

Version number:	Effective from:	Approved by:	Policy owner:	Review date:	Next Review Date:
Approved	29/11/23	CQC	Head of Student Services	June 2023	June 2024

Progression and Continuation Policy

From August 2023

Updated: 29th November 2023

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- Determine what is meant by progression, continuation, and completion.
- To clarify when undergraduates and postgraduate students can progress to their next unit / Stage
- Outline any conditions that are in place for this.
- To provide support for students through this policy to better achieve their goals and potential.

Values / principles

OCA is an open-access provider of courses, which means that, with certain exceptions (see our [Admissions Policy](#) for details), no prior qualifications are required to study. OCA believes that arts education should be open to all who desire it. As students may be new to higher education, distance learning, arts education, or any of these things in combination, OCA may impose specific restrictions (detailed below in sections 2, 3, and 4) on progression between units on qualification pathways. This is in order to help students progress at a rate suitable to them, to receive support, and to ensure as many students as possible are successful in their learning journey.

Scope

This policy applies to all OCA students who have begun their undergraduate and postgraduate programme of study.

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Changes

- Updated reference from Academic Regulatory Framework and Common Credit Framework to Academic Regulations for Subsidiary Institutions of The Open University.
- Updated references from Extensions and Deferrals to Extenuating Circumstances
- Resit and resubmission opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate students amalgamated

Related policies and legislation

This policy references the following:

- [Academic Regulations for Subsidiary Institutions of The Open University](#)
- [Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Recognition of Prior Learning](#)
- [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#)

Policy / procedure

1. Definitions

- 1.1. *Progression* is defined as the advancement from one stage of a programme to an adjacent higher stage.
- 1.2. *Continuation* is defined as the completion of one unit of study and moving to the next unit within the same stage of study.
- 1.3. *Completion* is defined as the unit being confirmed by a member of the OCA teaching team as all required projects / assignments having been submitted and formative feedback received.
- 1.4. *Completion date* is defined as the date upon which formative feedback for the final assignment/project on a given unit is returned to a student, and determines their eligibility to be invited for assessment.
- 1.5. *Assessment* is defined as the submission of work created through a unit of study for formal assessment, mapped against learning outcomes. This is reviewed by assessors and external examiners for the purpose of achieving credit towards a qualification.

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- 1.6.** Submission date is defined as the date by which work must have been submitted to OCA for inclusion in a formal assessment event. Details on assessment timings can be found on OCA Learn.

2. Progression and continuation parameters for undergraduate students

- 2.1.** When you complete a unit with OCA you may provisionally continue to the next unit, without first being formally assessed, except in certain circumstances:
- 2.1.1.** If the completed unit is your first unit on a degree programme undertaken with OCA (whether at Stage 1 or via direct entry by Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)) you must be formally assessed and receive ratified results before continuing to the next unit. This is to give students time to adapt to studying with OCA, considering the differences between distance learning and other forms of Higher Education.
- 2.2.** When progressing between stages of study (for example HE4 to HE5) you will be invited to a Progression Discussion with the Programme Leader, Programme Tutor, or other designated members of the academic team. This discussion is designed to support your progression, through understanding the academic requirements of the stage of study you are progressing to. The meeting allows you to discuss your progress to date and your subject focus at the next stage of study. The Progression Discussion can be a 1-2-1 or group session, and may be built into the introduction of your new unit at Stages 2 and 3.
- 2.3.**
- 2.4.** Where you are permitted to continue to the next unit of study on your pathway in all cases you must have submitted work for assessment and met all assessment criteria for submission at the first available assessment event after the completion date of your unit. If you do not submit work for assessment you will receive a mark of 0 (paragraph 4.6 of the Summative Assessment Policy), and be able to resubmit for a capped mark (paragraph 7.3 of the Summative Assessment Policy, and 17.3.1 of the Academic

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Regulations for Subsidiary Institutions of The Open University). The exception to this is where:

- 2.4.1.** If you have applied for deferral of assessment through OCAs [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#) and have been approved by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, you must submit work for assessment and meet all assessment criteria at the second assessment event following the completion date of your unit. Failure to submit for this event will mean no further assessment opportunities and possible withdrawal from the degree course.

3. Progression parameters for postgraduate students

- 3.1.** Postgraduate students will work to an enrolment schedule where - in usual circumstances - they would have been assessed for the previous unit before progressing.
- 3.2.** Where a postgraduate student has extenuating circumstances and has an approved deferral of assessment, they will be able to submit at the next assessment event following completion of a unit instead of the first event. This will require supporting evidence and will also require the student to delay the start of the next unit until the unit has been assessed and passed, joining another cohort.

4. Previous unit is unsuccessful at assessment and student has provisionally progressed.

- 4.1.** If you do not achieve the minimum required pass mark of 40% for undergraduate and 50% for postgraduate and you have provisionally progressed to the next unit, the action taken will be:
- 4.1.1.** Any ongoing units will be deferred whilst you prepare and submit work at assessment as either a resubmission or retake of the failed unit.
- 4.1.1.1.** If you are required to resubmit work for assessment (paragraph 17.3 of the [Academic Regulations for Subsidiary Institutions of The Open University](#)) this must be resubmitted at the next available assessment event after you have received your

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assessment outcome. No deferral of assessment is possible under these circumstances.

4.1.1.2. If you are required to retake a unit and submit for assessment (paragraph 17.4 of the [Academic Regulations for Subsidiary Institutions of The Open University](#)), you must undertake the unit, submit for assessment and meet the assessment criteria within 12 months of when you have received your assessment outcome.

4.2. If you are unsuccessful at assessment and subsequently exhausted all available assessment opportunities for resubmission and retake, you will be withdrawn from all units you are currently enrolled to and any associated award (see Section 9 of the [Terms and Conditions](#)). This includes specific registration with the awarding body where applicable.

5. Fee Liability

5.1. Where you have been allowed to progress onto your next unit subject to paragraph 6.6 of the Terms and Conditions, and Section 2 of this policy (Progression parameters for undergraduate study) but have exhausted all opportunities for assessment on a previous unit as stated in paragraph 4.2 of this policy any fees received will be refunded for the unit you have progressed to.

6. Appeals

6.1. Students do not have an automatic right of appeal against a decision made in line with this policy, except where they believe an administrative error has been made. Applicants may request an administrative appeal as set out in OCA's [Student Complaints and Non-Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

7. Implementing the policy

7.1. OCA will ensure this document is easily available to OCA students and applicants by making it available on both OCA's public facing website and on the student VLE.

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8. Support for the policy

- 8.1. If you are a disabled student and you would like to receive this procedure in an alternative format please contact the OCA's [Learner Support team](#). You should also contact the Learner Support team if you wish to discuss any reasonable adjustments to these procedures to take into account your disability and any additional support you may need.
- 8.2. If you live in Wales and require this policy in the Welsh language then please contact enquiries@oca.ac.uk.