



Student Handbook

For Online Students

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Foreword

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Arden University and I wish you well in your studies.

Arden University is at the forefront of distance learning provision, not only in the UK but also all over the world. It intends to maintain this position as a leader in supported online distance learning. This means combining appropriate communication technologies and knowledge media with personal tuition and counselling to ensure that you can learn effectively and enjoyably.

Arden University takes its obligations to each of its students very seriously. You have registered for an online distance learning course with particular personal goals in mind; our staff want to help you achieve those goals successfully.

The purpose of this Handbook is to describe the procedures and policies that are an essential element in sustaining an effective relationship between Arden University and its students. These policies make explicit the expectations on both sides. I advise you to familiarise yourself with the contents pages and to read any sections that are of interest to you. The Handbook should then be kept for more detailed consultation as particular issues arise. Most of the questions you have about Arden University practices will be answered in these pages.

I trust that you will find your association with Arden University a stimulating and rewarding experience.

Professor Carl Lygo
Vice Chancellor and CEO
Arden University

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the course; you have joined one of four intakes: January, April, August or October. Our aim is to provide you with the opportunity to establish a firm foundation for a successful career in your chosen discipline.

You will be studying alongside students from a variety of backgrounds. Though you are expected to invest time and effort into your studies you should also take every opportunity to have fun and enjoyment. We hope that you will find your learning experience to be productive, enjoyable and successful.

Purpose of this Handbook

The purpose of this Handbook is to introduce students to online distance learning study through Arden University, and to lay down the standards that Arden University requires from students. It also sets out the way in which we operate.

In this document, you will also find guidance on various key personal skills (such as effective reading and writing), which underpin effective study and also contribute directly to good working practices.

The Handbook should be read in conjunction with the Programme Handbook which contains the information you need to know about the structure and aims of your course and the modules (also referred to as units) you are required to study.

2. Useful Contacts

Student Support Team	email: studentsupport@arden.ac.uk Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700
Examinations Co-ordinator	email: exams@arden.ac.uk Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700
Student Finance Queries	email: studentfinance@arden.ac.uk Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700
Arden University Vice Chancellor & CEO Professor Carl Lygo	Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700 email: clygo@arden.ac.uk
Togetherall – free, online, welfare and wellbeing support, available 24/7	Web: www.togetherall.com/joinnow/ardenuniversity

Please be aware that any phone calls made to or by Arden University may be recorded for training and monitoring purposes.

2.1 Key Support Roles

Student Support Team

The role of the Arden University Student Support Team is to ensure that you are progressing well in your studies and they will assist you throughout your programme with any administrative query relating to your studies. At the start of the intake your Student Support Co-ordinator will help to ensure that you are familiar with processes, procedures, rules and regulations and will support you with working through the Induction Module on ilearn. After completion of your Induction Module your Student Support Co-ordinator will be in regular contact to support and guide you. They will also email you reminders of upcoming deadlines.

The Team can be contacted at studentsupport@arden.ac.uk. Please do not hesitate to make contact if there is something you are unsure of or need guidance about.

Director of Student Achievement

The Director of Student Achievement is responsible for overseeing the work of the Student Support Team.

Tutors

Each module you study has a dedicated module tutor. All tutors are approved subject specialists. They will help you by facilitating your academic progress and, to this end, they will set tasks and activities in the appropriate areas of ilearn, Arden University's Virtual Learning Environment.

The primary means of support will be delivered online through ilearn. Where appropriate, tutors may also provide support by other means, such as via email.

The tutoring process is viewed as an essential aspect of development and support for students. It is informally based and designed to encourage two-way communication; either peer-to-peer or student-to-tutor.

Your module tutor will provide you with academic advice and guidance and answer your questions of an academic nature. For all other queries, you are encouraged to contact your Student Support Team at Arden University directly via studentsupport@arden.ac.uk

Programme Team Leader

The Programme Leader has overall responsibility for the structure and delivery of the course. You will meet him/her as you progress with your studies, as Programme Leaders also teach on the programmes they lead.

3. Learning Support

3.1 Induction

Before you commence study on the course you are required to undertake an online induction module which contains all the information you need to get you started including how to use ilearn (Arden University's Virtual Learning Environment or VLE), how to access support, and a range of activities to introduce you to key study skills which will help you with the course. There is also an interactive quiz to consolidate your understanding of the skills, processes and procedures you will encounter during your studies. The aims of the Induction are for you to:

- Get to know staff and fellow students
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of your course of study
- Access a range of resources to support your study
- Ask questions relating to any aspect of the learning experience.
- Become acquainted with Arden University procedures and policies.

At the start of your intake, you will receive an email with your username and password for ilearn, which will allow you to access your Induction module by logging onto ilearn and selecting the Induction module. The induction includes several lessons each with learning materials, activities and discussion areas. This structure will be replicated in each module once you start the course. It is recommended you work through each lesson and carry out the activities; these can be found in the 'My Induction Learning' menu. You should also refer to the information under 'My Programme', 'My Support', 'Getting started' and 'My Resources'. A guide to navigating the induction module is available under 'My Resources'.

If you join the Induction module before the formal intake start date, there will be a number of tasks already available for you to work through. You will be given access to your Interactive Quiz on the first day of the new study period. A reminder notice will be posted on ilearn on this date. It is important that you complete and pass the Quiz within the first four weeks of the intake; after these four weeks have elapsed, access to the Interactive Quiz will be blocked. If you have not passed the Quiz by this time, you will have to wait until the next intake to complete your Induction and progress onto your first module – this could be up to three months away!

Once you have successfully passed the Interactive Quiz, your first module or modules on ilearn will be automatically released to you. To access additional / future modules click on the 'release now' button. If you experience difficulties during this process, please contact the Student Support Team.

3.2 Learning Materials

You will access your core learning material for the course via ilearn under 'My Learning'. For further explanation of ilearn see 3.3 below.

