

6. GUIDELINES ON POST-MODULE ASSIGNMENTS

6.1 *Guidelines*

6.2 *Assessment Categories*

6.3 *Marks*

6.4 *Concern Over Awarded Marks*

6.5 *Techniques of Study*

6.6 *e-Submission of Post-module Assignments*

6. GUIDELINES ON POST-MODULE ASSIGNMENTS

The post-module assignment (PMA – also sometimes referred to as Post Module Work, PMW) is designed as an educational extension to a particular module that you attended. During the module the targets are concerned with the familiarisation and the understanding of a coherent body of knowledge and the techniques of its application pertaining to some facet of manufacturing industry; the post-module assignment is to enable the participant to build-up confidence in the techniques of application of this knowledge and to indicate to the tutors whether the module targets have been achieved.

A second function of the post-module assignment is its use for the continuous assessment of the course work which is credited towards the fulfilment of the requirements for the MSc. The regulations state that an MSc student must satisfactorily complete modules equivalent to a minimum of 90 academic units of credit (i.e. attend 9 current modules with 10 credits fully and submit all the pertaining assignments). In addition MSc candidates must pass at least 70 module credits (including any core modules) with a minimum mark of 50%; a further 20 (failed) module credits may count towards the 90 completed module credits, providing they achieve a mark of at least 40%.

Guidelines on successfully completing assignments can be found in the Post-module Assignment section of the MSc website.

6.1 Guidelines

The following are recommendations to help you in the submission of satisfactory quality post-module work:

6.1.1 The post-module work should demonstrate to the module tutor that:

- (a) You have correctly interpreted the assignment;
- (b) You have become reasonably familiar with the body of knowledge covered in the module;
- (c) You have mastered the application of this knowledge;
- (d) You can reasonably communicate this application;
- (e) You can critically assess the constraints and limitations of the application of this body of knowledge and discuss them in a coherent manner.

6.1.2 The work submitted should be in a neat and presentable form. The latter entails that:

- (a) The post-module work be typed on A4 paper size;

- (b) The pages be numbered and there should be an index;
- 6.1.3 It is suggested that to satisfactorily complete most assignments the effort put into the post-module assignment should be equivalent to that required for a final year written examination, that is about 70 hours. However, remember that it is primarily the quality of the work that is the important feature.
- 6.1.4 Post-module assignments are expected to be submitted on Warwick Tabula online within six weeks of completion of the particular module to which the assignment belongs. Post module work that is late will be penalised (see below). Extensions will only be granted under very exceptional circumstances such as illness (in which case proof must be provided in the form of a Doctor's certificate etc.) or similar serious circumstances. Attendance on other modules, holiday periods etc. are not considered valid causes for extension by the University.
- 6.1.5 The post-module assignment that you submit is kept on file for the examining board. It is suggested that you keep a soft copy as you will send your submission online. Within a reasonable time after the submission deadline (usually 4-5 weeks) you will receive an assessment sheet that provides your mark and also the module tutor's comments.

6.2 *Assessment Categories*

Module Tutors will provide guidance as to their expectations regarding completed assignments during the module. In general, though, the assignments will be marked to the following categories:

6.2.1 *Comprehension*

This section would normally carry approximately 70% of the available marks, although this may vary from assignment to assignment. The relative importance between factual content and critical analysis will also vary, depending on the nature of the subject being covered.

Interpretation of question set – We would expect there to be an introduction which shows a good grasp of the question and provides a clear outline of the scope of the report. We would not expect you to launch straight in with no attempt to introduce and define the topic. The question set is the one to which we expect an answer, not the one that you think it should have been.

Subject relevance – All the material included should be relevant to the report. You should

not include irrelevant or repetitive material or that which is tangential to the subject matter.

Factual content – The factual material that you include should be correct and of sufficient quantity for the subject covered.

Insight & originality – We are looking for clear evidence of your own insight, imagination and innovative thought. Whilst we expect you to use various sources, you should not place too much dependence on material paraphrased from books. Indeed material which is copied directly from books or other sources will be severely penalised (see below).

Constructive critical analysis – We are looking for a piece of work which is well argued with all the main issues explored and evaluated and the conclusions justified. In this category we would expect more than just descriptive work where there is little analysis or criticism.

6.2.2 *Effort and Presentation*

This section would normally carry 30 % of the available marks.

Use of actual examples – We would expect answers to incorporate good, relevant use of (own or other) company/industrial examples to illustrate any theoretical points.

