

# Assessment Policy and Procedures

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 General

- 1.1.1 The policies and procedures set out in this document underpin the regulations which all staff and students are expected to follow. They provide greater details of the principles behind the regulations and the rules and processes that Goldsmiths puts in place to positively impact on the student and staff experience and to ensure compliance with external regulatory frameworks.
- 1.1.2 The relevant regulations appear in text boxes at the start of each section.

## 1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 The assessment policy and procedures apply to all undergraduate or taught postgraduate assessments at Goldsmiths that contribute to an award or to the award of credit.
- 1.2.2 The purpose of the policy is to set out the expected practices in the development, completion and marking of assessments.
- 1.2.3 It enables Goldsmiths to ensure that the academic standards of its awards meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications' frameworks.
- 1.2.4 The policy aligns with the Goldsmiths Regulations, and its other associated policies, procedures and guidance.
- 1.2.5 It applies equally to all taught programmes irrespective of their level. Where procedures differ between levels those exceptions are noted.

## 1.3 Key Contacts

Student administration: Advice on problems relating to the conduct of examinations and assessments and assessment misconduct

Assessments enquiries (Assessments Manager) [assessments@gold.ac.uk](mailto:assessments@gold.ac.uk),  
020 7717 2254 or 020 7078 5328

Associate Director (Student Administration): Advice on Goldsmiths' Regulations and good practice

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## 2 Methods and Types of Assessment

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3.1.1 All programmes of study must be approved through the Goldsmiths procedures for the approval, amendment and review of programmes and modules must meet the requirements of the Goldsmiths Credit and Qualifications Framework.

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The development and practice of assessment at Goldsmiths is informed by the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and aligns with the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education that programmes should be “well designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student’s achievement to be reliably assessed”.
- 2.1.2 All new and amended programmes and modules, with their associated methods of assessment must be approved by the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee in line with the Goldsmiths Programme Development and Approval Procedures.

### 2.2 Methods of Assessment

- 2.2.1 A variety of assessment methods are used to help students develop, through the provision of constructive feedback and to ensure that the learning outcomes for individual modules and programmes have been successfully met.
- 2.2.2 The following is an indicative list of assessments used at Goldsmiths. It is not intended to be either exhaustive or prescriptive. Goldsmiths encourages staff to devise innovative and inclusive assessment practices across all disciplines.
- 2.2.3 Details of specific assessments can be found in individual module specifications

Type	Format
Examinations (formal, time-limited, written assessments that take place at a specified date, time and location)	Unseen written examinations “Open-book” examinations Seen written examinations Multiple Choice examinations
Oral Examinations	Viva Voce Modern foreign language test

Type	Format
Other Assessments	Essay Dissertation Take-home paper Portfolio of written work Report Review Performance Exhibition Portfolio of Practical Work Studio projects Computer-based assessment Fieldwork Presentation Professional practice Work placement

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### 3 Scheduling of Assessments

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3.9.4 Goldsmiths provides guidance for students concerned about the scheduling of assessments during religious festivals or other periods of observance.

#### 3.1 Submission Deadlines

- 3.1.1 Where coursework forms part of the summative assessment of a programme of study, this must be clearly stated in the information provided to students. Details of the work required, and the date and time of submission, must be communicated in writing to the students by the relevant Academic Department at the beginning of the academic year.
- 3.1.2 Academic Departments should, as far as is possible, schedule assessments to avoid placing students under undue pressure and to permit timely feedback.

## **3.2 Examination Timetable**

- 3.2.1 There are three annual examination sessions at Goldsmiths: Spring, Summer and late Summer. Not all Academic Departments schedule examinations in the Spring session. Goldsmiths publishes an examination timetable at least one month before each session.
- 3.2.2 The Assessments Manager is responsible for the creation and publication of the examination timetable.
- 3.2.3 Academic Departments may sometimes schedule additional examinations outside of the normal examination sessions. When this occurs, Academic Departments are responsible for notifying students of the dates of the examinations and for their organisation.
- 3.2.4 Students are responsible for ensuring that they know the date, time and location of each paper they are registered to take and that they are available to sit all scheduled examinations.
- 3.2.5 Students must notify their Academic Department of any timetabling issues at the earliest possible time.

## **3.3 Religious Observance**

- 3.3.1 Goldsmiths recognises religion and belief as a protected equality characteristic and offers support to all staff and students, including while examinations take place.
- 3.3.2 If a student considers that religious observance has had a significant adverse impact on their performance in assessments, they may apply for mitigation under the procedures for extenuating circumstances.

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# **4 Preparation of Examinations**

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3.7.2 Boards of Examiners are responsible for the approval of the content of examination papers.

