

Timed Written Exams Process for OU Validated Programmes

Academic Year: 2023/2024

Organisational Quality Assurance

| Quality Assurance 2023/2024

# **Document History and Distribution**

This document has been distributed as follows:

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## **Document Location**

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## **Document Approval/Planned Revision**

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# **Introduction**

As a Validation Partner, The Open University (OU) requires Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC) to be compliant with legislative and regulatory requirements, relevant to the OU and the delivery of OU Validated Awards.

This document outlines BMC’s guidance for assessment including timed written exams and guidance notes.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide the Open University’s Module Results Approval and Qualification Classification Panel (MRAQCP) with assurances of the security and integrity of the assessment process including timed written exams.

# **Aim and Scope**

These guidelines apply to all OU programmes. It is expected that the guidelines will outline the granular details including who is responsible for each stage.

# **Preparation and Approval of All Timed Written Exams.**

A timetable of all assessment including the process of examination papers is decided by the OU Course Director and Programme team at the beginning of the academic year. Deadlines are agreed and set.

All assessment deadline dates including dates for timed written examinations are published in the student’s programme handbook which is issued to each student during induction and is available on the programmes Virtual Learning Environment (CANVAS).

Course work assessments, examination papers and accompanying mark schemes are written by the relevant module lecturer(s) and are internally moderated by member(s) of the programme team.

Course work assessments, examination papers and accompanying mark schemes are stored in a secure online platform using a secure password.

Course work assessments, examination papers and accompanying mark schemes are transferred from the relevant author of the module assessment to the relevant External Examiner (EE) using the secure online platform and a secure password.

Course work assessment, examination papers and accompanying mark schemes that are saved on the secure online platform with a secure password are accessed by the Course Director, relevant module lecturers and the Curriculum Area Manager (CAM).

Where course work assessment, examination papers and accompanying mark schemes are sent electronically to the EE, via email, or the EE is provided access to an online platform, all documents are password protected. Passwords are changed regularly. BMC use a secure email service and online platform service, (One Drive and MS Teams) monitored and maintained by the BMC IT Team.

The EE will confirm assessments before they are issued to students.

Examination papers and accompanying mark schemes are sent to the EE for approval three weeks before the published examination date.

Approved examination papers are printed by the relevant module lecturer using the colleges secure printers (once a staff member ‘sends’ a document to the printer the document does not print until the staff member logs into the printer using their staff pass).

Deadline for submission of approved printed examination papers to the Examination Office is one week before the published examination date. Approved printed examination papers are brought by the relevant module lecturer to the relevant campus Examination Office.

The Examination Office operate a log for signing papers in and out of the secure storage. In addition to this log, the Examination Office also have a log for transferring the papers to another room.

Examination papers are stored appropriately with access restricted.

The college follow JCQ instructions for Conducting Exams document <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/ICE23-24-Sept23revision_FINAL.pdf>

In summary, exam papers are stored in a safe within a secure room which is solely used for the purpose of administering secure examination materials.

# **Post Assessment activity**

Within one day of the sat examination, the module lecturer will make arrangements with the relevant Examination Office to collect the hard copy examination papers.

Marking and internal moderation will take place as outlined in F1.12 of the OU Handbook for Validated awards <https://www.belfastmet.ac.uk/siteFiles/resources/docs/public-documents/OU/ou-handbook-for-validated-awards.pdf>

Following internal moderation, all assessment that contributes towards an award will be moderated by the EE. The selected sample for external moderation follows F1.13 of the OU Handbook for Validated awards <https://www.belfastmet.ac.uk/siteFiles/resources/docs/public-documents/OU/ou-handbook-for-validated-awards.pdf>

The relevant module lecturer/ Course Director will share a sample with the EE using an online secure platform (password protected).

The college has a ‘double – checking process’ for entry of results into the exam board template and the college’s Student Record System, this is completed by the module lecturer and a member of the programme team.

The marker securely stores the marked examination papers script in a secured office / cabinet. Scripts are packaged with a label of their destruction date.

The college follow the OU guidance on Data Retention. This in conjunction with the Further Education Sector’s Retention and Disposal Schedule [Public Documents - About Us - Belfast Met](https://www.belfastmet.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/public-documents/)

The college sends the OU exam board paperwork to OUVP for MRAQCP to ratify via a ZendTo link. The timeline for sending the papers to the OU is 2 working days of the Exam Board.

All results are provisional until ratified by MRAQCP.