The module learning materials (in 'My Learning') are designed to facilitate your learning and to allow you to achieve the learning outcomes for each module. The material is interactive and contains practical activities, which have been designed to enable you to apply theoretical principles and frameworks. As with the induction module, each is broken down into lessons containing learning materials, activities and discussions.

Try to use your own background when completing the activities and draw the best ideas and solutions you can from your own experience. To get the best out of your learning experience, you are

encouraged to discuss your ideas with other students or your colleagues; this will make learning much more stimulating. Remember, if in doubt, or if you have any questions about the modules or how to study, ask your Tutor. A good way to do this is via the discussion area in the relevant lesson. This way other students who may have similar questions will also benefit.

If you wish to purchase your own textbooks, suggested reading is included on the module iLearn pages.

A range of online library resources is made available to Arden University students (via iLearn – My Resources – Resource centre menu), which supplements the learning materials within iLearn. Arden University's resources include libraries of electronic books (e-books). Arden University aims to provide an electronic copy of the core text for each module, although students should be aware that the availability of books in electronic form is subject to publishers' permissions. In the event that a core textbook cannot be provided in e-book format, suitable alternatives may be available. There are occasions when students may wish to purchase the hard copy of a core textbook, in the event that it is not available in the Arden University library. In all cases, a range of e-books is available to facilitate your wider reading around a particular topic.

3.3 iLearn

iLearn is Arden University's online facility designed to enhance your learning experience and help you through your studies. It provides access to:

- Your Induction
- Your Modules – once you have successfully completed the induction quiz. This includes module materials, lessons and assessment details
- Resources such as online electronic libraries and support information (user guides, links rules and regulations, contact details, your student handbook)
- Discussion forums and messaging facility
- My Notebook – you can make notes within each lesson and these will be collated and accessible from the 'My Notebook' link at the top of each module page.

You will also find links on iLearn to:

- Unitu – access to Arden University's online platform for the student voice, allowing students and staff members to communicate with each other and to raise and act upon student feedback.
- Study Skills – access to online resources to assist with study skills including referencing, academic writing skills, numeracy and exam skills.
- Careers resources – access to comprehensive personal and career development resources. After selecting 'view more', click on the green 'Career Portal' button to enter.

You will find a detailed explanation of the key functions of iLearn and how to use them during your Induction. The site will be updated regularly with new and relevant information as it becomes available. Tutors may make announcements or add notes to relevant sections or engage with you in discussion forums.

There is also a page for your own personal profile and photo. You are encouraged to add information about yourself, as other students may find it interesting.

ilearn will be our principal way of communicating with students registered on this course so it is essential that you visit ilearn on a regular basis. Please remember to look at the 'News & FAQ's' section for new messages and discussions.

If you require assistance navigating ilearn or with any of the feature on ilearn, there are a range of guides under the 'My Resources' menu.

3.4 How will students support each other through the course?

We believe success on the course will be enhanced through the development of a supportive learning community. One of the ways in which we will achieve this is through facilitated online discussions within ilearn and other tutor-initiated activity, where you will have the opportunity to undertake group tasks with other students.

3.5 How to access ilearn

You can access the ilearn site directly by entering the following web address in your web browser:
www.ilearn.rdi.co.uk

1. Enter your username and password and click 'Login'.
2. Select the relevant Module from the "My Modules" section in the middle of the screen.

4 Staff/Student Obligations

4.1 Student Charter

At Arden University, we are passionate about supporting people, achieving our best and inspiring progress. To help us support and inspire you to achieve your best, we have created a Charter – it's a set of guidelines that we can all follow, highlighting how we can work together to ensure you have a great learning experience.

By embarking on this course of study, you confirm your commitment to Arden University's **Student Charter** (Annex 1).

4.2 What you can expect from your Tutor

The tutor will provide learning support and advice to learners in the following manner:

- Providing a welcome forum post at the start of the module.
- Providing a response to your email or forum post, wherever possible within 2 working days (Monday – Friday).
- Providing formative feedback within 7 working days (Monday-Friday).
- Initiating task and discussions via the module discussion forum on ilearn.
- Moderating discussion boards and inputting as required.
- Live online chat sessions, where appropriate.
- Monitoring student participation and progress.

4.3 Student Feedback

Arden University is committed to providing you with the best possible service and we believe the best way to improve is to listen to your views.

We value your feedback and encourage you to pass on your comments, compliments or concerns. There are a number of ways you can do this.

If your comments relate to a particular module, the best way to provide feedback is by completing the **Module Evaluation Survey**. This will appear on your module page just before your assessment deadline.

You are also encouraged to provide feedback to your Student Representative via Arden's **UNITU** forum which you can access via ilearn or download as an app on your tablet or smartphone. The Student Representative will post issues raised onto feedback boards and present this feedback on behalf of the student body to the relevant course committee meetings.

You can also provide feedback at any time to the Student Support Team.

Please note that all feedback will be dealt with in strictest confidence and wherever possible anonymity will be maintained. Your feedback will be considered at Arden University's quarterly course committee meetings, following which an update will be posted to the student feedback forum on ilearn.

4.4 Student Representation

Student representation is a mechanism that helps Arden University ensure that the student voice is fully represented in decision making. Representation provides opportunities for students to feed directly into not only Course related developments, but also the wider activities of Arden University. Becoming a Student Representative is not only a great opportunity to make a positive difference to your learning experience and that of your fellow students, but it is also great for your CV.

Find out more about Arden University's policy on Student Engagement later in this handbook.

There will be an elected student representative for your course in your location. There is also an elected Student President and officers on Academic Board, Quality and Standards Committee, Access and Participation and the Learning and Teaching Committee. You can access Arden's **UNITU** forum via ilearn or via a mobile browser: <http://arden.unitu.co.uk> using the same email address and password you use to access ilearn to post your feedback and comments and to contact your student representative, but you can also download it as a progressive web app via the Unitu site by accepting mobile notifications on your tablet or smartphone, so you'll never miss out on what your fellow students are saying about your course and campus. You will also be able to communicate with all students across your course, including those studying at other campuses and in fully online distance learning mode, and ultimately with all Arden University students, via the UNITU platform/app.

