# Code of Practice for Student Assessment

The Code of Practice for Student Assessment explains how your study could be assessed. Not all types of assessment apply to all modules and you should read the particular assessment strategy for your module on StudentHome. Throughout this document, when we refer to a 'module' this includes studying a Microcredential through the FutureLearn platform.

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

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

These documents are available on the Student Policy and Regulations website.

## Definitions

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

### Task

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

### Component

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

a. one component of assessment, where the scores from the tasks included lead to a single overall score which is your module result, or

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

### Assignments

These are the tutor-marked (TMA) and interactive computer-marked assessment (iCMA) tasks and any other assessment tasks that contribute to a single overall score or to the continuous assessment component or the examinable component. Where the assessment

strategy for a module comprises only TMAs and iCMAs, the final TMA is referred to as the end-of-module TMA (emTMA).

### End-of-module assessment (EMA) tasks

These are formal written, speaking or computer-based exams or assignments and any other assessment tasks (which may be tutor-marked or computer-marked tasks) that contribute to a single overall score or to the examinable component.

# SA 1 Module assignments

## SA 1.1 How you will know about your assignments

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

## SA 1.2 Submitting assignments

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

## SA 1.3 Assignments for assessment purposes

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

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

## SA 1.4 Assignment score appeals

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

### SA 1.5 Resubmitting assignments

You are not allowed to resubmit any marked assignment, whether tutor-marked or computer-marked, to try to improve the score for that assignment, unless it is an emTMA and your module permits resubmission and you have a resubmission result for the module (see section SA 6).

### SA 1.6 Disciplinary Code

If you are found guilty of misconduct or plagiarism in an assignment, you will be subject to our Code of Practice for Student Discipline, SD 1.2

# SA 2 Exams

## SA 2.1 Exams

The following regulations apply to the conduct of formal exams. We will provide more information about your exam in the Exam Arrangements booklet and supplementary information sheet, which will be published shortly before the exam.

## SA 2.2 Eligibility

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

## SA 2.3 How the exam will be run

Exams will be run as set out by Senate. We will tell you beforehand the date, time and location of the exam, and will give you full information about how the exam will be held. Exams are usually three hours long. No additional time will be allowed either for reading the question paper or for candidates who arrive late for an exam.

## SA 2.4 Students overseas

If you are outside the UK at the time of the exam, you can ask to take your exam overseas. If you would like to request this, you will have to pay a fee in advance for each exam and meet the deadline for requests specified in the Help Centre.

## SA 2.5 In the exam room

### SA 2.5.1 Identification

You must identify yourself in the exam room by producing valid identification (bearing both your photograph and your signature) that the senior invigilator accepts. If you do not provide appropriate identification, you will have to complete a Candidate Identity Certificate statement and you will need to present valid ID to a solicitor or notary for verification at your own expense. Your result will not be released until your identity has been verified.

### SA 2.5.2 Permitted materials

You may take into the exam room only those materials that are authorised in the [Exam Arrangements booklet](#) and supplementary information sheet, or in your letter confirming any additional exam arrangements.

### SA 2.5.3 Late arrival

If you arrive late for the exam you will be allowed into the exam room to complete the exam in the time remaining. If you arrive more than 30 minutes late, your exam script may not be marked.

## SA 2.6 Leaving the exam room

### SA 2.6.1 Leaving within the first 30 minutes

You may not leave the exam room during the first 30 minutes or during the final 15 minutes of the exam session, except in an emergency.

### SA 2.6.2 Leaving after the first 30 minutes

You are allowed to leave the exam room temporarily at any time after the first 30 minutes of the exam session and, as long as you have been accompanied by an invigilator during the time outside of the exam room, you will be allowed back into the exam.

### SA 2.6.3 If you finish your exam early

You are allowed to leave the exam room when you have finished your exam at any time after the first 30 minutes of the exam session and before the final 15 minutes (you must give your question paper, answer booklets and exam stationery to an invigilator when you leave) but you will not be allowed back into the exam.