Use and presentation of references – We would be looking for evidence of a critical and wide-ranging use of relevant literature. Any references should be properly cited and listed and you should appreciate and demonstrate the difference between references and bibliography.

Length – The length of the assignment should be appropriate; that is neither too long so that irrelevant material is included nor too brief so as to be unable to cover the necessary material.

Logical structure – The structure of each answer should be such that it enables you to develop a logical argument and marshal your ideas clearly. You should not fail to adopt a clear theme or line of argument.

Grammar & syntax – You should use acceptable standards of grammar and syntax. Whilst some errors of sentence construction, punctuation and/or misuse of words might be acceptable, it is essential that the marker is able to understand your meaning.

Spelling – Should be correct. This is especially so where a word processor is used - as most have a spell-check capability. If there are a large number of spelling mistakes this

would indicate a serious problem.

Legibility – It is not a requirement that all assignments be typed or word-processed. They should, however be legible.

Content sheet – Each assignment should contain a content sheet which includes all the sub-sections of all questions, with relevant page numbers.

Page numbering – All pages should be clearly and correctly numbered.

Question sheet – The questions sheet provided by the module tutor should be bound in the folder provided at the front of your answer and after the fly-sheet.

6.3 Marks

Marks for assessed work are awarded on a percentage scale. The following table shows the relationship between marks awarded and the type of work expected for those marks.

<i>Mark Level</i>	<i>Comprehension & Analysis</i>	<i>Effort & Coverage</i>	<i>Presentation</i>
80+ Outstanding	<p><i>Showing total mastery of the subject matter, complete conceptual understanding and an extremely high level of technical competence shown by fully appropriate selection and correct application of tools/ techniques/ methodologies.</i></p> <p><i>The work demonstrates creativity and originality of thought and is of publishable quality with no more than minor revisions.</i></p> <p><i>Shows a sophisticated and critical manipulation and analysis of concepts and theoretical perspectives and capacity for independent thought.</i></p> <p><i>The work is extremely well argued; all the main issues are explored and evaluated and the conclusions are fully justified and supported by the evidence presented. Recommendations for improvement (where applicable) are practical and convincing.</i></p>	<p><i>All objectives are fully covered.</i></p> <p><i>Extensive coverage of as much relevant material as could reasonably be expected.</i></p> <p><i>Extremely high level of effort demonstrated by the wide range of appropriate references and actual company/industrial examples used.</i></p>	<p><i>Professionally produced showing exceptional written communication skills with faultless grammar and spelling.</i></p> <p><i>Well structured with excellent use of headings and sub-sections that show the development of a logical argument.</i></p> <p><i>Diagrams where used are appropriately titled and referenced in the text.</i></p> <p><i>The contents sheet includes all the sub-sections and relevant page numbers.</i></p> <p><i>All pages are correctly and clearly numbered. All references are properly cited and listed and references and bibliography are distinct.</i></p>

Mark Level	Comprehension & Analysis	Effort & Coverage	Presentation
70+ Distinction	<p><i>Showing a high degree of mastery of the subject matter, near complete conceptual understanding and a high level of technical competence with only insignificant errors. Clearly demonstrates understanding and appropriate application of relevant tools/ techniques/ methodologies. Shows very highly developed ability to analyse, synthesise and apply knowledge and concepts. There is evidence of highly developed critical abilities and some use of original ideas. The work is very well argued; all the main issues are explored and evaluated and the reasons for the conclusions are clearly indicated. Depth of analysis and outcomes exceed what would normally be achieved by a masters level candidate. Recommendations for improvement (where applicable) are practical and convincing.</i></p>	<p><i>All major objectives are covered. Very good coverage of most of the relevant material that could be expected. Very high level of effort demonstrated by the use of appropriate references and actual company/industrial examples.</i></p>	<p><i>Well produced, showing a high level of written communication skills with few or no grammatical and spelling errors. Well structured with good use of headings and sub-sections that show the development of a logical argument. Diagrams, contents sheet, page numbering, references and bibliography are presented correctly with few or no errors.</i></p>
60-69 Good Pass	<p><i>Showing a sound and thorough grasp of the subject matter though possibly lacking in the breadth and depth required for a distinction: good conceptual understanding and a good level of technical competence although there may be a few gaps leading to some minor errors. A good attempt at analysis, synthesis and application of knowledge and concepts. There is evidence of critical abilities and some attempt at original thought. There is appreciation of the main issues and the ability to make critical points and substantiate them. The main analysis and outcomes were beyond question, but may be more limited in scope than that required for a distinction. Recommendations for improvement (where applicable) are practical although they may not consider the wider issues and implications but with some additional work could be convincing and acted upon.</i></p>	<p><i>Most major objectives are covered. Comprehensive coverage of primary sources and relevant material. High level of effort demonstrated by the use of mostly appropriate references and actual company/industrial examples. Evidence of extra reading and research beyond the basic requirements.</i></p>	<p><i>Effective presentation, showing generally good written communication skills with good spelling and grammar. A well thought through overall structure and the length is appropriate. Diagrams, contents sheet, page numbering, references and bibliography are generally well presented with only minor errors of indexing, proof-reading or photocopying.</i></p>