Find out how you can become a Student Representative later in this handbook.

4.5 Annual Monitoring

At the conclusion of each year, academic departments are invited to reflect on the strengths/weaknesses of the previous year through the Annual Monitoring process. An important part of the process is a consideration of the student feedback provided by the Courses Committee and the module evaluation questionnaire. The views of students are considered extremely important to the successful running of your specific course and of our courses as a whole. Your input is, therefore, very important and may significantly influence both the content of our courses and the processes by which they operate.

Other reference sources considered include: External Moderators' reports, students' module results, students' registration, retention and completion statistics, and the action plan from the annual monitoring report of the previous year.

Arden University is committed to providing the highest quality of education possible within the limits imposed by the resources available, to ensure that you benefit from the academic, social and cultural experience. Where candidates feel that their legitimate expectations are not being met, whether it is an academic or non-academic matter, they have the right of access to the **Complaints Procedure** and **Academic Appeals Policy** contained in this handbook although it is hoped that most complaints can be settled at a local level.

5 Course Information

5.1 Module Descriptions

The learning outcomes, content and assessment details for each module are described in Module Definition Forms (MDFs) which can be found in your offer pack.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

Your tutor will provide you with an assignment brief for each assessment, which explains what you have to do to achieve the learning outcomes and assessment criteria and how the work will be assessed.

5.3 Assessment Methods

The assessment methods used for each module on your course are detailed in the Module Definition Form and in each assessment brief, which can be found on your module page in ilearn on the My Assessment Tab.

5.4 Course Duration and Pace of Study

UK degrees are made up of levels and credits. An undergraduate degree is 360 credits split into three equal sized levels (called 4, 5 and 6 on the national framework). Each level equates to one full time academic year (9 months). A master's degree is 180 credits all of which are at Level 7 and is the equivalent of 12 month of full time study year. At Arden, normally, 120 of these are taught modules with a 60-credit dissertation.

We recognise that most of our students are studying alongside work and so cannot proceed at full time pace. Our programmes are designed to be flexible but need to have time limits built into them. There are also operational constraints which means that not all modules are available all the time. The programme is scheduled to allow you to move through the programme to meet your own needs but does require that you take some responsibility for scheduling your study to ensure that you can complete within the time limits. For online study we operate a schedule based on quarters; i.e. there are four start and finish points in the year. This guidance note is based on our published regulations which can be viewed at <https://arden.ac.uk/studying-with-us/about-arden/our-policies-standards>.

Students on a full-time distance learning programme (only available on some postgraduate programmes) are expected to study at a prescribed rate to ensure that they complete within the time period. This will involve working on two modules each quarter for three study periods. You will work on your dissertation alongside this and have the final study period to dedicate to the dissertation, allowing you to complete within 12 months.

The pass mark on undergraduate modules is 40% and for postgraduate 50%. If you do not achieve this grade you are allowed a referral opportunity. If, after this, you have still not achieved the required grade you are allowed a second opportunity to study the module again. We refer to this as a retake of the module and this normally gives you two further assessment attempts subject to any professional and regulatory body requirements*. Any attempt after the first has a grade capped at the minimum pass mark (i.e. 40% for undergraduate and 50% for postgraduate modules).

We cannot allow a rate of study faster than a full-time rate, so we have rules designed to prevent students from having too large a workload at any one time. These take into account new modules you want to commence and any referrals or retakes needed.

5.5 Undergraduate degrees by Distance Learning

Your course is equivalent to a full-time three-year degree made up of three levels. You have three years to complete each level. If you do not complete a level within three years, then you are not able to continue on the programme*.

You may not begin studying **more than** two new modules per quarter. We include retake modules as 'new' for the purpose of this provision. Please note that due to timetabling constraints there may not always be two modules available in every quarter.

A large part of Level 6 is the dissertation. You can either do this as the final piece of work or in parallel with other modules, however you must have passed at least two modules at the final level before you can be allocated a supervisor and start your dissertation.

* due to the specific requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies (PSRB), the LLB (QLD) and BSc Psychology may have restrictions on both timeframes for completion and the number of attempts at modules. You should refer to your Programme Handbook for guidance.

Maximum Course Registration Timeframe – undergraduate courses

The maximum periods of registration for an undergraduate programme or level of study leading to an award are detailed in the following table. These have been designed to take into account the requirements of distance learners with variety of needs and include any periods during any additional time required as a result of mitigating circumstances.

Award	Credits	Maximum registration period
Level 4 (all undergraduate programmes except Higher National Certificates and Diplomas)	120	3 years
Level 5 (all undergraduate programmes except Higher National Certificates and Diplomas)	120	3 years
Level 6 (all undergraduate programmes except Higher National Certificates and Diplomas)	120	3 years
Graduate Diploma	120	3 years
Professional Certificate	20-120	3 years

Individual programmes may be designed to be completed in shorter periods than the maximum registration period set out above. Such periods will be stated in the programme specification which can be found in your Programme Handbook.

Please note that the maximum period of registration will be shorter if you have been admitted with Recognition of Prior Learning and the maximum period of registration will be calculated proportionately.

5.6 Postgraduate degrees by Distance Learning

Flexible study mode

Your course is equivalent to a full-time one year Master's degree but the course is flexible and the normal minimum completion time is 18 months. The maximum permitted time is five years.

You may not begin studying **more than** two new modules per quarter. We include retake modules as 'new' for the purpose of this provision. Please note that due to timetabling constraints there may not always be two modules available in every quarter.

You must have passed at least five modules before you can be allocated a supervisor and start your research project.

