

Fixed-time Assessment Regulations for Candidates

AU-RSC-22-5442-A

Applicable to all students and learners enrolled or re-enrolled from 1st August 2023

2023-24

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Regulations Summary

These regulations set out the University's arrangements for all fixed-time assessments, including:

- Regulations on Fit to Sit, including the process for reporting exceptional circumstances that arise subsequent to the beginning of a fixed-time assessment, and factors affecting a student's preparation for a fixed-time assessment.
- General processes and arrangements for fixed-time assessments, including candidate conduct, room arrangements, arrival and leaving an assessment room.
- Information on how to ask for and accommodate special arrangements for students with permanent medical conditions, illness, injuries, and examinations impacted by religious observance.
- Specific arrangements for assessments held overseas.
- Processes for reporting assessment malpractice.

Related Regulations, Policies, and Guidance

Further information on the assessment of students can be found in the University's [Assessment Regulations](#), and within the [General Regulations](#) relevant to the programme. The [Policy on Giving Effective Feedback on Assessed Work](#) provides further information on providing feedback on examinations and other assessments.

Full information on exceptional circumstances and the discipline of students can be found in the [Guide to Exceptional Circumstances](#) and [Regulations on Student Discipline](#).

Version Control

Ref No	Version	Responsible Officer	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date
AU-RSC-18-1868	A	Adam Hewitt	OLTC	Jun 2019	Sep 2019
AU-RSC-19-2815	A	Adam Hewitt	ULTC	Jun 2020	Sep 2020
AU-RSC-20-3966	A	Adam Hewitt	ULTC	Jun 2021	Sep 2021
AU-RSC-21-4833	A	Adam Hewitt	ULTC	Jul 2022	Sep 2022
AU-RSC-22-5442	A	Adam Hewitt	ULTC	Jun 2023	Aug 2023

A INTRODUCTION

- 1 For the purposes of these Regulations, 'assessment' refers to any fixed-time assessments as defined by the [Assessment Regulations](#). This includes on-campus (written or online), or remote online (both proctored and non-proctored) assessments.

B ASSESSMENTS

- 2 The relevant Associate Dean will ensure the publication of the assessment scheme (via the Module Specifications) at the start of each Stage of the programme.
- 3 These Regulations cover four main areas:
 - C [Fit to Sit](#)
 - D [Invigilated/Proctored Fixed-time Assessments](#)
 - E [Special Arrangements](#)
 - F [Assessment Malpractice](#)

C FIT TO SIT

- 4 By being present beyond the start time of a fixed-time assessment, students will be regarded as having deemed themselves fit to be able to undertake the assessment in question, and accept the outcome of the assessment as valid, subject to consideration of factors affecting performance which may arise subsequent to beginning an assessment which are notified to the Board of Examiners by the student. Any factors affecting performance that result in a student leaving a invigilated/proctored fixed-time assessment must be raised with the Chief Invigilator, and must be recorded in the Chief Invigilators Report. Where a student has deemed themselves fit to sit, the Board of Examiners will normally consider the student to have made a valid attempt at the assessment.

Factors affecting performance that arise at such a time as to affect preparation for a fixed-time assessment may constitute exceptional circumstances, providing appropriate grounds not to undertake the assessment at that time. However, if a student sits the assessment in question, they will have deemed themselves 'Fit to Sit'. Students should consult the Guide to Exceptional Circumstances to determine whether the factors they are experiencing may count as exceptional circumstances.

D INVIGILATED/PROCTORED FIXED-TIME ASSESSMENTS

General

- 5 The timetables for all University fixed-time assessments shall be published within the University and, except in special circumstances (see [Section E](#) below), candidates shall be required to present themselves for invigilated/proctored assessments at the time and, for on-campus fixed-time assessments, place indicated on the timetable. Candidates unable to take fixed-time assessments on particular days owing to religious commitments should indicate this on [MAP](#) (My Aston Portal) by the end of the third week of the commencement of each Stage of their programme. See also Regulation 49

below. Although Academic Services is sympathetic to the religious commitments of candidates it may not always be possible to accommodate all individual requirements.

