination of results

i. Assessment weightings for the overall scheme and within specific modules.

How your work is assessed

When you start a module, you will be briefed about the criteria used to assess your work, as well as being given the hand-in dates for assignments, and guidance on how to submit them.

As you work through the module, your tutors will review any assessed work that you have in progress and provide informal ('formative') feedback on it. This will help you refine your work prior to formal submission, thereby giving you every opportunity to achieve your full potential.

At the end of each module, your performance is assessed using the methods described in section 9.1, above. A feedback form will be completed by the marker for each assessment, and given to you so that you know how you have done. The mark awarded will provide an overall picture of your performance.

ii. How results are finalised and communicated to students

At the end of each academic year the Award Assessment Board meets to discuss modules and individual student marks. Once this has taken place and the marks are agreed, you will receive a full transcript containing your approved and final marks for the year. In your final year, this document will tell you the grade you have been awarded for your whole degree.

iii. Rules for determining degree classification, and for the award of honours, distinction, and merit, as applicable.

Your award

The award you receive will depend upon the amount of modules completed, and how many credits you accrue as a result. Here is a guide to the qualifications available:

Qualification	FHEQ Qualification Level	Overall Number of Credits required for award
Certificate of Higher Education	Level 4	120
Foundation Degree	Level 5	240
Non-Honours Bachelor's Degree	Level 6	300
Bachelor's Degree with Honours	Level 6	360

Degree classifications

You will receive a classification that reflects your overall performance in your certificate or degree. Here's how classifications are set at each level:

Overall Mark	Certificate of Higher Education	Foundation Degrees	Bachelors Degrees
0% - 39%	Fail	Fail	Fail
40% - 49%	Pass	Pass	Third (3rd)
50% - 59%			Lower Second (2.2)
60% - 69%	Merit	Merit	Upper Second (2.1)
70% - 100%	Distinction	Distinction	First (1 st)

iv. Other institutional policies and regulations

If you want to view any of Bridgwater and Taunton College's institutional policies and regulations, you can do so on the VLE.

Appendix D - Student participation and evaluation

As a student, we want you to be involved in every facet of College life. With that in mind, we have a number of formal policies in place to ensure student representation at the highest level of our institution. These enshrine our commitment to our students, and give you a direct role in the College's management.

i. Student Representation

Every Higher Education programme team at Bridgwater and Taunton College participates in Annual Programme Monitoring.

This involves taking student evaluations of modules and staff feedback into account and reviewing the quality of teaching and learning on the course. It can also draw on the views of employers involved in Work-Based Learning, and will consider the External Examiner's report.

On the basis of this process, the programme team produces an action plan that identifies goals, and sets out steps to achieve them.

ii. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

All College lecturers are observed at least once a year as part of our lesson-observation programme. This identifies areas of good practice that can be shared among colleagues, and highlights areas for improvement, both individually and corporately.

Staff development sessions are organised regularly so that academic staff can build their skills in teaching and learning by working with other skilled practitioners.

In addition, we are committed to drawing on student experiences when assessing our performance. We invite feedback as part of the module evaluation process, and each curriculum area has a student representative. This person is a go-between, communicating student views to the teaching staff, and reporting back to their peers on quality assurance meetings.

As a further part of our student engagement policy, the HE Study Centre and Learning Resource Centre hold regular student forums, where feedback is gathered on the quality of the service they deliver to users.

Annual student survey

Each year, we invite our students to complete a survey that assesses the College in a variety of areas. This is a valuable source of insight for us, and we build on the findings in refining our activities for the future.

Student board members

Student representatives sit on the Board of Governors, Programme Committees and the Bridgwater and Taunton College Academic Board. This is responsible for all of the HE programmes delivered at College.

You should also have a Student Union representative on your programme, who can liaise with you in relation to all union matters.