Mark Level	Comprehension & Analysis	Effort & Coverage	Presentation
50-59 Pass	<p><i>Showing a grasp of the subject matter with possibly some confusion or gaps but none that is major, and a fair understanding of the concepts. The work may contain some significant errors but it is technically competent at a routine level.</i></p> <p><i>The attempt at analysis, synthesis and application of knowledge and concepts is competent but lacks depth.</i></p> <p><i>The evidence of critical abilities is weak. There is a heavy reliance on course materials and little evidence of original thought.</i></p> <p><i>There is sensible comment on the evidence and materials used although some of the conclusions drawn may be unsubstantiated.</i></p> <p><i>The general outcomes were sound, but there may be some incorrect deductions from the data.</i></p> <p><i>Recommendations for improvement (where applicable) are generally correct but are stated at too high a level to be convincing.</i></p>	<p><i>The basic requirements of the work are covered.</i></p> <p><i>Limited coverage of primary sources and relevant material.</i></p> <p><i>Satisfactory level of effort demonstrated by the generally appropriate use of references and actual company/industrial examples although some areas may have benefited from additional support, or more equal balance of academic references and company/industrial examples.</i></p>	<p><i>A competent presentation within a satisfactory overall structure that may lack balance in certain areas or fails to fully integrate all of the material. It is generally well written with adequate spelling and grammar.</i></p> <p><i>Diagrams, contents sheet, page numbering, references and bibliography may contain errors or show inconsistency.</i></p>
40-49 Fail (but module deemed complete)	<p><i>Showing some familiarity with the subject matter, but with major gaps and serious misconceptions.</i></p> <p><i>A low level of technical competence with many errors. An incomplete and/or partially correct answer.</i></p> <p><i>There is some evidence that concepts and theory is understood and there is a modest attempt to analyse them.</i></p> <p><i>There is a tendency towards uncritical description and no evidence of original ideas.</i></p> <p><i>There is little discussion on the application of knowledge few, if any, conclusions drawn and recommendations for improvement are either missing or unsubstantiated.</i></p>	<p><i>Some of the basic requirements of the work have not been covered.</i></p> <p><i>Limited coverage of relevant material with over-reliance on secondary sources.</i></p> <p><i>Few, if any, examples used. Few references cited.</i></p> <p><i>Little evidence that any reading around the subject has been carried out.</i></p>	<p><i>Less than optimal presentation, lacking in logical structure, making it difficult to read. Ideas are poorly expressed, often with mistakes. There are errors in grammar and/or spelling.</i></p> <p><i>Diagrams, contents sheet, page numbering, references and bibliography may be poorly presented or some missing.</i></p>

<i>Mark Level</i>	<i>Comprehension & Analysis</i>	<i>Effort & Coverage</i>	<i>Presentation</i>
<40 Fail*	<p><i>Showing serious gaps in knowledge of the subject matter and many areas of confusion.</i></p> <p><i>Technical competence is poor with many serious errors and there is an inability to apply knowledge.</i></p> <p><i>Does not demonstrate understanding of the issue and information/data used may be irrelevant.</i></p> <p><i>Overall not a document that the company/university would wish to have its name on.</i></p> <p><i>Little or no evidence that concepts and theory have been understood and little or no attempt at sustained analysis.</i></p> <p><i>There is a lack of critical appreciation and often the question has been ignored or badly misunderstood.</i></p> <p><i>Does not demonstrate the ability to appropriately apply tools/techniques/ methodologies.</i></p>	<p><i>Few or none of the basic requirements of the work have been achieved.</i></p> <p><i>Inadequate / superficial coverage of relevant material and little use of even course material.</i></p> <p><i>Little or no indication of the participant's own efforts and contribution. No examples or references used.</i></p>	<p><i>Poor or muddled presentation and structuring of arguments.</i></p> <p><i>The level of expression is inadequate, often being unclear or confused. Poor grammar and/or spelling.</i></p> <p><i>Diagrams, contents sheet, page numbering, references and bibliography poorly presented or missing.</i></p>

