

## Assessment Policy for The Open University awards 2019-20

<b>Member of management responsible</b>	Matthew Twitchet
<b>Author of policy/procedure</b>	Nabeel Zaidi
<b>Peer reviewed by</b>	Colin Bladen-Kopacz, Frazer D'costa
<b>Date agreed by OU</b>	
<b>Date agreed by HE Committee</b>	
<b>Date agreed by CQC (if relevant)</b>	
<b>Date effective from</b>	
<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>Date last amended</b>	
<b>Review date</b>	

# ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND AWARD OF CREDIT

## Introduction

This policy relates to students studying for The Open University awards at South Essex College. Version 1.0 of this policy was drafted by and the responsibility of the Faculty of Higher Education (HE). This policy has now been updated to reflect the new structure outside of the Faculty of HE where The OU HE provision continues to reside, but with changed oversight and quality assurance arrangements within that structure.

- 1.0 The forms of assessment and its weighting and timing, and the ways in which the learning outcomes are to be demonstrated through assessment, are set out in the module and programme specifications approved by The Open University at the point of validation.
- 1.1 Each programme handbook contains comprehensive details of the assessment scheme as approved by The Open University in the validation process.

### **2.0 Minimum requirements for pass**

- 2.1 To obtain an Open University award students are required to complete all parts of the programme's approved assessment and comply with all regulations relating to their programme of study.
- 2.2 The minimum aggregate pass marks for The Open University validated awards are:  
40% for undergraduate programmes  
50% for postgraduate programmes.

These minima apply to assessments, modules, stages and qualifications.

### **3.0 Identification of requirements from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies**

- 3.1 Additional academic regulations required by any professional, statutory or recognised regulatory body will be set out in the relevant programme specification and approved by The Open University in the validation process.

### **4.0 Submission of assessed work**

- 4.1 Work submitted for a summative assessment component cannot be amended after submission, or re-submitted.
- 4.2 Student requests for extensions to assessment deadlines will not be approved unless made in accordance with published partner institution guidelines as approved by The Open University.
- 4.3 Where coursework is submitted late and there are no accepted extenuating circumstances it will be penalised in line with the following tariff:

Submission within 6 working days after the deadline date: a 10% reduction deducted from the overall marked score for each working day late, down to the 40% pass mark

(for UG) and 50% pass Mark (PG awards) and no further.

Submission that is late by 7 or more working days: submission refused, mark of 0.

Students who fail to submit work for assessments or attend examinations shall be deemed to have failed the assessments components concerned and will be marked as 0.

## 5.0 Assessment scores

5.1 All undergraduate assessment will be marked on a percentage scale of 0-100.

% Scale Score	Performance Standard
70+	Excellent pass
60-69	Very Good pass
50-59	Good Pass
40-49	Pass
0-39	Fail

5.2 All postgraduate assessment will be marked on a percentage scale of 0-100. Taught postgraduate awards may include merit and/or distinction classification (see paragraph 18.1).

% Scale Score	Performance Standard
70+	Distinction
60-69	Merit
50-59	Pass
0-49	Fail

5.3 The final grade for an individual assessment component will be determined after completion of a quality assurance process (e.g. moderation, remarking) as detailed in the partner institution's OU approved policy for moderation.

5.4 The result of the overall assessment calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater, this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.5% is rounded to 70; 59.5% to 60%; and so on). Where the calculation creates a mark below 0.5%, this will be rounded down to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.4% is rounded to 69%; 59.4% to 59%; and so on). For the purposes of rounding up or down, only the first decimal place is used.

## **6.0 Marking and moderation**

### ***Assessment Strategy***

6.1 The relevant department where The OU provision resides (“relevant department”) should develop an assessment strategy for each course, or set of courses, for approval in the annual monitoring process. The assessment strategy should address the following issues:

- Diversity of assessment within a course;
- Coverage of module learning outcomes by assessment methods;
- The balance between monitored and unmonitored assessment;
- Approaches to prevent and detect plagiarism in assessment;
- Professional Body Requirements, if appropriate;

and in cases of where programmes are proposing to have modules assessed by 100% coursework:

- Appropriate use of the academic year;
- Approaches to assessment for the discipline at other comparable institutions.

### ***Assessment of Performance-based Coursework (including oral presentations)***

6.2 Performance-based assessment with a permanent output, capable of being shown to the External Examiner should be subject to the normal policy for essays/assignments, but only where the permanent output relates directly to the assessment criteria. For example, a presentation where output such as a PowerPoint document is submitted would still count as performance-based coursework with non-permanent output, unless a learning outcome being assessed is academic content rather than presentation skill.

6.3 Performance-based assessment with a non-permanent output worth up to and including 40% of a module may be single marked. Where this type of assessment contributes to more than 40% of a module, work must be either double-marked, team marked, video/audio recorded or attended by the external examiner based on 100% coverage of the whole cohort.

### ***Assessment of Group Work***

6.4 Group work with a permanent output should be subject to the normal moderation process for essays/assignments.

6.5 Group work with a non-permanent output should be subject to the policy for the assessment of performance-based coursework.

6.6 The maximum amount that a joint mark (where a single group mark is derived from people working together in a group) can contribute to a single module is 25%.

### ***Marks for Participation***

6.7 Marks for participation may contribute no more than 5 percent of the overall mark of a module and the marks should relate to a module learning outcome.

### ***Moderation of Work-based Learning/Placement***

- 6.8 The assessment of work-based learning/placement should be subject to the normal departmental procedures in respect of moderation and external examining.

