

# ONLINE SUBMISSION PROTOCOLS

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## 1.1 Arrangements for Online Submission

- 1.1.1 Assessment for online submission should normally be uploaded through the University Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in use in your School, using either the Blackboard Assignment Tool or Turnitin. Training materials will be made available for both staff and students in order to fully support this process.

By enabling the online submission of work the University is in a significantly better position to improve the assessment and feedback experience of staff and students.

The University recognises that some forms of assessment cannot be submitted directly online as either the VLE does not support a particular format of the assessment, or due to the nature of the assessment, such as an oral presentation or a lab book. In these cases, Schools should publish clear guidance to students on the submission process at the time that the assessment is set.

Alternative arrangements can be made for staff and students with additional needs.

## 1.2 Deadlines for Submission

- 1.2.1 All staff should be familiar with University policy surrounding setting deadlines for submission as outlined in Section 6.9 of the Assessment Handbook.
- 1.2.2 All students and staff should be familiar with University policy surrounding the management of extenuating circumstances as outlined in the *Policy on and procedures relating to extenuating*

*circumstances* (available at: [www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/exceptional-circumstances.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/exceptional-circumstances.pdf)).

- 1.2.3 Assessment deadlines indicate the time by which on-time submissions should be made. In order to avoid penalties, work must be submitted **before** the stated time. Any submissions made on or after the deadline will be classed as late, unless covered by the University's policy on extenuating circumstances.

## 1.3 Academic Integrity

- 1.3.1 All students and staff should be familiar with University policy surrounding academic integrity as outlined in the *Policy and procedures relating to academic misconduct* (available at: [www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/9-academic-integrity-and-academic-misconduct-final.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/9-academic-integrity-and-academic-misconduct-final.pdf))

By submitting online, students automatically agree to observe conventions of academic integrity and the specific rules applied by the University of Reading. A statement on the submission of original work is available by default when submitting via Turnitin. A statement may be added manually to the assessment brief when submitting via Blackboard.

## 1.4 File Version, Format and Location

- 1.4.1 Submitted work should normally involve using only the software generally available to students on the programme(s) concerned. If specialist software is needed it must be specified and equity of access for students must be addressed.
- 1.4.2 It is the student's responsibility to submit the correct file, including the correct version, to the appropriate submission point within the VLE, in an acceptable and accessible format free from any viruses, prior to the deadline.
- 1.4.3 It is the student's responsibility to check that the process has been followed according to School or Departmental submission guidelines, to immediately review submission receipts, to recheck that the submitted file is correct, has been uploaded successfully and can be viewed or downloaded following submission. Failed submission attempts or partial completion of the online process does not indicate successful submission.
- 1.4.4 If a submission mistake is identified *prior* to the submission deadline, and the work has not yet been marked, students should resubmit their file, if possible.

If this is not possible, students must inform a Student Support Coordinator or other member of the programme administrative teams immediately to arrange resubmission. The Student Support Coordinator (SSC) will contact the module convenor, or the Programme Administrator, as appropriate. The SSC must always inform the module convenor if a student has not been able to resubmit themselves, so that the convenor is aware that the student alerted staff to the error prior to the deadline.

Submission errors detected *prior* to the submission deadline will not be penalised as long as the correct and readable versions of the files are submitted by the deadline.

- 1.4.5 If a student submits a file containing a virus, but the presence of the virus is unknown to the student and outside of the control of the student, no penalty marks will be applied as long as the original file was submitted before the deadline. This applies even when the submission is found to be inaccessible **after** the deadline. The student will be required to resubmit the work as soon as practicable after they are notified. Students are advised to check that their work can be opened, is viewable, is not password protected and not corrupted once submitted, in order to enable themselves to rectify the situation in advance of a deadline. Students should make use of virus scanning software prior to submission where possible. The deliberate submission of files containing a virus may be subject to University disciplinary procedures as outlined in the *Policy and Procedures Relating to Academic Misconduct* (available at [www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/9-academic-integrity-and-academic-misconduct-final.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/9-academic-integrity-and-academic-misconduct-final.pdf)) and/or *Student Disciplinary Procedures* (available at [www.reading.ac.uk/essentials/-/media/essentials/files/the-important-stuff/discipline-and-suspension/student-disciplinary-procedure-010921.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/essentials/-/media/essentials/files/the-important-stuff/discipline-and-suspension/student-disciplinary-procedure-010921.pdf))
- 1.4.6 Students should ensure that files are submitted according to any specifications outlined in school, department, programme or module guidance. This may include, but is not limited to, file types such as .pdf, Microsoft Word documents .doc or .docx, Excel .xlxs or Rich text format .rtf. Guidance may also include file format including font size or spacing. Students should check files carefully both prior to and after submission, especially if a file has been converted from one format to another as formatting may be affected. If a student submits a file which is not in line with specifications in terms of file type or format, penalties may apply although the University does accept that there may be some cases where students could not have reasonably identified problems before and after submission causing conversion issues. In addition, if a student has a disability registered by Disability Advisory Service (DAS) which relates to this process, then allowances can be made in line with reasonable adjustments recommended by DAS.
- 1.4.7 If an error involving submission to the wrong submission point or draft area is identified **after** the deadline has passed, but that submission was made prior to the deadline, no penalties will be applied. Students and staff should inform a Student Support Coordinator immediately to arrange for the assessment to be moved to the correct submission point.
- 1.4.8 A student will not normally be allowed to submit amended coursework after the deadline when they have already submitted before the deadline, unless this has been permitted as part of the exceptional circumstances procedures. In other cases, the School Director of Teaching and Learning can allow such resubmissions only if an error was made in submitting an incorrect version, for example work for a different assessment, or an empty file. In such cases the usual late penalty will apply to the resubmitted work. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they submit the correct and complete version of their work by the stated deadline.
- 1.4.9 Students are strongly advised to submit their work well in advance of the deadline time; any discrepancy in the student's computer clock or slower than anticipated upload time may result in the submission being late.
- 1.4.10 Errors surrounding the calculation of correct deadline timing would not normally be considered as a reason to waive the penalty. Students should check deadlines carefully, with particular attention to relevant time zones. Standard penalties for late submission will apply in line with existing University policy on late submission (available at: [www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/penaltiesforlatesubmission.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/penaltiesforlatesubmission.pdf) &