To satisfy the requirements for the MSc, candidates should pass at least 9 assignments at 40% or better AND achieve an average mark of 50% or better across the 9 assignments. **For students commencing their postgraduate studies from 1 August 2019 onwards**, the pass mark of their modules taken is 50% or above (after any late penalties have been applied). For the conferment of MSc awards to **students commencing their MSc studies from 1 January 2020 onwards**, only up to 2 modules out of the total 9 modules may be failed, provided that these 2 failed modules with a mark of at least 40%. For a Postgraduate Diploma awards, all modules must be passed at 50% or above. Marks below 50% fail.

Any assessment mark awarded prior to the Board of Examiners' meeting is subject to approval by that Board and hence potentially liable for revision.

6.4 Concern Over Awarded Marks

Once marks have been awarded and issued, they cannot be changed without the approval of the Examination Board.

In circumstances where you are unhappy over a mark which has been awarded, the following procedure that is available in Warwick weblink 'Concern Over Awarded Marks' section of the Warwick webpage (under PMA Guidelines).

6.5 *Techniques of Study*

[The following was written for new undergraduate participants, but much of what is said still applies to participants following postgraduate programmes, particularly those who have been away from study for some time]

By John Nisbet, Professor of Education, University of Aberdeen

At university, you take over responsibility for your own study. In school, assignments of work were short-term - for a week ahead at most - and in this way teachers paced you through your courses, helping you to distribute your time appropriately. In university, most assignments are long-term: there is a certain amount of work to be done in a year or in a term, and it is largely up to you to make sure that you cover it.

University terms are shorter than school terms, and you will discover that there is a lot of work to be done in a rather short time. So any inefficiencies in your techniques of studying will soon begin to tell. It is not enough just to put in regular hours of study: you must make sure that these hours are not wasted and that you use your time to the best advantage.

6.5.1 *Organising your study*

- Do you start promptly? Avoid the trap of wasting time at the start by doing trivial jobs. Examine sceptically any "reasons" you invent for postponing the difficult part of an evening's work. If you follow a fairly regular routine for study, it is usually easier to get through the work. Routine fits some temperaments more than others. But it is unwise to work only when you feel inclined, and you should set aside some regular times for study. It is important to learn to be able to work effectively even when you do not feel in the mood for it. Don't neglect aspects which you find tedious or difficult. Making a start is often the step which requires the greatest effort.
- How much of your study time is genuinely productive? Ask yourself whether you are really learning or thinking - or are you merely frittering away your time? You waste time if you merely write out lists to be learned on some later occasion, or if you copy out notes (or, worse, type them) without thinking about what you write. Beware of satisfying your conscience by doing undemanding tasks which save you the effort of thinking.
- Review your work (for a day, week or term) to ensure that you allot an appropriate amount of time to each of your subjects and to each part of each subject. Give important or difficult tasks priority: arrange your study so that the work which needs careful thought or special attention is done while you are fresh. Identify the fixed

commitments where there is a time limit. Assess the amount of work and the timing of it. Divide and plan the work - and allow time for recreation.

- Can you recognise the appropriate time to stop for a break? Studying when you are tired may be uneconomical: five minutes' rest may get you through the next hour's work in three-quarters of the time. Or is your weakness the opposite - you stop too readily? Rests relieve fatigue, not boredom. A tedious task may be even more tedious after a break.

