

13. SUBSTANTIAL ASSESSMENT TASKS

This section of the Student Regulations Framework applies to all taught programmes of Plymouth Marjon University, whether undergraduate or postgraduate.

13.1 Introduction

Substantial assessment tasks include Dissertations, Honours Projects, Independent Study Modules and other modules of 30 credits or more, and typically have a single assessment point. Detailed information on substantial assessment tasks will be found in Programme and Module information provided by the programme team.

13.2 Ethical Clearance

Students should seek ethical clearance for all assessment tasks which involve research, or where specifically required, following the procedures used by researchers at the University as laid down in the University's Research Ethics Policy and Code of Conduct. Programme teams will make students aware of this, and support students through the process of seeking ethical clearance in accordance with the Policy.

13.3 Dissertations and Honours Projects

1. Dissertations and honours projects involve students working independently but with supervision provided by an appropriate tutor, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Detailed guidance on what is required will be provided in the Programme and / or Module information.

2. Dissertations and honours projects are taken in the final stage of study (Level 6 for undergraduate dissertations; Level 7 for postgraduate dissertations). They are typically worth 40 credits or more and therefore cannot be considered for condonement (see Section 6 of this Framework).
3. Dissertations and honours projects must be an original piece of work and should not exceed the word limit as published in the information provided by the programme team or the equivalent student effort (where graphical, video, audio or other non-written material is involved).
4. The nature and timing of the undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations and honours projects will be subject to approval at programme level and will follow the University's published Assessments Calendar.

13.4 Dissertations and Honours Project Requirements

Students must follow the requirements specified by their programme team, including the nature and format required for the work. All sources consulted must be fully acknowledged throughout in accordance with the University's requirements. Further guidance is available from the Student Information Handbook.

13.5 Submission of Dissertations and Honours Projects

1. Students must follow the format for submission as detailed by their programme team and set out in the module information. The University normally retains a copy.
2. Please also refer to Section 4 of this Framework with regard to Extenuating Circumstances.

13.6 Feedback on Dissertations and Honours Projects

Feedback on the dissertation/honours project will be provided to the student in the normal timeframes, (please also refer to Section 12.3 of this Framework), and should be available no later than the day the final results are posted.

13.7 Library Dissertation and Honours Project Holdings

1. Selected dissertations/honours projects will be made available electronically via the Library, typically for a period of five years. This will not affect ownership or copyright of any original material contained within the dissertation/honours project.
2. Students who do not wish their dissertation/honours project to be made available, if selected, can opt out. They can do so either by completing the relevant section on the dissertation/honours project report form or by advising the Head of Library in writing at any time thereafter.

13.8 Undergraduate Independent Study Modules (ISM)

1. Undergraduate programmes may also have validated Independent Study Modules (ISMs). An ISM is a single module (20 credits) at Level 5 or 6 that enables students to negotiate a topic for independent study under the supervision of a tutor. An ISM is distinct from and cannot form part of the dissertation/honours project.
2. Details of what the module involves can be found in the relevant Programme and/or Module information. The content of ISMs must be drawn from the areas of study within, or related to, the student's programme of study.
3. The Programme Leader must approve registration for an ISM and the topic; submission dates for ISMs, where applicable, are notified in the relevant Programme and/or Module information.

4. An Independent Study Module (ISM) should not exceed 5,000 words or the equivalent student effort (where graphical, video, audio or other non-written material is involved). ISMs must be in addition to the minimum number of taught modules in any one year.
5. In order to ensure that students are equipped to meet the demands of independent study, they will not be permitted to undertake an ISM before the second semester at Diploma Level (Level 5). Students can only take one ISM across their entire programme of study.
6. Please also refer to Section 4 of this Framework with regard to Extenuating Circumstances.

13.9 Right to Copy

The University retains the right to copy any work submitted for assessment, be it in print or electronic format, in order to carry out its processes of assessment and for administrative purposes. Students cannot opt out of this arrangement.

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