Two-year route (postgraduate loans)

Students resident in England may be eligible for a postgraduate loan from the Student Loans Company if they are enrolled on one of our eligible Masters degrees. Full details regarding eligibility can be found at <http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/content.php?r=22757-Postgraduate-Loan>

Our eligible Master's degree routes are those described as "2 Year Part-Time Distance Learning". Students on our "Flexible Distance Learning" routes are not eligible for this funding. If you are in any doubt as to your route, please ask Student Support.

If you are funding your study through a postgraduate loan (available in the UK only) then there is a requirement that the course is scheduled for completion within two years. We will provide a schedule that achieves this. The rules about release of modules in the previous section apply so it is important that you follow the schedule in order to maintain eligibility to draw down the loan funding.

Students enrolled on one of the eligible Masters routes and in receipt of a postgraduate loan from the Student Loans Company, must progress at an appropriate pace to complete within two years. **Arden University is required to make annual reports to the Student Loans Company regarding your progress.**

If you fall behind, or if you decide you would prefer to study at a slower pace, you may transfer to the Flexible Distance Learning route and take up to five years (from the date you first started) to complete your Master's degree. * However, if you transfer to the more flexible route, you will not be eligible for any continued loan payments and we will be required to notify the Student Loans Company.

If, during your studies, you need advice about your continuing loan payments or the progression requirements outlined above, please talk to our Student Finance Support Advisor by calling 02476 515 700 or emailing studentfinance@arden.ac.uk.

*Provided you are still eligible to proceed under our academic regulations.

Full-time study

If you are studying a distance learning postgraduate programme at a full-time rate then you are expected to complete the programme within 12 months, including the dissertation. You will study at a set pace, completing two modules in each study period for the first three study periods. You will start on your dissertation in the second study period, allowing you to start thinking about the title, gain ethics approval, and begin your research, and you will have the fourth study period to dedicate to completing the dissertation.

5.7 Maximum Course Registration Timeframe – postgraduate courses

The maximum periods of registration for a postgraduate programme or level of study leading to an award are detailed in the following table. These have been designed to take into account the requirements of distance learners with variety of needs and include any periods during any additional time required as a result of mitigating circumstances.

Award	Credits	Maximum registration period
Master's Degree	180	5 years
Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip)	120	3 years
Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert)	60	2 years

Individual programmes may be designed to be completed in shorter periods than the maximum registration period set out above. Such periods will be stated in the programme specification.

Please note that the maximum period of registration will be shorter if you have been admitted with Recognition of Prior Learning and the maximum period of registration will be calculated proportionately.

Study Planning

The rules may seem complicated but in practice work in a straightforward way and for the vast majority of students they facilitate flexible access to learning and allow completion to suit individual circumstances. We will publish a timetable so you can plan with confidence and our Student Support Coordinators are happy to give advice.

6. Study and Assessment

6.1 Activating your Modules

There are four module start dates during each calendar year: January, April, August and October. A module delivery schedule showing which modules are available in each quarter can be found on the induction page of ilearn.

You will be required to activate your modules on ilearn to begin studying. Access to new modules will be available from the module start date, as long as any prerequisites for those modules have been satisfied. Your first module following successful completion of the induction quiz will be automatically released. If you decide that you are not able to complete your module at this time, you may be able to defer. Please refer to section 6.9 below.

In order to benefit from the full schedule of module activities, you should activate your module as soon as possible on or after the official module start date. You will have up to **four weeks** from the official module start date in which to activate your module:

JANUARY- APRIL

April submission

Module release window: 31st Jan- 28th Feb

APRIL-JULY

July submission

Module release window: 30th April- 28th May

AUGUST - OCTOBER

October submission

Module release window: 1st Aug- 28th Aug

OCTOBER - JANUARY

January submission

Module release window: 31st Oct - 28th Nov

Please remember that if you miss this deadline you will have to wait to join the module at the next available module start date. Unfortunately, no exceptions can be made to this rule. If you are studying on a full-time distance learning programme it is required that you activate two modules for each study period; for all other students it is normally expected that you activate and study 20 credits at a time. Each module (with the exception of major projects and dissertations) will have a credit value of 20 credits, so it is expected that you study one module at a time. If you wish to study at a faster pace it is recommended that you contact the Student Support team to discuss your options before activating any additional modules. The maximum number of new credits you may have active at any one time is 40 credits.

Details of credit values for each module can be found in your **Programme Handbook**.

6.2 Assessment

Once you activate a module at one of the official start points, you will be expected to study the module and complete your assessment by the published submission date. This will normally be around 10 weeks after the start date of the module.

A module delivery schedule which includes assessment submission dates can be found on the induction page on ilearn. Please check the module delivery schedule before you activate your module to ensure that you will be able to commit to studying the module and meet the assessment deadline. The submission date(s) for each module are also displayed on the relevant module page on ilearn.

If you know of a reason why you will not be able to meet the assessment deadline, you are advised to delay the activation of your module until the next available module start date. If you have already activated your module and find yourself in this position, please refer to the section on deferral.

Assessment briefs (with the exception of examinations and 24 hour assessments) will normally be released at the start date of each module.

The assessment briefs will contain the following information:

1. Module title, Assignment title, word count
2. Submission instructions
3. Assignment brief/tasks detailing what the candidate needs to do.
4. Student Guidelines where applicable to assist you in your understanding of the exact requirements of the assessment.
5. Specific performance criteria mapped against the grading structure

For more information about word count please refer to the [Word Count Policy](#).

6.3 Submitting your Assessment

Your assessment brief will include instructions on how to submit your assessment. If your module is assessed by examination, please refer to section 6.5.

Normally, you will be required to submit your assessment electronically to the assessment submission area on your module page on ilearn by following the assignment submission link.

