

Section 32 Agreed penalties policy

32.1 Penalties for over-length work

32.1.1 Limits are specified for some assessed work in order to maintain equity between all students doing the same assessment. Module Directors/Tutors must clearly communicate this information to students in the assessment brief.

32.1.2 Assessed work should not exceed the prescribed word limit. Students may be subject to a penalty if they exceed that limit.

32.1.3 The penalties are:

Amount over the limit	Penalty
Less than 10%	Deduct no marks, but note in feedback
Between 10-24%	Deduct 5 marks*
Between 25-49%	Deduct 15 marks*
More than 50%	Eligible only for the capped pass mark

* Or given a capped pass mark, whichever is greater e.g., a raw mark of 43 would be capped at a mark of 40 for an undergraduate student if the work was 20% over the word limit

32.1.4 If a failure mark is given for the raw assessment mark (i.e., undergraduate between 1-39 or postgraduate 1-49) then the over-length penalty is applied to the failure mark. Students should also be made aware through feedback what the original mark was and the penalty that has been applied.

32.1.5 For written work, the student must provide an accurate word count for each piece of work they submit. This will normally rely on the word count system within Microsoft Word.

32.1.6 The word limit specified for written assessments excludes:

- Tables (tables may not include large amounts of text)
- Graphs
- Equations
- Footnotes
- Bibliography
- Appendices – Appendices may contain diagrams, tables or visual images but not large amounts of text

32.1.7 Markers will check the declared word count on the cover sheet against the word limit specified for that assessment. If the word count exceeds the specified word limit, the appropriate penalty will be applied. This is reported to the School Assessment Board when the mark is agreed.

32.1.8 If it is suspected that the student has not declared the word count honestly, and that the work is longer than declared, the word count may be checked, and a penalty applied. The School Assessment Board may reserve the right to refer a student for consideration under the University's 'Academic Misconduct Policy' (refer to [section 24](#)).

32.1.9 Work is marked normally, and the over-length penalty is applied to the raw provisional mark for the assessment. This applies when marking first attempt work or reassessment work.

32.2 Penalties for under-length work

- 32.2.1 There is **no penalty** for under-length work providing there is sufficient suitable content. Writing significantly less than the word count set increases the risk that the work will not adequately address the assignment brief and learning outcomes. Work is assessed on its academic merits and this will be reflected in the mark awarded and the feedback provided for the piece of work.

32.3 Penalties for late work and non-submissions

- 32.3.1 The University has a uniform policy for the late submission penalty for a piece of summative assessed work.
- 32.3.2 The deadline for work is **on the hour**, i.e., where the deadline is 12:00 noon, work submitted at 12:00:01 is considered late.
- This is to ensure clarity and consistency for students, and the continued effective management of the University's academic standards (i.e., applying discretion beyond the deadline does not constitute a fair and transparent approach).
- Students are advised to submit their work **at least 1 hour before the deadline** (refer to [section 11.5.6](#)).
- 32.3.3 Late submission penalties are **applied to the raw assessment mark** not the module mark.
- 32.3.4 If the student incurs both an over-length penalty and a late submission penalty, then the over-length penalty is applied first, and the late submission penalty is applied to the over-length adjusted mark.
- 32.3.5 If a failure mark is given for the raw assessment mark (i.e., undergraduate between 1-39 or postgraduate 1-49), then a late submission penalty is not applied. This only applies to work submitted within 5 working days. Students who submit after 5 working days receive a penalty mark of zero.
- 32.3.6 The penalty for submitting work late for an assessment marked on a pass/fail basis is a failure. Failures in pass/fail modules cannot be condoned or compensated but can normally be reassessed if failed at first attempt.
- 32.3.7 Refer to [section 11.6.10](#) for information on the treatment of errors made during the submission process for example, submitting an incorrect file, or to the wrong Moodle site, or submitting to the School or a tutor's university email account.
- 32.3.8 In cases where a student submits work late such that it incurs a penalty mark of zero (i.e., a first attempt submitted after 5 working days from the submission date, or a late reassessment attempt), it is at the School's discretion to decide if they will mark the work and provide feedback. There is no obligation to mark work and provide feedback for work submitted after 5 working days. If marked, the mark given would be indicative only, and the student would retain the penalty mark of zero. There is no obligation for the School to mark work or provide feedback for work submitted late after 5 working days.