### ***Moderation of Study Abroad Work***

- 6.9 The University should take the mark awarded by the host institution and use the established conversion tables to convert the mark to the standard University scale. The External Examiner should have oversight of the marks awarded by a host institution and the conversion used.
- 6.10 The External Examiner should be invited to provide comment, through his/her report, if he/she observes any anomalies between the converted marks and the rest of the students' marks profiles.

### ***Requests from students to have their work re-marked***

- 6.11 Where coursework has a permanent output and is single marked, students have the right to request formal re-marking of a piece of work if they disagree with the original.
- 6.12 Where coursework has a permanent output and is marked by single marking with moderation, students have the right to request that a piece of work is re-marked if they disagree with the original mark in one or both of the following circumstances:
- If procedural/administrative error is suspected.
  - If their work was not initially included in a sample of work moderated.
- 6.13 The right under 2 above can only be exercised if the student has had a meeting with the initial marker of the work (or a substitute appointed by the Vice Principal Quality and Compliance where the initial marker is unavailable) to obtain further feedback on the reason for the initial mark, and had subsequently made the request for re-marking, on the form provided for that purpose, including the signature of the first marker or substitute as a confirmation that the meeting has taken place, within two weeks of term time from the date of initial feedback to students. Students must be aware that marks can decrease, increase or remain the same after the re-marking. The right to a remark under 2 above can only be requested, for any particular piece of work, on one occasion.
- 6.13 When work is re-marked on another basis, it must be second or double marked by another member of staff. The marks must be reconciled. The relevant department must publish its policy on how students can request such re-marking, and they must warn students that marks can go down as well as up. The relevant department are advised to set a deadline for students to submit their requests for re-marking. It can determine the appropriate level of feedback to give the student on the re-marked work.
- 6.14 Students cannot request that their exams are re-marked unless a procedural / administration error is suspected.

### ***Reconciliation of Marks***

- 6.15 Where two members of staff are involved in marking a piece of work, the markers should make every effort to agree a mark, rather than merely averaging the two marks. The relevant department must keep a full record of both individual and agreed marks for all work which is second or double marked.
- 6.16 Where the two internal markers are unable to reach agreement, the relevant department should make every effort to resolve the matter internally, for example by involving a third person to arbitrate or, if necessary, to act as a third marker. Work should only be sent to an External Examiner, who will be asked to arbitrate, in exceptional circumstances. The External must be given access to written comments from internal markers on the piece(s) of work involved.

### ***The Role of the External Examiner***

- 6.17 Unless the External has been specifically sent work to arbitrate on a dispute between internal markers, the External's role will be as a moderator. Externals should not act as second markers. In moderating student work the Module External is providing an independent overview of the consistency of approaches to assessment. As such, the Module External's primary concern is with the overall marking standard in the module rather than with marks obtained by individual students. The External should not alter the marks of any individual student.

### ***Marking the Work of Students who are Partners or Close Relatives***

- 6.18 Staff should not mark the work of partners or close relatives unless approval is given by the Vice Principal Quality and Compliance. In the case of a query, the Head of the relevant department should determine whether there is a conflict of interest.

### ***Moderating/Second Marking/ Double Marking the Work by Staff who are Partners or Close Relatives***

- 6.19 Staff should not act as moderator or second marker where their partner or close relative is the first marker unless approval is given by the Vice Principal Quality and Compliance. In the case of a query, the Vice Principal Quality and Compliance should determine whether there is a conflict of interest.

### ***Marking Policy for all Taught Students***

<b>Coursework</b>	<b>Marking Protocol (minimum requirements)</b>
An individual item of coursework worth up to and including 40% of an individual module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Essays/assignments</li><li>• Coursework tests using written answer papers, including in-class tests and progress tests</li><li>• Performance-based coursework with a permanent output, capable of being shown to the External Examiner</li></ul>	Single marked.  Anonymous moderation required for new staff, and assessed coursework titles and tests marked by multiple staff.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance-based coursework with a non-permanent output</li> <li>• Group work with a permanent output</li> <li>• Group work with a non-permanent output</li> </ul>	
<p>An individual item of coursework contributing more than 40% of an individual module:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essays/assignments</li> <li>• Coursework tests using written answer papers, including in-class tests and progress tests</li> <li>• Performance-based coursework with a permanent output, capable of being shown to the External Examiner</li> <li>• Group work with a permanent output</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All fails must be (Anonymous) second-marked and a random sample (10%) must also be (Anonymously) moderated</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coursework testing using OMR sheets or online testing tools</li> <li>• Coursework marked to a marking schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An independent check must be made to ensure that the programme is working accurately and that marks have been assigned to the correct candidates.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual items of coursework comprising at least 30 credits (including PGT Dissertation and final year undergraduate project reports)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All must be second marked or double marked. (Anonymously)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance-based coursework with a non-permanent output that contributes to more than 40% of a single module</li> <li>• Group work with a non-permanent output that contributes to more than 40% of a single module</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All must be (Anonymously) double-marked or team marked, or video/audio recorded or attended by the external examiner.</li> </ul>
<b>Examination</b>	<b>Marking Protocol</b>
<p>All exams at level 4; and exams at level 5 which count for 50% or less of the module mark</p>	<p>The scripts only need to be (Anonymously) single-marked, but all fails must be second-marked and a random sample (10%) must also be moderated. Where a formal marking schedule is in place it is not necessary to second-mark or sample - but an independent check must be made on all marks calculations. Marking schedules must be reviewed as part of the department's procedures for reviewing draft exam papers.</p>
<p>All exams at level 5 which count for greater than 50% of the module mark; and all exams at level 6 and 7</p>	<p>All scripts must be (Anonymously) second marked, double marked or marked to a marking schedule</p>