- 6 For fixed-time assessments organised by the Examinations Office, an assessment timetable will be made available on MAP. Details of other fixed-time assessments will be made available by Colleges on [Blackboard](#).
- 7 It is the responsibility of each candidate to ascertain the correct time and, where relevant, place of each assessment for which they are a candidate. It is also the responsibility of candidates to take their University ID card to each invigilated/proctored fixed-time assessment (both on-campus and remote fixed-time assessments).

Arrangements for On-campus Invigilated Fixed-time Assessments

- 8 Candidates shall not enter assessment rooms until permitted to do so by the Chief Invigilator.
- 9 Outdoor clothing, briefcases and bags may be brought into assessment rooms, providing they are deposited well away from the candidates, usually at the front or rear of the assessment room. Mobile phones and other electronic devices, including smart watches, must be turned off and left with the candidate's bag/coat or placed in the clear bag provided. All other watches and camera enabled devices must be placed in the clear bag. Candidates may not keep electronic devices on their desk or their person e.g. in a pocket. Aston University does not accept responsibility for personal possessions in examination rooms.
- 10 For assessments that allow calculators, candidates will bring their own calculator which must be from the Casio FX-83, Casio FX-85, Casio FX991, HP10s or HP10s+ series, unless otherwise specified on the rubric. No other type of calculator is allowed. The Examinations Office has a limited supply of approved spare calculators and cannot guarantee that there will be sufficient to supply one to a student if they have not brought their own.
- 11 On entering the assessment room, candidates shall follow all provided instructions. A candidate shall not leave the assessment without the permission of an Invigilator.
- 12 For fixed-time assessments organised by the Examinations Office, each candidate must complete the attendance form on the desk before the start of the assessment. The form contains important information about the assessment which should be read before it is signed. The form must be left in clear view on the desk and will be collected by an Invigilator. The candidate's University ID card must also be on the desk for verification purposes.

Conduct of Candidates for On-campus Invigilated Fixed-time Assessments

- 13 Candidates must not begin to respond to assessment questions or write anything on either a question paper or answer book until the Invigilator has instructed all candidates that they may begin.
- 14 Candidates shall comply with all directions from the Invigilator(s) and shall not communicate with any person other than Invigilator(s) in any way nor show their papers to any other candidate. Failure to comply with the directions of an Invigilator is an offence under the University's [Disciplinary Regulations](#).
- 15 Candidates shall observe silence within assessment rooms. A candidate who causes a disturbance, or who brings in equipment which is likely to create a disturbance, may be required to leave the assessment room.

- 16 Other than bottled water, candidates shall not be permitted to eat or drink in an assessment room, unless suitable evidence for the need is first submitted to the Examinations Office and subsequently approved.
- 17 Pens, pencils, erasers and/or other permitted items such as keys, money etc., may be brought into the examination room but must be placed in the clear bag provided. No other container is permitted on a candidate's desk. Candidates having such items will be asked to remove them.

Conduct of Candidates for Remote Proctored Fixed-time Assessments

- 18 For proctored assessments, Candidates must not begin to respond to assessment questions until the Proctor has instructed all candidates that they may begin.
- 19 Candidates shall comply with all directions from the Proctor. This includes any instructions which allow a Proctor to inspect the candidate's environment (a "room sweep"). Failure to comply with the directions of an Proctor is an offence under the University's [Disciplinary Regulations](#).
- 20 Candidates shall not communicate with any person other than the Proctor in any way. This includes individuals at the same location as the candidate, or remotely with other candidates or individuals via electronic means.
- 21 Candidates may only have permitted items within their vicinity for the duration of the assessment. Permitted items will be included as part of the assessment rubric.

Late Arrival

- 22 Candidates will not be permitted to enter an assessment room, or start a remote fixed-time assessment, later than 30 minutes after the commencement of the assessment. For certain fixed-time assessments (for example, OSCEs), owing to the nature of the assessment, later arrival may not be permitted.

Extra Time

- 23 A candidate who arrives late, or who is absent from the assessment for part of an assessment, will not be permitted to continue beyond the finish time appointed for the end of the assessment.