- 4.1.1 Examination papers must be written for January, May and Late Summer Resit examination periods in the autumn term.

- 4.1.2 External Examiners must be asked to approve the form and the content of examination papers.
- 4.1.3 Students required to re-sit an examination must be provided with a paper based on the syllabus studied in the former session. If a unique paper is set for one or more individuals (e.g. retakes), the rubric must include the student ID number/s of those sitting, to ensure the correct paper is made available to the correct student in the halls.

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## 5 Completion of Assessments

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3.2.1 Students must follow all specific instructions for assessments. Failure to do so may result in a penalty or non-valid attempt. This includes submitting work for assessment by the published deadline and presenting themselves for examinations at the published time and place.

3.2.10 Except where a student presents extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Board of Examiners, failed assessments will be capped at the relevant pass mark for subsequent attempts.

N.B under the Exception Academic Regulations in force in 2019/20, any assessment failed at the first attempt will have no cap applied to the remaining two attempts. For all other resit attempts, this regulation remains in force

3.2.2 All assessments should be conducted in English unless the purpose of the assessment is to test the ability of students in another language.

### 5.1 Submission Requirements

- 5.1.1 Students must submit assessments by the deadline published by the Academic Department(s), and present themselves for examinations at the published time and place. Full details of the rules and procedures relating to the conduct of written examinations are published in the guidance for the conduct of written examinations.
- 5.1.2 Students with a disability may have been granted an assessment reasonable adjustment that allows them to apply for a short term deferral. The Reasonable Adjustments Support Agreement (RASA) Guidance and Procedures set out the process for applying for a RASA and its implementation.

- 5.1.3 Students who do not submit an approved Extenuating Circumstances application in respect of an absence from examination or late submission of an assessment (at any time after the deadline notified) will be recorded as having made an attempt and being absent for that element of the assessment. A mark of zero will be awarded for the assessment and the subsequent attempt will be capped at the relevant pass mark.
- 5.1.4 Academic Departments can require students to submit work for assessment in a specific format (for example using an essay template Word document). Submitted work which does not conform to these requirements may not be considered for marking.

## **5.2 Legibility of Written Work**

- 5.2.1 Students must ensure that work submitted for assessment is legible and coherent, normally they will only receive marks for work that can be read.
- 5.2.2 If Examiners are unable to read a student's work, the Assessments Manager should be informed as they may be able to arrange for work to be transcribed. The costs incurred for a scribe shall be charged to the student.
- 5.2.3 If work has to be transcribed the student will dictate the completed work to a scribe under supervision. This typed (or hand-written) version should correspond line for line and page for page with the original; both the original work and the transcription shall then be returned to the Examiners for marking.

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## **6 Reasonable Adjustments / Extenuating Circumstance**

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Regulation 3.9.1 Goldsmiths has a legal responsibility and an ethical commitment to provide fair access to education and equality of opportunity in teaching, learning and assessment for all students. In some cases, teaching and assessment methods must be adapted to meet an individual's needs, in accordance with the institution's legal responsibility to make reasonable adjustments.

Regulation 3.9.2 Recommendations for adjustments may be made through Reasonable Adjustments Student Agreement (RASA) are where a student has a 'protected characteristic' (as defined within the Equality Act 2010) that impacts their ability to learn and perform under specific teaching conditions, or in particular types of assessment tasks. RASAs will be provided by Student Services.



## **6.1 Reasonable Adjustments Student Agreement (RASA)**

- 6.1.1 Reasonable adjustments to assessments may include, but are not limited to, provision of alternative examination rooms; additional time to complete assessments and examinations; the use of alternative methods of assessment and the use of assistive technology in examinations.
- 6.1.2 Once a RASA is completed, adjustments to assessments will be put in place automatically.
- 6.1.3 The RASA Guidance and Procedures set out the process for applying for a RASA and its implementation.

## **6.2 Extenuating Circumstances**

3.9.3 Extenuating circumstances should not be used as an alternative to a RASA. However, there may be occasions where exceptional and unforeseeable factors present themselves which mean that a RASA is unable to provide adequate reasonable adjustments for a situation.

3.3.1 Students may experience exceptional circumstances that temporarily make it impossible for them to participate in their studies, submit assessments or attend examinations. Goldsmiths considers applications from students who believe that their work and assessments have been affected by these circumstances.

3.3.2 Before a submission or deadline: When a student knows before a submission or other deadline that an illness, the worsening of a chronic illness, or an otherwise unforeseen event is beginning, they should notify the person specified in their department to receive information on extenuating circumstances so that consideration of adjusted deadlines, deferred assessments and alternative assessments can be made.