## 1.5 Dual Submission

- 1.5.1 Schools should not normally require hard copy submission of assignments from students in addition to submission via the VLE with the exception of presentations, posters, dissertations, and major project work as detailed in advance by the School or Department. If dual submission is required the rationale should be clearly outlined to students. Hard copy and online submissions will have the same deadline.
- 1.5.2 It is the student's responsibility to ensure that any assessment submitted in both hard copy and online is identical. Schools should treat the electronic version as the master copy when considering the timing of submission and in terms of version control. The costs associated with any compulsory printing are met by students and should be outlined at the start of the module.
- An electronic copy of a presentation or poster may be required to support the provision of electronic feedback.

## 1.6 System Difficulties

- 1.6.1 A fault, or a problem with the University Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in use in your School, Turnitin or a problem with network facilities maintained by the University, specifically to support students, may impact on submission of online assessments. Faults may be identified by students or staff who should report them to the IT Service Desk as soon as possible (e-mail [it@reading.ac.uk](mailto:it@reading.ac.uk); ext. 6262). The problem will then be investigated and the impact assessed. Where submission is delayed due to a fault with the VLE, Turnitin or University maintained network facilities, assignments will not be subject to any penalties for late submission up to the amended deadline as long as students adhere to all subsequent instructions for resubmission.
- In the event of a verified systems outage lasting less than one hour, which impacts on the ability of students to submit work, all affected summative assessment due during and within one hour of the end of the outage will be given an amended deadline, 24 hours from the original deadline.
- In the event of a verified system outage lasting one hour or more, which impacts on the ability of students to submit work, all affected summative assessment due during and within 24 hours of the end of the outage will be given an amended deadline, 24 hours from the original deadline. In the event that a student has already submitted their assessment in this specific scenario, they will have the opportunity to resubmit their work ahead of any amended deadline.
- The imposition of penalties for late submission will be suspended between the deadline and amended deadline in the two circumstances outlined above. Should assessed work be submitted after the amended deadline, standard late penalty policy will be imposed from the amended deadline.
- For example, if a piece of assessment is due on Monday at 3pm but a verified systems failure occurs lasting one hour and twenty minutes between noon and 1.20pm, the amended deadline for this work will be 3pm on Tuesday. If this piece of coursework, contributing, for example, 40% of a Part 1, 20 credit module, is submitted before 3pm on Tuesday, no late penalty will be applied. If the piece of coursework is submitted at 4.30pm on Tuesday, a 10% penalty will be applied because the penalty calculation is based on the amended deadline, not the original deadline.

For further information on the University policy on penalties for late submission please [click here](#).

The deadline to return marking and feedback will be extended in line with all revised times of submission.

If access to systems is not likely to be restored within 24 hours, an appropriate group will be formed to agree next steps in consultation with the PVC for Teaching and Learning.

Should a student be submitting after an original deadline (not affected by systems failure) but a verified University systems outage then impacts their ability to submit their summative work late, the same principles apply, namely that in the case of an outage lasting less than one hour, the imposition of penalties will be suspended for 24 hours. If an outage lasts for more than one hour but less than 24 hours, the imposition of penalties will be suspended for 24 hours. If the system is not restored within 24 hours, the period in which penalties would be suspended would be consistent with any decision taken by the appropriate group mentioned above.

- 1.6.2 In contrast, *personal* computer failure which prevents submission of work will not be considered a valid reason for a student to seek an extension to the published submission deadline or any amended deadline, in line with existing policy on extenuating circumstances. Students are strongly encouraged to create regular backup copies of their work.

## 1.7 Retention of Assignments and Submission Receipts

- 1.7.1 Student advice surrounding retention of assignments should be in line with the University's Guidance on Retaining Student Work as outlined in Section 14 of the Assessment Handbook (available at: [www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/14-retention-of-exam-scripts-and-coursework.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/14-retention-of-exam-scripts-and-coursework.pdf))
- 1.7.2 It is the student's responsibility to retain a copy of the automatic digital receipt as evidence of timely submission, for work submitted electronically. The University will reserve the right to access submission receipts to gather evidence in cases of student queries or appeals. No evidence other than the digital receipt will be accepted as evidence of a successful electronic submission. The University does not accept any evidence reporting to show a file's last modified date recorded, even if this is before the submission deadline. If a student fails to successfully submit and so fails to receive a copy of the digital receipt, the University will normally impose standard late penalties.