Leaving a Fixed-time Assessment during the Assessment

- 24 Except in cases of illness or of other sufficient cause, a candidate shall not leave a fixed-time assessment earlier than 30 minutes after the commencement of the assessment or during the final 30 minutes of the assessment. This applies to both on-campus and remote proctored fixed-time assessments.
- 25 A candidate who completes an assessment between the times noted above may leave the assessment after asking the permission of an Invigilator/Proctor, and after handing in or submitting any completed script(s)/answer(s).
- 26 Candidates shall not be permitted to remove any assessment material from the examination, including assessment questions, answer books, dictionaries, or any other material, either in physical or electronic format.
- 27 For invigilated assessments, a candidate who leaves the examination room for any reason (other than after handing in a completed script) shall be accompanied by an Invigilator. Candidates are not permitted to leave a proctored on-line assessment other than after the submission of all completed script(s)/answer(s).

Use of Aids

- 28 Details of any aids such as books, manuscripts or other extraneous material which may be used in an assessment will be notified to candidates in advance by the appropriate Associate Dean in writing at least four weeks before the commencement of the assessment periods.
- 29 For assessments that allow calculators, candidates should bring their own calculator, which must be from the Casio FX-83, Casio FX-85, Casio FX991, HP10s or HP10s+ series, unless otherwise specified on the rubric. No other type of calculator is allowed. The lid must be removed and, for on-campus invigilated fixed-time assessments, placed either in the clear bag provided or with the candidate's bag/coat.
- 30 Students who are in possession of material or any other aids not specifically permitted by the relevant Associate Dean will be reported to the University Discipline Officer (acting as nominee of the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Students)) and may be liable to disciplinary proceedings.

Dictionaries

- 31 Exchange students who wish to use a foreign language dictionary in assessments that allow the use of a foreign language dictionary, should indicate this on MAP (My Aston Portal) by the end of the third week of their enrolment. In no circumstances is a candidate allowed to use a dictionary which they have brought into the assessment room. Unless specified on the rubric, all students will have access to a copy of the Oxford English Dictionary to refer to.

Collection of Work to be Assessed

- 32 At the end of the assessment, candidates shall follow the instructions for the collection/submission of the assessed work.
- 33 For on-campus invigilated fixed-time assessments, where relevant, any notes made in an answer book should be left on the desk but should be clearly crossed through to indicate that they do not constitute an answer to a question. Any text which has been crossed-through will not be marked. Candidates shall not be permitted to remove any assessment stationery from the assessment room.
- 34 Candidates must not make changes to any assessment answers after being instructed to stop writing by an Invigilator/Proctor. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the candidate.

Special Factors

- 35 It is the responsibility of the candidate to notify the relevant College via the [Extenuating Circumstances](#) procedure, in writing, of any factors which occurred either during or prior to the assessment and which may have affected their performance.

E SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 36 In certain circumstances, special arrangements may be made for a candidate who is taking assessments. These arrangements may include the provision of additional time for the completion of a paper or for reading or having read to them the paper prior to the normal start of the examination, answering fewer questions on a paper, taking an examination outside the University, the provision of special facilities or an amanuensis,

or such other arrangements as may from time to time become necessary. In all other respects, the normal Regulations governing assessments shall apply.

- 37 Wherever possible all special arrangements shall be approved six weeks in advance of any assessment by the relevant Associate Dean and, in all cases, in consultation with the [Enabling Team](#). All special arrangements shall subsequently be reported to the [Board of Examiners](#).
- 38 If special arrangements are approved for a candidate who is taking an on-campus invigilated assessment, the assessment may be held in a separate room at the same time prescribed for the assessment in that subject. At least one University Invigilator shall be present in the room.
- 39 Where the assessment is organised by the Examinations Office, the Examinations Office must be informed of any special arrangements to be made, normally at least three weeks in advance of the assessment date.

Permanent Medical Conditions

- 40 A candidate who, for medical reasons, is unable to sit an assessment under normal conditions, or who, in the opinion of The Enabling Team, would be significantly disadvantaged by being required to do so, may be permitted to sit the examination under special conditions. These conditions may include additional time, a shorter question paper and/or the use of special facilities.
- 41 Such special arrangements must be agreed with The Enabling Team in advance of the examination and may not be varied during the assessment period.

