



University of
St Andrews

Coursework penalties

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Purpose	This policy applies to penalties incurred for late coursework and to coursework of incorrect length.

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UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS
POLICY ON COURSEWORK PENALTIES

1. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all coursework, whether submitted electronically or by other means.

2. Penalties for Late Work

All Schools are required to publish deadlines (date and time) for the submission of assessed work as well as the penalties to be applied for work that is submitted late. The penalty scheme is chosen according to the nature of the module and the particular assignment.

Every day of the week will be considered as counting towards a late penalty. This rule will apply to all holidays (public and University) and includes weekends, with Saturday and Sunday each counting as one day.

Where work is marked to the 20-point scale, the following lateness penalty schemes are available:

- A. 1 mark per day, or part thereof**
- B. 1 mark per 8-hour period, or part thereof**
- C. Initial penalty of 3 marks, then a further 1 mark per additional 8-hour period, or part thereof**

Where work is marked to some other scale, the following variants apply:

- A. 5% of the maximum available mark per day, or part thereof**
- B. 5% of the maximum available mark per 8-hour period, or part thereof**
- C. Initial penalty of 15% of the maximum available mark, then a further 5% per 8-hour period, or part thereof**

In conjunction with one of the available penalty schemes, a cut-off period may also be specified, after which a mark of zero will be awarded. At the School's discretion, such work may still be assessed for credit.

Schools may operate stricter penalty schemes, including 100% penalty for any unjustified lateness, for assessments that by their nature need to take place at a particular time. Examples include oral presentations and interviews.

In cases where, due to particular School teaching arrangements, the application of this policy would disadvantage some students relative to others, the Assistant Vice-Principal (Dean of Learning & Teaching) may authorise the use of minor variations of these schemes.

3. Penalties for Work of Incorrect Length

A written coursework assignment may have a specified length in number of words, either as an indicative guideline, or as a requirement enforced by penalty. Failure to adhere to a required word length is penalised according to a scheme specified for the assignment. The penalty scheme is chosen according to the nature of the module and the particular assignment.

Where work is marked to the 20-point scale, the following penalty schemes are available:

- A. 1 mark for work that is 10% over-length, then a further 1 mark per additional 10% over**
- B. 1 mark for work that is 5% over-length, then a further 1 mark per additional 10% over**
- C. 1 mark for work that is over-length to any extent, then a further 1 mark per additional 5% over**

Where work is marked to some other scale, the following variants apply:

- A. 5% of the maximum available mark for work that is 10% over-length, then a further 5% of the maximum available mark per additional 10% over**
- B. 5% of the maximum available mark for work that is 5% over-length, then a further 5% of the maximum available mark per additional 10% over**
- C. 5% of the maximum available mark for work that is over-length to any extent, then a further 5% of the maximum available mark per additional 5% over**

If it is required to penalise work that is shorter than the specified length, the equivalent schemes obtained by substituting the word under for over are also available.

The following may be decided at School level, and should be clearly communicated to students:

- the method for counting words
- the details of which parts of a written assignment are included in the word count
- the process for dealing with disputes as to actual word length

EXAMPLE EFFECTS OF COURSEWORK PENALTIES

These illustrative examples are not part of the policy itself.

The following table shows examples of the lateness penalties imposed for various degrees of lateness. In each case it is assumed that the original mark awarded is 15 on the 20-point scale.

	Scheme A	Scheme B	Scheme C
1 minute	1	1	3
1 hour	1	1	3
12 hours	1	2	4
1 day	1	3	5
25 hours	2	4	6
36 hours	2	5	7
3 days	3	9	11
10 days	10	15	15
16 days	15	15	15

The following table shows examples of the word count penalties imposed by the various schemes for various lengths of work. In each case it is assumed that the specified length is 3,000 words, and that the original mark awarded is 15 on the 20-point scale.

	Scheme A (under-length not penalised)	Scheme A (under-length penalised)	Scheme B (under-length not penalised)	Scheme B (under-length penalised)	Scheme C (under-length not penalised)	Scheme C (under-length penalised)
2,400	0	2	0	2	0	5
2,550	0	1	0	2	0	4
2,700	0	1	0	1	0	3
2,850	0	0	0	1	0	2
2,990	0	0	0	0	0	1
3,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
3,010	0	0	0	0	1	1
3,150	0	0	1	1	2	2
3,300	1	1	1	1	3	3
3,450	1	1	2	2	4	4
3,600	2	2	2	2	5	5

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01	Changes made to tables for purpose of clarification	Approved	LTC	Feb 17 (updated May 17)
02	Changes to titles/contact details to reflect decanal restructuring	Approved	-	February 2021
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