### SA 2.6.4 Removing stationery

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

## SA 2.7 Conduct of students at the exam

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

### SA 2.7.1 Misconduct during the exam

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

a)  taking into the exam room, or possessing while in that room, any books, notes or other materials, except those which have been supplied by the invigilator or authorised in the [Exam Arrangements booklet supplementary information sheet](#), or your confirmation of additional arrangements letter;

b)  helping or trying to help another student, or getting or trying to get help from another student;

c)  consulting or trying to consult any books, notes, online resources or other material while temporarily outside the exam room during the period of the exam;

d)  having a mobile phone, smart watch, smart glasses, fitness tracker, music player or any other communication or photographic device, at your desk or on your person;

e)  misrepresenting your identity or allowing another person to represent you at the exam;

f)  attempting to influence a script marker or other University official (such as by writing notes on your exam script about special circumstances);

g)  taking photos or copies of any exam papers or scripts;

h)  behaving in any way that is unfitting in an exam room or that might bring the University into disrepute.

### SA 2.7.2 Disciplinary Code

If you are found guilty of misconduct in the exam, you will be subject to our Code of Practice for Student Discipline SD1.2.

### SA 2.7.3 Indiscipline in the exam

For the purpose of this regulation, indiscipline in the exam is defined as any socially unacceptable action or behaviour that comes within the terms of regulation SD 1.3 of the Code of Practice for Student Discipline.

### SA 2.7.4 Serious cases

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

## SA 2.8 Absence from the exam

### SA 2.8.1 Ill health or other serious circumstances

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

We will not offer you another exam if:

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

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

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

# SA 3 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

## SA 3.1 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

The following regulations apply to assessment tasks that are approved as an examinable assessment (EMA), and to the final TMA on modules with no EMA or exam (emTMA). We will provide you with more information in the [Information for Students Submitting Examinable Work booklet](#).

## SA 3.2 Submission of assessment tasks

### SA 3.2.1 Cut-off dates

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

### SA 3.2.2 Late submission

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

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

### SA 3.2.3 Ill health or other serious circumstances

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

**SA 3.2.4 Applying for discretionary postponement (if your module permits this)**

You must apply for a discretionary postponement in accordance with the instructions in the Assessment Handbook. You will need to provide relevant documentary evidence covering the three weeks leading up to the submission period.

We will not offer you another opportunity to submit your assessment task(s) if:

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

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

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

## SA 3.3 Disciplinary Code

If you are found guilty of misconduct or plagiarism in the end-of-module assessment, you will be subject to our Code of Practice for Student Discipline SD 1.2.

# SA 4 Students with disabilities and additional requirements

## SA 4.1 Sources of Information

There is detailed information on the Help Centre about the support we can offer for exams if you have a disability or additional requirement, are ill or injured at the time of the exam, have caring responsibilities, or you are pregnant or a new parent.

## SA 4.2 Assignments

The Assessment Handbook tells you how to submit your assignments and what you must do if you are unable to submit an assignment by the cut-off date. If you feel that any of your assessments have been affected by your disability or additional requirements, you should submit special circumstances as detailed in Paragraph SA 5.1.

## SA 4.3 Exams

If you have declared a disability, we will contact you before your exam to ask you about any reasonable adjustments you may need. If you have not declared a disability but have other additional requirements, you should contact your Student Support Team. You must contact the University to tell us about your needs by the deadlines given on StudentHome and provide third party documentary evidence to support your request.

### SA 4.3.1 If you are unable to get to an exam centre

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

a)  for reasons of ill health or other additional requirements, you cannot go to an exam centre; and

b)  your Student Support Team have approved your request.

The exam will be held under the supervision of an invigilator appointed by us.

### SA 4.3.2 If you are unable to write your answers

You can ask to record your answers in a different format if you have additional requirements that prevent you from completing them in writing.

### SA 4.3.3 Format of question paper

You can ask to have your exam question paper produced in an appropriate format approved by us if you have relevant additional requirements.

### SA 4.3.4 Additional time

You can request additional time in which to complete your exam if you think you will need more time due to your disability or additional requirements.