3.3.3 After a submission or deadline: Where there is a request for the recognition of extenuating circumstances after the deadline for an assessment has passed or after an examination, the student is required to describe the circumstances. the student is also required to show why it was not possible for them to notify Goldsmiths of their circumstances before the deadline or at the time of the examination of assessment.

3.3.4 Details of extenuating circumstances with documentary evidence must be submitted by the student to their department (or lead department) as soon as possible and, unless there are exceptional reasons, no later than seven days after the assessment deadline or date of examination. where a

student is unable to contact the person specified in their department they should contact the relevant administrative staff to seek advice and support.

- 6.2.1 Students who are absent from examinations; do not submit coursework; submit work after the deadline, or believe that the standard of the work submitted has been affected by exceptional circumstances, may apply for extenuating circumstances to be considered.
- 6.2.2 The procedures to be followed are detailed separately in the Policy and Procedures for Extenuating Circumstances.

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## 7 Academic Integrity / Plagiarism

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3.8.1 It is a disciplinary offence for a student to cheat or attempt to cheat in an assessment. Goldsmiths maintains procedures for defining and dealing with poor academic practice or academic misconduct.

3.8.2 Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage within teaching, learning and scholarship. Students must not act in any way that may put at risk the academic integrity of themselves, any other member of the college or Goldsmiths itself. Poor academic practice or academic misconduct by a student will be considered as undermining academic integrity.

3.8.3 Goldsmiths has the power to take action, up to and including termination of registration, against any student who is found to have undertaken poor academic practice or committed academic misconduct.

3.8.4 Students who are dissatisfied with action taken against them under this regulation may challenge that decision through academic appeal.

### 7.1 Academic Misconduct

- 7.1.1 Goldsmiths policy relating to academic misconduct is detailed separately in the Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures.

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## 8 Marking

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3.2.4 All assessments contributing to the award are marked in accordance with Goldsmiths policy on marking and moderation.

3.2.5 The pass mark is 40% for all undergraduate programmes and 50% for taught postgraduate programmes. Undergraduate programmes that include a foundation year may use separate pass mark and grading criteria for that year. Refer to individual programme specifications for this information.

3.2.7 Marks are awarded for all attempts at assessment contributing to the award.

3.2.6 Goldsmiths publishes full marking criteria for all of its awards.

3.11.1 Marking criteria must be made readily available and accessible to students in advance of the assessment to which it applies

3.11.2 All summative work must be subject to some form of moderation. Moderation is not required for formative work but may still be used. The form of moderation used in assessments should be appropriate for the nature and method of the assessment itself.

3.11.3 Feedback must be provided on all assessed work, with the exception of final assessments where this is discretionary, in line with the requirements of the Goldsmiths Feedback Policy.

### 8.1 Grading and Marking Criteria

8.1.1 Each programme of study has its own approved marking scheme and you should check your programme specification or departmental handbook to familiarise yourself with yours. However, Goldsmiths also has approved generic grading criteria for students. These are as follows:

## Undergraduate Degrees

Mark	Descriptor	Generic Grading Criteria	Specific Marking Criteria
<b>90-100%</b>	Exceptional I: First	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>exceptionally accomplished</b> level.	Departments should list specific grading criteria in each generic grading band to allow an assessment of the level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes
<b>80-90%</b>	Outstanding I: First	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>outstanding</b> level.	As above
<b>70-79%</b>	Excellent I: First	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>excellent</b> level	As above
<b>60-69%</b>	Very Good Iii: Upper Second	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning	As above
		outcomes to a <b>very good</b> level.	
<b>50-59%</b>	Good Iiii: Lower Second	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>good</b> level.	As above
<b>40-49%</b>	Threshold III: Third	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>threshold</b> level	As above

<b>Mark</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Generic Grading Criteria</b>	<b>Specific Marking Criteria</b>
<b>25-39%</b>	Fail	Represents an overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and a re-sit must be taken unless all three permitted attempts have been used). Work achieving a mark of between 35-39% may be compensated in certain circumstances set out within the Goldsmiths policy and procedures for the progression and award of students on taught programmes	As above
<b>10-24%</b>	Bad Fail	Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and a re-sit must be taken unless all three permitted attempts have been used).	As above
<b>1-9%</b>	Very Bad Fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes (shall be deemed a non-valid attempt and module must be re-sat).	N/A
<b>0%</b>	Non-Submission or plagiarised assessment	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment	N/A

