

Progression and Continuation Policy

From August 2024

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1. Policy Summary

- 1.1. This policy sets out how OCA students are enabled to progress and continue with their studies, and the limitations around these.
- 1.2. OCA operates an open access policy. This means you do not need specific experience or qualifications to join most OCA study options. The progression and continuation rules in this policy are designed to support your study journey.
- 1.3. These rules and limitations are also in place to limit any financial liability you may incur if you were to progress or continue.
- 1.4. The OCA curriculum is designed to be sequential, with each subsequent aspect of study supported by what has come before. This is to help you understand the material before moving on to further study.
- 1.5. There are specific limitations in place around progression and continuation to ensure that you have sufficient time to reflect and develop key skills that enhance your learning.

2. Scope

2.1. What does this policy cover?

- 2.1.1. This policy applies to all students studying undergraduate or postgraduate degrees at OCA, who enrolled to a unit from August 2023 onwards.
- 2.1.2. This policy covers progression from one unit to another, and continuation from one stage of study to another.
- 2.1.3. The policy also covers assessment rules regarding progression, in relation to resubmissions and retakes.

2.2. What does this policy not cover?

- 2.2.1. This policy does not apply to students studying non-accredited provision at OCA, on short or foundation courses.

3. Undergraduate students

- 3.1. When you complete a unit with OCA you may provisionally continue to the next unit, without first being formally assessed, except:
 - 3.1.1. If the completed unit is your first unit on an undergraduate 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 your ratified result 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.

- 3.2. When progressing from one stage of study to another (for example HE4 to HE5) you will be invited to a Progression Discussion with a member 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.
- 3.3. When you progress to a new unit, you must submit work for assessment and meet all assessment criteria for submission for the unit you have completed at the first available assessment after you have completed.
- 3.4. If you do not submit work for assessment (as outlined in paragraph 3.3) 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 Regulations for Subsidiary Institutions of The Open University). The exception to this is where:
 - 3.4.1. 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.

4. Postgraduate

- 4.1. Postgraduate students will work to an enrolment schedule where - in usual circumstances - they would have been assessed for the previous unit before progressing.
- 4.2. 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. See the [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#) for details.

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

5.1. 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:

5.1.1. Any ongoing units will be deferred whilst you prepare, submit work at assessment, and successfully pass as either a resubmission or retake of the failed unit.

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

5.1.1.2. 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 will have 12 months from when you receive your assessment outcome to undertake and complete the unit. Following completion of the unit you will be required to submit work the [next available assessment event](#). No deferral of assessment is possible under these circumstances.

5.2. If you are unsuccessful at assessment and subsequently exhausted all available assessment opportunities for resubmission and retake on a core unit, 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.

6. Fee Liability

6.1. Where you have been allowed to progress onto your next unit subject to paragraph 6.6 of the [Terms and Conditions](#), and Section 3 of this policy (Undergraduate students) but have exhausted all opportunities for assessment on a previous unit as stated in paragraph 5.2 of this

policy any fees received will be refunded for the unit you have progressed to.

7. Appeals

- 7.1. There is no automatic right of appeal against a decision made in line with this policy, except where you believe an administrative error has been made. You may request an administrative appeal as set out in OCA's [Student Complaints and Non-Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

8. Glossary of terms

- 8.1. *Progression* is defined as the advancement from one stage of a degree programme to an adjacent higher stage.
- 8.2. *Continuation* is defined as the completion of one unit of study and moving to the next unit within the same stage of study.
- 8.3. *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.
- 8.4. *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 included at the next available assessment.
- 8.5. *Assessment* is defined as the submission of work created during 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.
- 8.6. *Assessment outcome* is the date where you receive your ratified result following an Exam Board.
- 8.7. *Submission date* is defined as the date by which work must have been submitted to OCA for a formal assessment event. Details on assessment timings can be found on [OCA Learn](#).
- 8.8. *Core Unit* is defined as a required part of the programme structure, specified by the Programme Specification.

9. If you need support

- 9.1. 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.

- 9.2. If you live in Wales and require this policy in the Welsh language then please contact enquiries@oca.ac.uk.

10. Linked and other policies and legislation

- 10.1. This policy references the [Academic Regulations for Subsidiary Institutions of The Open University](#), [Terms and Conditions](#), [Recognition of Prior Learning](#), [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#), [Student Fees Policy](#), and [Student Accessibility Policy](#).
- 10.2. Students can find useful information relating to [assessment](#) and [study planning](#) within OCA Learn.

11. Changes since previous policy

- 11.1. Transfer of policy to new template.
- 11.2. Amendments to wording for clarity and ease of reading throughout.
- 11.3. Clarification in paragraph 5.2 that withdrawal after exhausting assessment attempts applies to core units only.