Illness or Injury

- 42 A candidate who requests special arrangements on the grounds of illness or injury will be required to submit a medical certificate to the appropriate Associate Dean normally in advance of the assessment.
- 43 A candidate who is required to attend the University for assessment but is unable due to illness or accident, but who is able to take the examination may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted to take the assessment outside the University provided that at least one University Invigilator is present. Alternatively, consideration will be given to allowing the assessment to be undertaken remotely online in the presence of a Proctor.
- 44 A candidate who is unable to write/type the answers to an assessment due to injury or other cause shall be permitted by the relevant Associate Dean and, in all cases, in consultation with the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Students), to dictate the answers to an amanuensis or typist and may be allowed additional time in which to complete the assessment.
- 45 Where appropriate, the amanuensis shall be an approved individual who is familiar with any symbol or phraseology likely to be used in the assessment. The amanuensis shall normally not be a member of staff involved in setting or marking the relevant assessment.
- 46 The amanuensis or typist shall write the answers or other information at the dictation of the candidate and shall read back or show the script to the candidate as requested, but shall not assist the candidate in any other way. In addition to the amanuensis, one Invigilator/Proctor shall be present.

Assessments Held Overseas

- 47 Where candidates are required to take on-campus invigilated fixed-time assessments, special arrangements are made for students enrolled on distance learning programmes based at centres outside the United Kingdom, to enable them to undertake their assessments overseas. All other students, including those enrolled on distance learning programmes based at centres within the UK, are required to sit fixed-time on-campus invigilated assessments at the University.
- 48 In exceptional circumstances, a student who would normally be required to undertake fixed-time on-campus invigilated assessments at the University may be allowed to take them overseas: permission may only be granted by the appropriate Associate Dean or their nominee after discussion with the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Students). The candidate must submit a detailed case to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Students) not less than six weeks before the due date of the assessments. If permission is granted, the candidate will be required to pay the appropriate fee in advance which will normally include any costs incurred in setting up special arrangements.

Religious Observance

- 49 Students have a responsibility to fulfil the requirements of their programme of study in order to achieve the relevant award. Students who wish to advise the University of any religious festivals during which they would be unable to undertake assessments for religious reasons must complete a **Religious Commitments, and Assessment** task in [MAP](#) by the end of the third week of the commencement of each Stage of their programme, in order to advise the University of requests affecting formal assessments. In consultation with the appropriate faith leaders, the University will endeavour, to a proportionate and reasonable extent, to make arrangements for students whose faith requires them to miss assessments for reasons of religious observance to take assessments at a different time.

F ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE

- 50 Any breach of the Fixed-Time Assessment Regulations for Candidates may constitute assessment malpractice and must be reported in writing by the Invigilator/Proctor to the University Discipline Officer (acting as nominee of the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Students)) immediately after the assessment.
- 51 For on-campus fixed-time invigilated assessments, if an Invigilator has reason to believe that a candidate is guilty of assessment malpractice, the Chief Invigilator shall inform the candidate that they will be reported to the University Discipline Officer (acting as nominee of the University's Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students)), as soon as possible after the assessment. For paper-based assessments, the Invigilator shall mark the script immediately below the last line written by the candidate, note the time on the script, and sign it. The candidate will be permitted to complete the assessment and retain the script for the duration of the assessment, but any prohibited material should be removed where practicable.
- 52 For remote fixed-time proctored assessments, if a Proctor has reason to believe that a candidate is guilty of assessment malpractice, they shall inform the candidate that they will be reported to the University Discipline Officer (acting as nominee of the University's Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Students)), as soon as possible after the assessment. The candidate will be permitted to complete the assessment, but candidates should be instructed to remove any prohibited material where practicable.

- 53 In assessments other than invigilated/proctored fixed-time assessments, any candidate alleged to be guilty of malpractice will be reported to the Executive Dean* as soon as possible.
- 54 When a report of alleged assessment malpractice is made to the University Discipline Officer (acting as nominee of the University's Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Students)), or Executive Dean*, the incident will be investigated and the candidate will be informed of the procedure to be followed. Where the University Discipline Officer or Executive Dean* decides that there is a case to be answered, cases of alleged assessment malpractice will be dealt with in accordance with the [Ordinance](#) and [Regulations on Student Discipline](#), AU-RSC-22-5443-A and subsequent versions. The Chair of the appropriate [Board of Examiners](#) shall be informed of the circumstances of the case.

* 'Executive Dean' refers to the Executive Dean, or their nominee, of the College in which a student is enrolled. It also, where appropriate, refers to the person so designated by the Senate for inter-College or collaborative programmes. Nominees should normally be the relevant College Associate Dean.