By submitting your assignment you will be agreeing to the Student Declaration, which confirms that the work you have submitted is your own original work. You will also be agreeing for your work to be scanned through Arden University's plagiarism detection system. It is Arden University's policy to scan all assessments through the Turnitin plagiarism detection system. Before your assignment submission deadline, you are advised to upload a draft assessment to ilearn. You will then be able to view the Originality Report generated by Turnitin, which will show any matches in your work to external sources that have not been correctly referenced. Please allow up to 48 hours for the Turnitin report to be generated by the system and become available to you, particularly when you re-upload for a second time or more. To view your Turnitin originality report, click on the percentage 'similarity index score' which will appear next to your assessment once the report has been generated by the system. The final submission you make prior to the deadline will be the work sent for marking regardless of whether this is your draft assessment with no exceptions.

If you experience difficulties uploading your work to ilearn, you should contact the Student Support Team immediately. You should also contact Student Support **before the deadline** if you are unable to submit your work by the deadline. Late submissions without notification cannot be accepted. See Section 6.7 for more details.

6.4 Help with Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism

You must ensure that you carefully read the information on plagiarism provided within the Induction module on ilearn and complete the Plagiarism Quiz before commencing your first module. You can return to this quiz later in your studies to refresh your understanding of key definitions relating to unfair practice and referencing.

You must also ensure you have read and understood Arden University's regulations on [Unfair Practice](#)

Staff involved in the assessment process will use a range of techniques along with their academic judgement, knowledge and experience to assist them in the detection of unfair practice. One of the tools that Arden University utilises to help staff identify potential unfair practice is Turnitin. The Turnitin system allows your Tutor to check your work for improper citation, incorrect or inadequate referencing or potential plagiarism by comparing your work against its continuously updated databases. All assessments submitted for formal assessment will be scanned through the Turnitin software.

Before formal submission of your assignment to ilearn, you can upload your draft assignment to Turnitin via the same submission portal that you will upload your final version to. This will enable you to view the draft originality report generated to Turnitin and thus you will have the opportunity to make corrections to your assignment before making your final submissions. The last submission that you upload before the deadline is the version that will be marked. In addition a guide is available on ilearn (under My Resources – Guides) to help you review your Turnitin originality report and identify any problem areas. It is essential for you to read this information before you start planning for your first assessment.

Please remember that the Turnitin report is just one of the sources of evidence that will be considered when investigating suspected cases of unfair practice. It is important to understand that a Turnitin originality report showing a match to an external source may be used as evidence during the investigation of suspected cases of unfair practice. However, an originality report that shows a low or even a 0% match cannot and will not be accepted as evidence that no unfair practice has taken place.

6.5 Modules Assessed by Examination

If your course includes an examination you will be required to confirm details of your preferred examination venue at the commencement of the module.

A member of the Examinations Team will contact you to assist you with making arrangements for your examination.

A free of charge examination venue is available at our offices in Coventry, UK. Overseas students may take examinations at British Council Offices worldwide. Please note that charges will be set by the British Council and students will be responsible for paying charges for examinations directly to the venue.

6.6 Alternative Examination Venues

If it's not practical for you to take your exam at one of our free venues or at a British Council Office, our exams team will assist you with arranging your exam at an alternative venue.

Our Examinations Team maintain a list of approved worldwide examination centres which can be found on the Induction module page. You will be responsible for making contact with the venue directly to establish their availability to host your examination. The Examinations Team will guide you through this process. You will also be responsible for paying charges directly to the venue. Charges are set by the venue and will therefore vary.

You may wish to propose an alternative College or University examination centre to be considered for approval by Arden University. You are not permitted to use an examination venue with which you have family, employer or other associations.

An approval process will be undertaken by Arden University to ensure that the institution is of good standing, has the capability to host examinations and meets Arden University's approval criteria.

For more information about the process for approval of Arden University examination centres please contact exams@arden.ac.uk

6.7 Submission Deadlines

Assignments must be submitted by the hand-in date as stated on the assignment brief. The submission date(s) for each module are also displayed on the relevant module page on ilearn.

If you require an extension, for an exceptional reason only, you must apply using the appropriate form, **before the agreed hand-in date**. The granting of an extension is not automatic and must be formally approved. Please see sections 6.9 and 6.10 on Assessment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances and contact Student Support if you require guidance.

6.8 Assessment Deferrals

Upon opening a module, you have one deferral opportunity that can be used against your first submission. The deferral deadline can be found on your module page and can be actioned through ilearn. If you select to defer a module this means that your submission deadline will move to the following submission period, however you will still be able to access the module materials. You will need to answer the new question which is relevant to that period. If you have already had an attempt at a module then you are unable to defer.

Please note that if you are studying a full-time distance learning programme you will not have the option to defer a module.

6.9 Assessment Extension

An **extension** is defined as permission to hand in a piece of assessed work after the published hand-in date, without incurring a penalty. Extensions to assessment deadlines may be granted in exceptional circumstances normally up to a maximum of seven days following the published hand-in date and time in accordance with the [Extension Policy](#).

How do I make a request for an extension to an assessment deadline?

- You need to complete and submit the extension form before the deadline date, the form can be requested from your student support co-ordinator.
- You should describe your reasons for the short extension and if you have any evidence to support your request submit this with the form to your student support advisor.

- The application will be considered and you will be notified by your University email (normally within 24 hours) of the outcome. If the request is approved, you will be given a new submission date. Providing you hand in your coursework on or before the extension submission date, you will receive full marks for the work.
- If your application is declined you will need to attempt the assessment otherwise a non-submission will be recorded and any resubmission will be capped at 40%.

How much information do I need to provide for an extension?

You must include all relevant facts. Your application may be rejected if you fail to complete the details concerning identification of the module(s) and assessments for which you are making an application.

You must ensure that you provide the specific assessment dates. You must state the date from which the mitigating circumstances affected your work, and the date that you were able to resume your normal pattern of study. These dates should correspond with any information provided in your third-party evidence (if you are able to provide any). You must also make sure that you explain the impact that these circumstances have had on your performance. Try to make your submission clear, but concise.

