

Assessment FAQ for Students

How will my module be assessed?

Your module can be assessed in a variety of different ways. The different types of assessment have been designed with particular learning outcomes in mind. For example, the traditional unseen exam is used to assess students working under pressure. Of course your assessments should not be limited to simply exams; rather you should be assessed in a variety of other ways such as presentations, essays, fieldwork, placements, dissertations, and peer-reviews. This list is by no means exhaustive but should give a flavour of the types of assessments you may encounter.

How is my module graded?

There are various grades given to an assessed piece of work ranging from A1 through to N for non-submission. The grades are given depending on the level of work submitted and how strongly it achieved the marking criteria as highlighted in the module descriptors. The table below shows the grades and the numerical mark needed to achieve that grade.

| Grade | Numerical Range (%) | Definition UG (Levels 7-10) | Definition PG (Levels 11-12) |
|-------|---------------------|---|--|
| A1 | 90-100 | Exceptional | Exceptional |
| A2 | 80-89 | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| A3 | 70-79 | Excellent | Excellent |
| B1 | 60-69 | Very good | Very good |
| B2 | 50-59 | Good (Above threshold standard for a pass) | Good (Meets threshold standard for a pass) |
| C | 40-49 | Basic competence (Meets threshold standard for a pass) | Basic competence (Does not meet threshold standard for a pass) |
| D | 30-39 | Unsatisfactory (Does not meet threshold standard for a pass) | Unsatisfactory (Well below threshold standard for a pass) |
| E | 1-29 | Very unsatisfactory (Well below threshold standard for a pass) | Very unsatisfactory (Significantly below threshold standard for a pass) |
| N | 0 | No work to assess | No work to assess |

What is the pass mark and how do I gain academic credit?

Credit is automatically awarded for all modules where the pass threshold for an individual module has been met. The pass threshold is set at 40% for modules at undergraduate levels, Years 1 through to 4 (level 7-10), and 50% for modules at postgraduate level (level 11 and 12). You require 120 credits per stage of study for an undergraduate degree and 180 credits for a Master's degree.

What happens if my coursework is late?

If you submit an assessed piece of coursework late there will be a penalty applied. This will be 10 percentage points off your mark up to 7 days from the submission date (e.g. original mark of 57% will be reduced to 47%). If you miss this date also, your work will be given a mark of 0 or non-submission. However, if there is good cause for late submission, then you can ask the module co-ordinator for an extension. If this is granted then no penalty will be applied but work must be submitted within that extension or a mark of 0%, grade N, will be applied.

What if an assessed piece of coursework does not meet the pass mark?

If an assessed piece of coursework does not meet the requirements of a pass mark then you will be given an opportunity to re-sit that particular piece of coursework (not necessarily the same piece of coursework at the re-assessment diet). NB: If you do not submit all coursework elements you will be coded as re-attend which impacts on potentially re-attending a module(s). If it is your first attempt then you will be allowed two further attempts, providing that the previous mark was not an N or 0. (Again note differences between UG and PG regulations as PG only have 1 re-assessment opportunity). The timing of the re-assessment opportunities will be communicated to you by the module co-ordinator.

What is a deadline?

A deadline is the date and time by which a piece of assessed coursework is due for submission. Extensions to this deadline may be granted by the module co-ordinator, providing that there is good reason to do so. Failure to meet this deadline, without an extension, will incur a 10 point deduction from the hundred points available up to seven days; anything submitted after the seven days without extension will be treated as a non-submission.

What is plagiarism?

University Regulations define cheating and plagiarism as "*the attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment by gaining credit for work of another person or by accessing unauthorised material relating to assessment*"

In the event of a minor or serious case of plagiarism, the Plagiarism Panel Chair will determine the sanction to be imposed and will inform the student of that sanction. Students have the right of appeal against the decision of the Panel and appeals will be referred to the Senate Disciplinary Committee. Major cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Senate Disciplinary Committee for consideration under the Code of Discipline for Students.

How do I submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim?

Extenuating Circumstance (Reg 7.7 and 7.8)

A new approach to extenuating circumstances (mitigation) will be implemented for modules commencing 2016/17.

The key features of the new approach are:

- Students will be able to self-certify by completing an online extenuating circumstances (EC) statement. They do not need 3rd party evidence to support their statement;
- Students have a maximum of two years to pass all the assessments associated with a module. This maintains the 'currency of knowledge';
- The number of assessment opportunities has no changes. Undergraduate students will still get three attempts to pass a module, with one extra attempt (within the two-year period) on submission of an EC statement;
- If a student submits a piece of assessment, it will be marked and the mark will be counted (fit-to sit);
- If a student submits an assessment and then decides that they had extenuating circumstances and subsequently submits an EC statement (within 48 hours), any mark achieved for the assessment will not be counted;
- Exceptionally, where a student has decided that their extenuating circumstances have affected their performance, but is unable to submit an EC statement within 48 hours they should submit a 'late EC statement' through the Appeals route (Reg 13). Further information on the new approach to extenuating circumstances can be found on the SAUWS website.

How quickly will I receive feedback on an assessed piece of work?

You should receive feedback within Three Working Weeks (15 working days) of submitting coursework. One thing to bear in mind is that feedback can come in various forms and may not be limited to written comments. Feedback can be in the form of verbal feedback, comments sent in emails from lecturing staff, and the comments attached to turnitin; or through marking rubrics.

If you've not received feedback of some kind within three weeks of submitting coursework, please contact your lecturer in the first instance. If you still do not receive feedback then this must be escalated to the module co-ordinator. If, however, this is the same person then contact the programme leader for your course. If you still do not receive feedback then contact the Students' Association who will be able to advise further.

This is of course just a select list of questions and answers that are likely to come up during your studies. If you require further or more detailed information please use the links below or contact your programme leader.



John Black
President of Education
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Website links for further and extended information:

University Regulations 7 on Assessment:

http://www.uws.ac.uk/uploadedfiles/flexible_page_content/current_students/rights_and_regulations/regulatory_framework/regulation%207%20assessment.pdf

Assessment Handbook for Staff:

http://www.uws.ac.uk/uploadedfiles/flexible_page_content/current_students/rights_and_regulations/regulatory_framework/assessment%20handbook%202015-16.pdf

Self-Service Banner:

<http://ssb.uws.ac.uk>

Students' Association of the University of the West of Scotland:

<http://www.sauws.org.uk>

Academic Advice:

<https://www.sauws.org.uk/advice/academicadvice/>