

Word Count and Marking of Over-length Coursework Policy

This policy relates to taught students and regulations must be read in conjunction with the *Taught Degree Regulations*.

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1. **Scope of the policy**

The policy set out in this regulation covers modules assessed wholly or partly by coursework. It covers coursework of all sorts, including essays, extended essays, reports, independent study projects and dissertations.

2. **Word limits**

The word limit prescribed for each piece of assessed coursework is a maximum. Assessments are designed to enable students to achieve excellent marks without writing to the limit. There is consequently no specific penalty for work that is under-length. Under-length work is dealt with by the normal provisions of the marking scheme.

3. **Provision of a word count**

Students must provide an accurate word count on their assignment for all coursework submitted for assessment. Examiners will normally give students the benefit of the doubt and will regard small undeclared over-runs as genuine errors of calculation, but significant inaccuracies in declared word counts will be treated as an offence under the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

4. **Definition of word count**

Word count is defined as the number of words contained in the submitted work including quotations, footnotes, titles, abstracts, summaries and tables of contents. Appendices and bibliographies are not included in the word count. Appendices will not normally be marked and they must not include material essential to the argument developed in the main body of the work.

5. **Special provisions**

Where work is expected to include significant amounts of non-textual content (e.g. musical or mathematical notation or linguistic structure diagrams), specific word count guidance will be provided for each assignment. Where work is expected to include the presentation of foreign language material with significant use of interlinear glosses and idiomatic translations, specific word count guidance will be provided for each assignment.

6. **Penalties for over-length coursework**

Marks will be deducted for work that exceeds the prescribed word limit. The reduced mark will be entered onto the record of results on the student database. The deductions for over-length work are as follows:

Excess Length

Up to and including 10%
More than 10% up to and including 20%
More than 20% up to and including 30%
More than 30%

Mark deduction

5 percentage points
10 percentage points
15 percentage points
The work will be assigned a grade of 0.

7. Resubmission of coursework that has been subject to a penalty for being over-length and late

- 7.1 Over-length coursework for which the mark after penalty is the minimum pass mark (40 undergraduate; 50 postgraduate) or more may not be revised and resubmitted.
- 7.2 Over-length coursework for which the mark after penalty is less than the minimum pass mark (39 or less for undergraduate; 49 or less for postgraduate) may not be revised and resubmitted if the module for which it forms a part has been passed.
- 7.3 Normal resit requirements apply to over-length coursework for which the mark after penalty is less than the minimum pass mark (39 or less for undergraduate; 49 or less for postgraduate) and the module of which it forms a part has been failed overall.
- 7.4 Resubmission will be at the next available opportunity as outlined in the [Taught Degree Regulations](#).
- 7.5 Capping of the overall mark for the module at the minimum pass mark will apply as appropriate.

8. Coursework subject to a penalty for being over-length and late

If coursework is over-length and submitted late, the deduction of marks for over-length work will be applied first and the penalty for late submission will be applied second. If, as a result, the coursework mark is less than the minimum pass mark (39 or less for undergraduate; 49 or less for postgraduate) then if resubmission is permitted the coursework must be on a new topic.

Document Version

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2015/16	John Peck, Head of Registry and Quality, Jenni Rhodes, Quality Assurance Manager	Policy removed from the Taught Degree Regulations. Approved by LTQC on 03.06.2015.	3 June 2015
2015/16	Eva Peters, Curriculum & Regulations Officer	Correction of section 8 to include information omitted from previous version (“...then if resubmission is permitted coursework must be on a new topic”). Approved by LTQC on 03.02.2016.	15 February 2016
2018/19	Eva Peters, Curriculum & Regulations Officer	Terminology updates in line with restructuring. Approved by LTQC 29.05.2018.	July 2018