## Masters Degrees

Mark	Descriptor	Generic Grading Criteria	Specific Marking Criteria
<b>90-100%</b>	Distinction	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>exceptionally accomplished</b> level.	Departments should list specific grading criteria in each generic grading band to allow an assessment of the level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes
<b>80-90%</b>	Distinction	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>outstanding</b> level.	As above
<b>70-79%</b>	Distinction	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>excellent</b> level	As above
<b>60-69%</b>	Merit	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>very good</b> level.	As above
<b>50-59%</b>	Pass	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>threshold</b> level.	As above
<b>30-49%</b>	Fail	Represents an overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and must be resat unless all three permitted attempts have been used).	As above

<b>10-29%</b>	Bad Fail	Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and must be resat unless all three permitted attempts have been used).	As above
<b>1-9%</b>	Very Bad Fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes (shall be deemed a non-valid attempt and module must be retaken).	N/A
<b>0%</b>	Non-Submission or plagiarised assessment	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment	N/A

## 8.2 Anonymity

- 8.2.1 The practice of anonymity minimises the potential for bias in the assessment process and is a central element of the College's procedures for ensuring the integrity and fairness of the marking system.
- 8.2.2 Where it is possible, all summatively assessed work should be marked anonymously and care should be taken to ensure that this is observed throughout all stages of the assessment process including during the deliberations of the Board of Examiners.
- 8.2.3 To ensure anonymity, students should use only their student number when submitting assessments.
- 8.2.4 The nature of some assessments (such as performances, studio practice, placements, practical work or presentations) may make it impossible to maintain anonymity. However, this should occur only when absolutely necessary and appropriate.

- 8.2.5 Where it is not possible to maintain anonymity, departments must ensure that effective second marking and moderation processes are employed to ensure the fairness, consistency and reliability of the assessment.

### **8.3 Marking and Moderation**

- 8.3.1 The purpose of moderation and double marking is to ensure consistency in the application of assessment criteria.
- 8.3.2 All forms of summative assessment must be subject to some form of double marking or moderation, irrespective of their academic level or credit value.
- 8.3.3 Double Marking involves the marking of all pieces of student work for a particular assessment by two or more examiners. It may be “seen” or “blind”.
- 8.3.4 Seen double marking means that a piece of assessed work is marked independently by two examiners and the marks and comments of the first examiner are visible to the second examiner.
- 8.3.5 Blind double marking means that a piece of assessed work is marked independently by two Examiners and the marks and comments of the first examiner are not seen by the second examiner.
- 8.3.6 Where an assessment is double blind marked and differences in the marks awarded emerge between examiners, a final mark should not simply be an average of the two marks. Rather, examiners should agree a final mark by reference to the original work, learning outcomes and grading criteria, and if appropriate by employing an internal moderator.
- 8.3.7 Moderation means that a second Examiner reviews the marks awarded by the first Examiner, including reviewing only a sample of papers. A moderator may not change an individual mark: in the event of concern by the moderator about marks or patterns of marking the Board of Examiners may determine to amend on a consistent basis the marks for all students who have taken the assessment or to remark it in its entirety.
- 8.3.8 When work is moderated, the moderator must consider all firsts/distinctions, borderlines and fails and a sample of other scripts totaling at least twenty per cent of the cohort.
- 8.3.9 When assessments which are marked “live” (such as oral examinations, presentations, exhibitions, performances or group work) and comprise more than 20% of the overall assessment for a module, this element should be conducted by not less than two Examiners. Where an oral examination is 20% or less of the overall assessment and it is conducted by one examiner, a recorded copy of the work must be made available for the External or Second Examiner to scrutinise.



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## 9 Appeals

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3.10.1 Students are entitled to challenge the outcome of any academic assessment or decision to terminate their registration on academic grounds, by lodging an academic appeal on one or more of the following grounds:

- Administrative error or procedural irregularity in the way in which the assessment was conducted.
- There is evidence of prejudice or of bias such that the validity of the result of examination is called into question.
- Their performance was adversely impacted by extenuating circumstances which they could not disclose to examiners within 7 days of the assessment affected.

3.10.2 Academic appeals cannot be submitted on the following grounds:

- Ignorance of assessment requirements and assessment regulations
- Challenge of academic judgement
- Appeals based on extenuating circumstances which do not provide evidence to explain why those circumstances could not have been brought to the attention of the examiners within 7-days of the assessment.

3.10.3 Academic appeals must be received in accordance with the appeals procedure. Academic appeals received which do not follow the appeals procedure may not be considered.

3.10.4 Once the academic appeals procedure has been completed, where a student is dissatisfied with the final decision, they may refer matters for external review to the Office for the Independent Adjudicator.

### 9.1 Procedures and Guidelines for Academic Appeals

9.1.1 Full details of the appeals procedure are published separately in the Procedures and Guidelines for Academic Appeals.