

Access to HE Diploma

One Awards guidance on managing Access to HE assignment late submissions and extensions



Intended audience

Assessors, internal moderators, external moderators, course leaders and managers with responsibility for the Access to HE Diploma

Definitions

A late submission occurs when a student submits an assignment after the published hand-in date, which should be stated on the assignment brief, or after the date of an agreed extension.

An extension to the deadline for the submission of an assignment can be agreed in advance by the provider following consideration of supporting evidence of extenuating circumstances provided by the student. Agreed extensions are not an automatic right and must be managed fairly and consistently by providers.

Purpose of this document

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), which regulates the Access to HE Diploma, sets down minimum requirements for the way in which the regulations for dealing with late submissions and approving extensions must be administered, see below. Therefore, providers are responsible for having a clear policy in place and fair and consistent processes for managing cases as they arise. This document is intended to provide guidance for providers approved to deliver the Access to HE Diploma in designing and managing their policy and procedures. One Awards External Moderators are responsible for monitoring the compliance of provider policies and procedures with QAA requirements and assessing the extent to which they are applied fairly and consistently across the units, diplomas and providers they are appointed to.

Links to key documents and QAA regulations

QAA Grading Scheme Handbook:

Section C 4: Managing Student Submissions

Section C 4c: Late submissions and extensions

- The provider's standard written procedures for approval of extensions must be applied on all occasions when a student requests an extension to the deadline given on the assignment briefing sheet.
- If work is submitted after the formal deadline has passed, and no extension has been granted (and there are no exceptional extenuating circumstances which explain the failure to request an extension), all grade indicators (see below) relating to that assignment must be capped at pass.
- If an assignment is submitted after the deadline without an extension having been granted and the work does not meet the learning outcomes, there is no opportunity for resubmission except via the referrals process. (See Section E.)

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One Awards Access to HE Provider Handbook: Section Four, page 9. Guidance on the design of provider policy and procedures for granting extensions

1. Hand-in dates should be clearly stated on the assignment brief when it is handed to students and strictly adhered to. It is important that the provider policy and guidance for students outlines the reasons why this is important:
 - To ensure fairness and consistency in the assessment process for students
 - To develop student time management and personal organisational skills which will be required for study at Higher Education
 - To ensure that the assessment process can be managed effectively to ensure timely feedback to students and manage staff workloads
2. It is recommended that a central co-ordinator is responsible for supervising the granting of extensions via the assessors. This could be an internal moderator, course leader or other member of staff with an overarching quality role.
3. Requests for extensions should be made by the student to the assessor, or other named person responsible, in writing at least 5 working days before the published hand-in date, unless there is evidence that exceptional circumstances exist.
4. It is recommended that the form is available both on-line and in a central point like the Learning Resource Centre.
5. Exceptional circumstances must be defined in the policy, or examples given as guidance, and agreed by the central co-ordinator in each case.
6. The reason for the extension should be clearly stated on the form and any medical evidence attached. The policy should clearly state the circumstances which will require medical evidence.
7. The assessor should then pass the request to the central co-ordinator who will make a decision which is then passed to the assessor to report to the student. This process should be completed within 2 working days.
8. The length of the extension should be proportionate to the amount of work the student has left to complete, the extenuating circumstances which apply and comparable with previously approved extensions given for similar cases. See examples below.
9. Each part of the process should be recorded and held securely.
10. The use of “week commencing” in assignment briefs should be avoided. Where a number of classes are taking the same subject, the hand-in date for each class should be customised. It is not recommended that an end date of the last day in

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the week should be given in these cases as students could argue that some were being given extra time.

11. Clear guidance should be given to students on the process for granting an extension within the student handbook and should be reiterated at induction and before the assignments are handed out. It should be clear that it is a request and not an automatic right.
12. Extensions which have been granted should be indicated on the assessment tracking document once the assignment has been assessed and graded (if applicable) preferably in a different colour.

Late Submissions

1. If a student hands in work late without an extension having been granted the grade indicators for that assignment are capped at a pass.
2. If the student submits their work late without an agreed extension and is then unsuccessful in achieving all the learning outcomes, there is no opportunity for a resubmission. The only option available to the student to achieve the unit is to apply for a referral (See QAA Grading Scheme Handbook Section E and the One Awards Access to HE Provider Handbook Section Four, page 9). Referrals are not an automatic right and so the provider must consider the case and decide whether or not extenuating circumstances exist which justify an application to One Awards midyear. Equally, One Awards considers each referral application and makes a decision based on the evidence provided. Referrals made at the end of the course are considered by the Final Awards Board.
3. This regulation applies to graded and ungraded units and so it is critical that students are made aware of the potential consequences of any late submission on the achievement of their Diploma.
4. Clear guidance should be given to students on what constitutes a late submission within the student handbook and should be reiterated at induction and before the assignments are handed out.
5. All late submissions should be clearly indicated on the central assessment tracking document preferably in a different colour from that for agreed extensions.
6. Repeated late submissions should be followed up through the provider's own attendance and disciplinary procedures and the reasons evaluated in order to develop the providers policy, guidance and management processes.
7. Patterns of late submissions and extensions on grade profiles should also be evaluated at the end of each academic year to measure the impact on student, units and Diploma results.

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Case studies: examples of cases where extensions have been approved and rejected

Circumstances	Approved/rejected and reason	Length of extension if granted
An assignment is due in on the Friday. A pregnant student has been off for 4 days and rings on the Thursday to say that she has been to see the midwife and has been told to rest for 2 weeks. Confirmation is provided in writing by the midwife or a medical certificate is provided.	Approved	2 weeks is agreed in consultation with the student but it will be reviewed at the end of the second week in case she needs any further rest.
An assignment is due on a Monday morning, and a student rings to say that his grandfather has died over the weekend and he has not been able to complete it. He asks for an extension of 3 days as he thinks he can produce it within this time.	Approved	Three days
An assignment is due on a Friday and a student contacts his lecturer on the Thursday saying that he will not be able to hand it in the next day because he has to work in his part time job in a bar that evening.	Rejected – student has to manage his time to meet his deadlines.	
A student says he is unable to hand his work in by the deadline because he has missed several classes and he does not understand what he has to do. No valid reason is given for missing the classes.	Rejected – good attendance is required on the course.	
A student comes to College the day after an assignment was due in and asks for an extension. She says she just got the date wrong and did not check her calendar.	Rejected – planning and time management is essential	