### SA 4.3.5 Notification of additional arrangements

When the Module Result Panel meets to consider your module result, it will be provided with brief factual details of any additional arrangements which have been made for your exam. If you feel that the arrangements made for your exam did not adequately compensate you for your disability or additional requirements, you should submit special circumstances as detailed in Paragraph SA 5.1.

## SA 4.4 Other end-of-module assessment tasks

### SA 4.4.1 Submission of assessment tasks

If you are unable to submit your assessment task by the cut-off date for reasons related to your disability or additional requirements, you should consider deferral or you may be eligible for discretionary postponement as detailed in paragraph SA 3.2.3. If you complete your assessment but feel that your performance has been affected by your disability or additional requirements, you should submit special circumstances as detailed in Paragraph SA 5.1.

## SA 5 Special circumstances

### SA 5.1 Submission of special circumstances

If you think that you have studied your module effectively but that special circumstances have had a serious effect on your performance in either the exam, other end-of-module assessment or the continuous assessment, you may bring information about this to the attention of the Module Result Panel. You can find further guidance about this in the [Assessment Handbook](#).

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

### SA 5.2 Awarding aegrotat credit

The Open University may award aegrotat credit under policy agreed by Senate to students who are registered or enrolled on the final module of some qualifications. Aegrotat credit is an award of a pass which may be awarded posthumously, or to students who are too ill to complete any further study.

## SA 6 Resits and resubmissions

### SA 6.1 When resits and resubmissions are allowed

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

a)  have achieved an overall assessment score for that module of at least 40, or such other minimum level approved by Senate, in the continuous assessment component and (where this applies) have also achieved a certain score (known as a 'threshold requirement') on specified assessment tasks in the continuous assessment component; or

   have achieved an overall score for that module of at least 30 and (where this applies) have also achieved a certain score (known as a 'threshold requirement' on specified assessment tasks;

   and

b)  (for modules that have a residential school) have satisfied the appropriate residential school requirement or ALE for that module; and

c) (for modules that have an exam) have taken the exam and have achieved any minimum level set by Senate; and

d) (for modules with other end-of-module assessment that allow you to resubmit the work to pass) have achieved any minimum score for this assessment set by Senate for this purpose.

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

Not all modules permit a resit or a resubmission. The assessment strategy for your module will tell you if a resit or resubmission is permitted.

## SA 6.2 Conditions for allowable resits and resubmissions

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

a) Only one resit/resubmission opportunity is permitted for each module registration or enrolment.

b) You must normally resit/sit the exam or resubmit/submit assessment work within a maximum of 3 exam/submission opportunities or within 13 months of the first exam/submission or postponement, whichever occurs first.

### SA 6.2.1 Timing of resits and resubmissions

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

a) You are granted a discretionary postponement (SA2.8) and (SA3.2.4) or,

b) Your resit/resubmission is within 12-16 weeks of your original exam or submission. If your resit/resubmission is within this timescale, you may be eligible to choose to delay your resit/resubmission to the next main exam/submission period (elective postponement). Elective postponements are available for resit/resubmission students only on eligible modules and must be notified to the Open University prior to the resit/resubmission exam/submission date.

### SA 6.2.2 Registration or enrolment for resits and resubmissions

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

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

### SA 6.2.3 Capping of resit resubmission results

When resitting or resubmitting, your final grade will be capped unless you have been notified at the time of your resit/resubmission result that you have been awarded an uncapped

resit/resubmission due to special circumstances. This means that if you are successful in your resit/resubmission, you will not be awarded more than the minimum pass grade for this module.

## SA 7 Viva voce assessment

You may be asked to complete additional assessment tasks, such as a written piece of work or a speaking exam, if the Module Result Panel thinks it is necessary before your module result is determined. You may not request a viva voce assessment.

## Summary of changes made in this Code during 2016

### February 2016

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

## Summary of changes made in this Code during 2019

### November 2019

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

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

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

# 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 Open 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 Open 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 Open 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 in the [Code of Practice for Student Discipline](#) SD1.2.

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