

# **Staff Guidance for UG In-Term Assessments (2021-22 Academic Year)**

*Arick Shao (UG SEB Chair)*

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This document provides a summary of details and policies regarding in-term assessments for undergraduate modules during the 2021-22 academic year.

# 1. Assessment Patterns

This section details the possible assessment patterns for undergraduate modules. These profiles are officially set in SIS before the start of the academic year. As such, we are required to follow these patterns to a certain extent (see *Section 2.1*).

**Note:** See the corresponding SIS spreadsheet for the precise assessment pattern for every module.

## 1.1. Standard Modules

These refer to modules that have a final exam and do not have additional requirements mandated by the IFoA. For these modules, the assessment pattern is as follows:

- [20%] 5 courseworks (4% each)
- [80%] Final exam

**This is different from the previous year's assessment pattern (25% coursework, 75% exam).**

Therefore, please do make sure you communicate the correct information to your students on your QMPlus page!

**Note:** One exception is MTH4114 (*Computing and Data Analysis with Excel*), which has 80% final exam and 20% mid-term. But, for all practical purposes, this can be treated as a standard module.

## 1.2. IFoA Modules

A number of our modules are associated with IFoA (*Institute and Faculty of Actuaries*) exemptions for actuarial students and have additional requirements mandated by the IFoA:

- MTH5120: Statistical Modelling I
- MTH5124: Actuarial Mathematics I
- MTH5125: Actuarial Mathematics II
- MTH5126: Statistics for Insurance
- MTH5131: Actuarial Statistics
- MTH6101: Introduction to Machine Learning
- MTH6112: Actuarial Financial Engineering
- MTH6113: Mathematical Tools for Asset Management
- MTH6139: Time Series
- MTH6157: Survival Models

In particular, for these modules, at least 30% (by mark) of assessments must consist of special types of coursework. As a result, these modules do not follow the standard assessment pattern.

Instead, **each of these modules has one or two in-term assessments, along with a final exam.**

**Note:** There are a few modules that are associated with IFoA exemptions but do not have additional coursework requirements:

- MTH5129: *Probability and Statistics II*
- MTH6141: *Random Processes*
- MTH6154: *Financial Mathematics I*

These modules are considered "standard" and follow the usual 20%/80% assessment pattern.

For further information on IFoA-related modules and their assessment patterns, please ask *Gaik Ng* or *Chris Sutton*, who run our actuarial programme.

### 1.3. Special Modules

These refer to modules that do not have final exams:

- MTH4112: Actuarial Professional Development I
- MTH5001: Introduction to Computer Programming
- MTH5127: Actuarial Professional Development II
- MTH6110: Communicating and Teaching Mathematics
- MTH6138/MTH717U: Third Year Project / MSci Project
- MTH6150: Numerical Computing with C and C++

These modules have only coursework assessments (e.g. programming assignments, dissertations). Otherwise, there is little in common among these modules in terms of assessment patterns.

### 1.4. Foundations (SEFP) Modules

We are also responsible for mathematics modules in the Foundations (SEFP) programme:

- SEF015: Discrete Mathematics
- SEF026: Essential Foundation Mathematics
- SEF040: Mathematics A
- SEF041: Mathematics B

For these modules, there is no standard assessment pattern. The assessment details are set by SEFP, but this is done with approval and input from our School.

Moreover, all the mark entry is done directly by SEFP. Thus, policies regarding in-term assessments are primarily handled through SEFP, and Foundations module organisers should look first to SEFP for guidance. Here, we only provide approval and advice to SEFP as needed.

**Note:** *On the other hand, we are fully in charge of the exam setting and scrutiny process, so exams for the above modules go through the same process as those for MTH modules.*

## 2. Assessment Policies

This section details various policies regarding in-term assessments.

### 2.1. Assessment Submission

While there is flexibility in how you implement your in-term assessments, the main requirement to keep in mind is that **the number of submission points for your assessments should match the given assessment pattern for your module.**

For example, suppose you are running a “standard” module, with 5 in-term courseworks. Then, you should give your students 5 submission points for these courseworks – for instance, one submission due approximately every two weeks.