32.3.9 When a penalty is applied for a first attempt:

Submission	Penalty for assessment component
Work submitted by the published deadline (or approved extension deadline – i.e., through the exceptional circumstances or LSP processes)	No penalty, eligible for a full mark
Work submitted after the assessment deadline (or approved extension deadline) but within:	
1 hour	Deduct 5 marks* *Apply a capped pass if deducting marks reduces a passing mark to a failure mark
1 hour to 24 hours**	Deduct 10 marks* *Apply a capped pass if deducting marks reduces a passing mark to a failure mark
24 hours to 5 working days	Capped pass
Arriving late for a scheduled assessment (without exceptional circumstances) e.g., attending a presentation, viva etc. on the same day after the allotted time. This does not apply to examinations. Note: it may not always be possible to reschedule an assessment if a student is late	
1 hour	Deduct 10 marks* *Apply a capped pass if deducting marks reduces a passing mark to a failure mark
1 to 3 hours	Capped pass
Work for a 'timed assessment' (refer to section 10.15) submitted after the published assessment deadline (or approved extension deadline) but within:	
1 hour	Deduct 10 marks* *Apply a capped pass if deducting marks reduces a passing mark to a failure mark
1 to 3 hours	Capped pass
Work submitted after 5 working days*** of the published deadline (or approved extension deadline) Work not submitted, or submitted after 3 hours of the published deadline for a 'timed assessment' (refer to section 10.15) Non-attendance for an examination (without approved exceptional circumstances) Non-attendance for a scheduled assessment (without exceptional circumstances) e.g., presentation, viva etc.	Receives a mark of zero

** '24 hours' runs for the 24-hour period following the deadline e.g., for a submission on Friday at 12.00 noon the 24-hour period is until 12.00 noon Saturday

*** A 'working day' runs from 12.00 noon to 12.00 noon excluding weekends, bank holidays, University closure days at Christmas but includes Monday to Friday through vacation periods

32.3.10 When a penalty is applied for a reassessment attempt:

Resubmission	Penalty for reassessment component
Work resubmitted by the published reassessment deadline (or approved extended deadline)	No penalty, but the reassessment capping rule applies i.e., the maximum module mark that can be achieved is a pass mark
Work resubmitted after the published deadline (or approved extended deadline)	Receives a mark of zero – reassessments submitted late are not eligible for capped marks
<p>Work not resubmitted after the published deadline (or approved extended deadline)</p> <p>Work not resubmitted for a 'timed assessment' after the published deadline (refer to section 10.15)</p> <p>Non-attendance for a resit examination (without approved exceptional circumstances)</p> <p>Non-attendance or lateness for a scheduled reassessment (without exceptional circumstances) e.g., presentation, viva etc.</p>	Receives a mark of zero

Examples – all deadlines are 12:00 noon

- 32.3.11 An undergraduate or postgraduate first-attempt submission submitted at 12.45pm on the submission date given a raw mark of 64, would have 5 marks deducted.
- 32.3.12 An undergraduate or postgraduate first-attempt submission submitted at 4.00pm on the submission date given a raw mark of 64, would have a penalty of 10 marks deducted, giving a final mark of 54 for the assessment.
- 32.3.13 An undergraduate first-attempt submission submitted at 4.00pm on the submission date given a raw mark of 44, would have a penalty of 10 marks deducted, but as the work is of passing standard the penalty applied is a capped final mark of 40 for the assessment (rather than a failure mark of 34).
- 32.3.14 A postgraduate first-attempt submission submitted at 4.00pm on the submission date given a raw mark of 56, would have a penalty of 10 marks deducted, but as the work is of passing standard the penalty applied is a capped final mark of 50 for the assessment (rather than a failure mark of 46).
- 32.3.15 An undergraduate first-attempt submission submitted 32 hours after the submission date given a raw mark of 48, would have a penalty of 10 marks deducted, but as the work is of passing standard the penalty applied is a capped final mark of 40 for the assessment (rather than a failure mark of 38).
- 32.3.16 A resubmission resubmitted at 12.01pm would be given a final mark of zero for the assessment.