6.5.2 *Learning, understanding and remembering*

- Understanding is the key to learning and remembering. If you understand a principle, it is easy to remember it. If you do not understand a topic, look it up in a textbook (use the index), or discuss it with another member of the class. Don't be afraid to approach your tutor or lecturer on any points which do not seem clear. Periodic revision of previous work often helps in understanding. Don't assume that, just because you have read a book or have looked over your notes on a piece of work, this aspect is "done" and finished with.
- Be sure you use the correct strategy in your study. Sometimes study is ineffective because participants misunderstand what is required. In every subject there are facts or techniques or skills or knowledge which you have to master: other parts of the subject require you to review and interpret evidence or take a point of view and justify it. These two different tasks can be described as 'surface-level' and 'deep-level' processing. Surface-level processing is mastery of detail: in deep-level processing you try to get through to fundamental principles. Both are necessary, and it is important to know which strategy is the appropriate one.
- Learn principles by thinking out examples and relating the examples to the theory. When a lecturer says he is going to outline three theories, some participants interpret this as meaning that they have to guess (or reason out) which is the 'correct' one. This is an immature level of thinking, but it is just as false to think that all interpretations are relative and it is merely a matter of opinion. The mature thinker is able to link the interpretation with the evidence, and to appreciate that it is appropriate to use different interpretations in different contexts.
- Learn details by fitting them into some principle or logical system. Material which is organised in some structure is much easier to recall. In memorising details, do you put the book aside from time to time to test yourself? This helps you to identify the points which are hardest to recall. Give these points special attention: mnemonics may help.

Just reading the details over and over again is wasteful of time and effort.

- Leave plenty of space when you take notes, so that afterwards you can add your own annotations and summaries. Use space intelligently, so as to bring out the relative importance of the various items and their logical structure. Notes should not be written like paragraphs in a book. Write lists vertically, not horizontal along the line. Use underlining and capitals (especially to ensure the correct spelling of names and technical terms).
- Do not try to write down everything that is said in a lecture. Distinguish key points from detail. Some of the detail may be readily available in a text-book, and some detail may be quoted only for illustration. Apply your intelligence to the selection of points to note. Taking notes involves following the lecturer's thought and argument, and summarising points so that you can recall and revise the material. Think about what is being said and identify the overall structure of the lecture, starting a new section in your notes for each new point. Note-taking is not a substitute for thinking.
- In taking lecture notes on complex aspects of a subject, do you find that you are missing important points while you are busy writing down unimportant details? If so, you are probably trying to write too much. Concentrate on the main points, summarising them as briefly as possible. Leave large spaces. (If you think you have missed a point, leave a gap and fill it in later). Go over your notes as soon as possible afterwards and fill in details or examples (with reference to textbooks) to amplify the general points.
- Do you read over all your lecture notes fairly soon after each lecture, marking important points and making summaries? Even if you spend only a few minutes on this, it will help your memory and improve your understanding. This is a good way to get started promptly in an evening's work. "Writing up your notes" means working over them in this way, thinking about them, checking points, annotating and tidying them - not just copying them out neatly. But do not rely on lecture notes: you must also read for yourself and make notes on your reading.
- Before starting to read a book or a chapter, do you glance quickly through it? This gives you a general idea of the subject matter and will lend direction to your study.
- Make short notes and summaries while you read. This does not mean copying out passages from the text, but rather jotting down the main ideas and principles. In reading, stop periodically and review in your mind the main points in what you have read so far. When you have read the chapter through, look back over the text with reference to your notes for quick revision. Read with a pencil in your hand if you want to remember what you read.

- Can you adjust your speed of reading to suit the level of difficulty? You should be able to read rapidly but you should also recognise the rough, uphill, twisting section when you must change into low gear. When you come to a difficult or important part in a book, tackle it systematically. Do not just read it over several times in the hope that somehow it will come clear. Note the theme of each paragraph: the paragraph is the unit of thought and should have one main theme. Pick out the key sentence or key phrase which sums up the paragraph: it is often the first sentence or the last in the paragraph.

Not all these suggestions are necessarily right for you. Each person must develop the techniques of study which suit him or her best. But it is important that you should consider from time to time whether your study methods are the most efficient. Developing an efficient technique of work and study during your registration years provides you with a skill which will be valuable throughout your professional life.

You should receive PMA marks and accompanying feedback within 20 working days of submission via Tabula. Although official transcripts are not available until you have completed your degree the Course Office can produce a 'performance report' listing your current marks if required.

You cannot appeal against academic judgement, however, if you have concern over your mark please follow the advice on the 'Concern over Awarded Marks' section of the Warwick webpage (under PMA Guidelines).

If you achieve less than 50% on the module mark for your first attempt, you may be permitted a resubmission. Further information is available on the website: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/wmg/overseas/hk/pma/resubmission/>.

6.6 e-Submission of Post-module Assignments

For e-submission of your post-module assignments, you are advised to go to <https://tabula.warwick.ac.uk/>.