**Note:** *On the other hand, you can be flexible in how you structure your courseworks. For example, in a standard module, it is fine to have 10 weekly courseworks, as long as these are submitted 2 at a time, so there are 5 total submission points. However, please avoid having 10 separate submissions, one for each weekly coursework.*

**Note:** *Also, definitely avoid “tricky” schemes, like “best x out of y courseworks”.*

### 2.2. Late Submissions

The School has standard policies for dealing with late submissions.

In short, for each coursework submission, you have two options:

1. Upload solutions to the coursework onto QMPlus **immediately after the deadline**. If you do so, then all late submissions can be given 0 marks.
2. Otherwise, you will have to implement QMUL’s late submission policy:
  - Five marks (out of 100 total) are deducted for every 24 hours that the submission is late.
  - A submission that is more than 7 days late is given 0 marks.

Most module organisers would likely wish to go with option 1, which is easier administratively. If you do this, then *please do make sure you upload your solutions as soon as the deadline passes*. In either case, do make clear on your QMPlus page and in your communications what your module’s late submission policy is.

**Note:** *In general, a missed submission can be excused through a successful EC claim (see Section 2.3). In option 2, late submission penalties can also be waived through a successful EC claim.*

### 2.3. Timed Assessments

While it is possible to have timed assessments (e.g. mid-term exams or quizzes held for 24 hours or less), they do come with additional complications, and great care must be taken to ensure that these assessments are implemented properly.

In particular, one should do the following:

1. Students need to be notified of timed assessments well in advance, at the beginning of term. Not doing so will generally lead to many PR issues and trouble for the Maths Office.
2. More importantly, for timed assessments of less than 24 hours, module organisers will have to take *special exam arrangements* into account. If a student has been allowed extra time by

the university, then you must manually give the student a proportional amount of extra time for your assessment. For example, if you are running a 1-hour quiz, and a student has 25% extra time, then this student should be given 1:15 for the quiz.

**Note:** *Point 2 is especially important, as this comes from university regulations. In particular, there are legal ramifications if we do not properly take student disabilities into account.*

For further information on manually assigning extra time to QMPlus quizzes, or on obtaining a list of students with special arrangements, please ask the Maths Office or the *Learning Environments team* (Thomas Prellberg, Rainer Klages).

**Note:** *Timed assessments are not subject to the late submission policy in the previous section.*

## 2.4. Excused Absences

Students may obtain excused absences from in-term assessments for a variety of reasons (illness, bereavement, etc.). These are handled via EC (*extenuating circumstances*) claims that students may submit to the Maths Office.

*EC claims are handled centrally by the Maths Office.* Thus, you should not deal directly with EC claims, and you can direct students to the Maths Office if they have any queries regarding ECs.

The usual policy is that *if a student obtains an EC for an in-term assessment, then that assessment is discounted from the total mark for the module.* (However, see the next section for the exception to this.) This discounting is also handled centrally, thus you will not need to worry about this.

## 2.5. Reassessments

By university regulation, *a module is only allowed to discount up to 20% of total marks.* Luckily, this does not affect our standard modules (which conveniently have 20% in-term assessments).

On the other hand, this rule does affect a number other modules:

- Modules with additional IFoA requirements (at least 30% in-term assessments).
- MTH5001 (30% in-term assessments).

For these modules, **if a student has approved ECs for all in-term assessments, then they will be required to sit one replacement assessment at a later date.** These reassessments will be held in either May or July.

Reassessments for IFoA modules will be coordinated by *Chris Sutton* and *Gaik Ng*.

**Note:** *While modules containing only in-term assessments are also subject to the 20% rule, these modules have, in practice, been able to avoid this for various reasons:*

- *MTH6110: there have been other ways to deal with excused absences outside of ECs.*
- *MTH4112, MTH5127: These are 0-credit modules, so reassessments are less essential.*

## 2.6. Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct cases for any in-term assessment worth 30% or less of the module (this holds for all UG in-term assessments) can be handled entirely within the School, as long as the student is not a repeat offender.

For information on academic offences, in particular on how to move forward with them, please contact the *Academic Misconduct Officer (Oliver Jenkinson)*.