6.10 Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating circumstances are genuine circumstances beyond your control or ability to foresee, and which impair your assessed work.

If your circumstances are such that an extension of up to seven days would not be sufficient or if you feel that, despite being granted an extension, your performance in a piece of coursework will be seriously impaired, you may formally submit a mitigating circumstances application accordance with Arden's [Mitigating Circumstances Policy](#)

If accepted, you will be granted a deferral which means you will be given permission to postpone submission of your assessment and undertake a new piece of work at the next available submission period.

How do I submit a request for mitigating circumstances?

- It is recommended you discuss the matter with student support co-ordinator initially so that the mitigating circumstances can be reviewed.
- You need to complete and submit the mitigating circumstances form no later than five working days after the deadline.
- The form should clearly state the dates when your circumstances occurred and which assessments are affected. You should also describe the mitigating circumstances and how they have or would impair your performance in the assessment.
- You should also attach supporting third party evidence to the form. (Please see guidance below on acceptable evidence).
- If you are unable to submit your supporting evidence with the form, you will normally have up to ten days from the original deadline in order to do this.
- Your completed form and evidence should be submitted to a student support co-ordinator. This will then be considered by the Student Affairs committee.
- If your application is accepted this will be confirmed to you by email and you will be given a new submission deadline.

- If your application is declined you will need to attempt the assessment if the deadline has not passed, otherwise a non-submission will be recorded.

What evidence do I need to provide with a mitigating circumstances application?

Requests for mitigation must be accompanied by supporting evidence, normally from an independent third party. You are advised to keep a copy of any evidence you submit. We realise that in some cases it may be difficult to do this, however lack of third-party evidence will mean that your request is unlikely to be granted.

Medical evidence must bear the GP's practice stamp, and/or be on appropriate letter-headed paper. Please note that some doctors may charge a fee for providing you with medical certification for over 7 days. We are not liable to pay this fee on your behalf.

Examples of other third-party evidence that might be acceptable in support of nonmedical circumstances may include:

- a death certificate;
- a letter from a counsellor who you have been seeing;
- a letter from your employer verifying the extenuating circumstances;
- a Police Report and incident number.

6.11 Failure to Submit

If you fail to submit your assessment or attend your examination, and have not been granted a deferral, **you will automatically receive a mark of zero**. If you are entitled to reattempt the assessment (i.e. you have a referral opportunity), your next submission must be taken at the next scheduled assessment period and your grade will be capped at 40% for undergraduate programmes and at 50% for postgraduate programmes. You will also be required to complete the new assessment brief for the new assessment period.

If you are referred in a module (i.e. you do not achieve a pass) you will have one further opportunity to be re-assessed in the module. Further details on re-assessment can be found under section 6.12 of this handbook.

6.12 Notification of Assignment Grades and Examination Boards

Arden University normally returns marked feedback forms for assignments directly to candidates within 20 working days from the official submission date. For exam modules this will be from the date the examination paper is received by Arden from the centre the examination is sat.

You will receive your provisional grade and assessment feedback from Arden University via email.

All grades must be confirmed by the Examination Board before confirmed grades can be released to students. Grades are therefore provisional and subject to change until they have been confirmed by the Examination Board. Where marks have not been confirmed by the Examination Board, the feedback will indicate this.

Examination Boards will consider and confirm students' progress and final award. Examination Boards are a key part of the quality assurance processes to ensure that standards are comparable with those of other schemes within the UK higher education system.

The Examination Board is attended by the External Examiner, who will review the work of students, the marks awarded and the assessment process as a whole before confirming grades.

Examination Boards normally take place in March, June, September and December of each year. Students will receive notification of confirmed grades within 5 working days of the Examination Board, except in exceptional circumstances.

6.13 Re-assessment

Arden University operates re-assessment procedures that are designed in compliance with Arden University's Regulatory Framework, which can be accessed here <https://arden.ac.uk/studying-with-us/about-arden/our-policies-standards>.

If you are referred in a module (i.e. you do not achieve a pass grade) you will have one further opportunity to be re-assessed in the module, by reworking the original submission. You will be automatically registered for this resubmission as per the table below:

Referred period	Resubmission period
January	July
April	October
July	January
October	April

If you fail your resubmission of the assessment, you may be permitted to re-study the module and to be granted two further re-assessment opportunities. However please note that:

- This is subject to the discretion of the Examination Board
- The option to retake failed modules does not apply to major projects and dissertations
- This is subject to the requirements of external or Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation if applicable to your programme.

If you have no further re-assessment opportunities in a module you will be contacted by your student support co-ordinator to discuss your options.

The maximum grade that can be awarded for any re-assessment including re-taken modules is capped at 40% for undergraduate programmes and 50% for postgraduate programmes. Marks achieved for individual assessment elements undertaken on the original take are not carried forward to the re-take of the module.

As assessments change at every assessment period, please note that it is your responsibility to ensure you submit the correct paper. If in doubt, please contact the Student Support Team.

6.14 Criteria for Classification of Arden University Awards

The criteria for Arden University awards are set out in Arden University's Regulatory Framework and outlined below.

1. The final award is achieved when a student has gained the number of credits required. An award classification will be calculated as described below. Where a student exceeds the credits required for a level, the highest marks of any option modules will be taken. Where APL is awarded the Award mark will be based only on modules actually completed.

A. Pass Awards

2. All awards comprising fewer than 120 credits and all exit (i.e. not target) awards are pass awards.

B. Classification for Degree with Honours

3. The minimum credit requirements for each programme are specified in the Programme Specification which can be found in the programme handbook.
4. The base class of degree will be determined in accordance with the Full Honours classification scheme, according to the established percentage band equivalents:

<35%	=	fail
35-39	=	pass
40 - 49%	=	third class
50 - 59%	=	lower second class
60 - 69%	=	upper second class
>70%	=	first class

5. In calculating base class, account will be taken of the credit value of each module mark. The classification will be based on a weighted arithmetic mean of the highest graded 180 credits of which minimum 100 are at Level 6 and the remainder at Level 5. Any grade at Level 5 or Level 6 which attracted an unfair practice penalty in category UPC must be included in the classification calculation as part of the 180 credits total. All major projects must be included in the calculation.
6. The classification of final year top-up degrees will be calculated based on a weighted arithmetic mean of the highest graded 100 credits achieved at Level 6. Any grade at Level 6 which attracted an unfair practice penalty in category UPC must be included in the classification calculation as part of the 100 credits total. All major projects must be included in the calculation.
7. The weighted arithmetic mean used to calculate the classification will be rounded to the nearest integer.
8. Students who have failed to reach the standard for the final award may be awarded an exit award where this is specified in the Programme Document.
9. Students who are granted module exemptions through Recognition of Prior Learning will only be eligible for an exit award if at least 50% of the credits required for that exit award are achieved through Arden University.

C. Pass, Merit and Distinction awards

10. For Postgraduate Awards, the base class for an award will be determined on the following grade boundaries:
 - 50-59 = Pass
 - 60-69 = Merit
 - 70 and above= Distinction
11. The classification will be calculated based on the weighted arithmetic mean of all credits excluding the lowest graded 20 credits.
12. If a student is exempt from more than 1/3 of credits, then they will not be entitled to a merit or distinction.

6.15 Appeals against the decision of the Examination Board

An appeal is the process by which a student requests that the Examination Board reconsider a decision or mark awarded, or a decision on Unfair Practice.

Appeals will only be considered if there has been an arithmetical error, irregularities in the assessment process, or if there are exceptional mitigating circumstances that for good reason could be made known to the Examination Board prior to the meeting.

Appeals which question the academic judgement of the marker cannot be accepted.

For further information and details on how to submit an appeal, please refer to the [Academic Appeals Process](#).

6.16 Inactivity, Re-registration and Withdrawal

Arden University requires all of its students to undertake annual re-registration. Each year on the anniversary of your enrolment, you will notice that when you log into your ilearn account that you will be asked to confirm your personal details.

If you fail to complete the required re-enrolment process on ilearn when prompted, this will result in you not being able to access your ilearn study materials. It will also mean that you will not be registered as an active student and will therefore be unable to continue on your course.

6.17 Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint relating to any aspect of your educational experience, it is recommended that you contact your student support co-ordinator in the first instance. Wherever possible, the University would wish to see any complaint resolved as close as possible to its origin, and with a minimum formality.

For full details of the complaints procedure, please refer to the [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

6.18 Equality and Diversity

Arden University is committed to providing equal opportunities for staff, students, applicants and all persons with whom it deals and will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour with respect to ethnicity, race, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy, maternity, age or disability, including mental health. These characteristics align with the protected characteristics defined in the Equalities Act 2010. For further information, please refer to Arden's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

6.19 Student Engagement Policy

Introduction

Arden University is committed to ensuring that the student voice is fully represented in decision making. This occurs through both feedback and representative activities.

Feedback is achieved through completion of module surveys, annual student surveys (including the National Student Survey for eligible students), and through engagement on Unitu. Modules are reviewed after each time the module is delivered. Information from these surveys is taken to Course Committees; the Quality and Standards Committee; and the Academic Board. Students are also provided with contact details of named staff from Arden University's Student Support Team who can deal with specific problems as and when they arise.

Representation provides opportunities for students to feed into the wider activities of Arden University. It has to be recognised that the distributed nature of the majority of Arden's student body is less conducive to conventional meetings and that therefore focused use is made of on-line communications to achieve the desired outcomes. The software platform Unitu is provided to facilitate student representative communications and to enable all students to have their say, wherever they are located.

Additionally, Staff Student Liaison Committees take place every semester at each campus to discuss issues specific to the Blended Learning mode of study. Blended Learning student representatives are invited in order to ensure that students have the opportunity for formal input into the management of the programmes. Students will receive details of the student representative process as part of their induction. The principles outlined by Arden University and set out below will be adhered to.

Purpose of Student Representatives

Student representatives will be required to:

1. provide a student voice at all levels of Course management;
2. voice problems, suggestions or requests raised by members of the student body;
3. act as a representative on relevant Course Committees (and/or Staff Student Liaison Committees as appropriate);
4. feed back to the student body on issues discussed during relevant meetings;
5. provide student involvement in the planning and development of Courses.

Course Committee

The Course Committee provides an opportunity for staff and student representatives to meet together for discussion and consultation about their programme of study and other matters relating to the quality of students' academic experience and will be held at least twice per year for each Course. Student representative normally attend via Skype. In some cases, where appropriate, multiple Courses will be considered at the same meeting.

Composition:

The Course Committee will include the student representative(s) and designated members of Arden University Academic/Administrative staff. A Chairperson and Secretary will be appointed as per the Terms of Reference for Course Committees.

All members will have the right to submit items for inclusion on the agenda and raise items for discussion. Full minutes should be kept of each meeting including a note on items requiring action.

Items for Discussion/Agenda:

These will include, inter alia:

1. discussion of matters raised by students, and matters on which Arden University wishes to seek student views;

2. the outcomes of student evaluation of schemes (via end of module surveys) and Arden University responses; and
3. consideration of proposals for new schemes and any changes to current schemes.

Academic Board and its sub-committees

There will be student representation on the Academic Board, the Quality and Standards Committee, and the Learning and Teaching Committee. Individuals who nominate themselves for these posts must be existing student representatives from across Arden University's courses. Where there is more than one nomination, representatives for Academic Board and its sub-committees will be elected by all student representatives.

You can see who your Course Representatives are via Unitu, as well as the Learning and Teaching Committee, Quality and Standards Committee and Academic Board Representatives. Your Arden University Student President can also be found on Unitu.

6.20 Guidelines for the Selection and Appointment of Student Representatives

Why is student representation important?

Students are a key stakeholder in everything that Arden University does. Through student representation Arden University ensures that the student voice is heard when making decisions about the learning experience of over 5,700 students. Representation gives students the opportunity to share their opinion not only on their programme developments, but also the wider activities of Arden University.

The role of the student representative

Student representatives are members of Arden University's Course Committee which meets at least twice per year to consider programme-related issues. The student representative's role is to gather feedback from fellow students on what works well with the programme, areas for improvement and any concerns to be addressed. Arden University gives student representatives all the tools to collect this information effectively. Student representatives will then highlight and present key findings to Arden University's Course Committee for consideration.

Blended Learning student representatives also have the opportunity to attend on-campus Staff Student Liaison Committees, held each semester to discuss any campus-specific issues. Distance Learning student representatives will have the opportunity to attend on-line Staff Student Liaison Committees.

In addition to this, one student representative will also be made a member of Arden University's Academic Board which again meets every 3 months to make decisions on a wide range of issues, such as new programmes and also reviews Arden University's provision to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

The Quality and Standards Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Academic Board, also includes an elected student representative in its membership. The Committee's responsibilities include developing and monitoring of Arden University's policies and procedures, managing changes to existing programmes and approval of new programmes, and maintaining oversight of the health of existing programmes, and advising Academic Board of the outcomes.

One student representative will also be a member of Arden University's Learning and Teaching Committee which meets quarterly to develop the Arden University Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

What are the benefits of becoming a student representative?

Becoming a student representative is an opportunity to gain valuable skills that look impressive on your CV, while networking and engaging with peers and academic tutors. That aside, becoming a student representative allows you to communicate the important views of your student community to senior members of staff at Arden University; ensuring your voices are heard and changes are made in the right places.

Making the student representative role a convenient and positive experience for you

The good news is that student representatives normally attend the meetings via Skype, so location is not an issue and there is little inconvenience when participating. You will also have the advantage of online feedback boards to assist you in collating student views. Being a student representative can also demonstrate your dedication to learning and ability to work with fellow students and bring their views to a new audience. **How student representatives are appointed**

Representatives are elected to represent all students from a programme (or group of programmes). Any active student can nominate him/herself as a student representative for that programme when the election period has been announced providing they have at least one calendar year of their programme remaining.

Student Representatives elected to the Academic Board, Quality and Standards Committee, and Learning and Teaching Committee must be existing Student Representatives at programme-level.

Elections are announced and facilitated using Unitu. It is important that you activate your account and you can download the app on your smart phone or tablet to stay informed.

How you can become part of this

To be considered for the role of student representative for your programme, you will need to respond to the call for nominations with a short statement about yourself, why you believe you will make a good student representative and why students should vote for you. Voting will then be opened to the student body for a limited period of time using Unitu.

The student representative sitting on the Academic Board, the Quality and Standards Committee, and the Learning and Teaching Committee will be elected by programme-level student representatives, following a similar nomination and election process.

How you can contact your current student representative today

We encourage students to discuss with their student representative any ideas for improvement or feedback about their programme. You can do this by posting on your course area on Unitu (accessible via ilearn or using the Unitu app for smartphones and tablets). You can also express your views about issues raised by your fellow students in the same way.

We will let all students know when the next period of nominations will be open.

We hope you can join the debate!

ANNEX – OUR CHARTER

At Arden University, we are passionate about supporting people, achieving our best and inspiring progress. To help us support and inspire you to achieve your best, we have created a Charter – it's a set of guidelines that we can all follow, highlighting how we can work together to ensure you have a great learning experience.

To ensure you have a great learning experience, we ask that you:

- Treat everyone that works or studies with Arden with respect and comply with our policies and regulations
- Engage positively with your course, your tutors and fellow students to make the most of the learning opportunities we provide
- Help us understand your motivations, personal schedule and targets so that we can help you achieve your goals
- Keep your tutors and student support coordinators updated on your progress, how you are feeling and if you have any concerns that may be holding you back
- Commit to your studies by attending and taking part in scheduled activities
- Seek help and advice when you need it and make the most of the support available to you
- Complete and hand in assessments on time, with diligence and honesty, whether or not they count towards the final mark and take on board the feedback we provide to help you succeed
- Be an 'Arden ambassador' and promote good, positive behaviour at all times
- Tell us what you think by providing helpful feedback through evaluations, surveys and your student representative.

To help you have a great learning experience, we will:

- Provide a warm welcome and be respectful and professional at all times
- Continually deliver high quality, engaging teaching and learning opportunities and access to a wide range of online learning materials
- Publish clear and accurate information about your course and our policies, procedures and regulations
- Support you on your journey by actively encouraging you to engage with and successfully complete your course
- Work with you to clarify your career aspirations and give you the tools to achieve your goals
- Give you helpful and timely feedback on your assessments, offering guidance for improvement and supporting your development
- Equip you with the resources and academic and pastoral support needed to achieve the learning outcomes for your course
- Help you develop a set of personal and professional skills over and above your academic studies as laid out in our 'graduate attributes' (explained in your Programme Handbook)
- Create opportunities to work with others and network with students from all around the world
- Boost your employability by building on your transferable skills throughout your studies
- Encourage you to develop professional ethics, to strive for equal opportunities and to value diversity
- Listen and respond to constructive feedback and support you to participate in the development of the University.

To help you make the most of your time at Arden, your Student Representative Network will:

- Be focussed on and responsive to you, our students and always have your best interests at heart
- Encourage you to speak up to help influence and improve the way the university develops and is managed
- Represent your views and interests through the student representative and communicate any outcomes
- Be open and honest with the university and its students
- Encourage interaction with your fellow students from all over the world to enrich your experience of studying with us
- Ensure you are treated fairly, respectfully and are aware of your rights and responsibilities and encourage interaction with students from different countries and cultures around the world.