MANCHESTER
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The University of Manchester

UCIL

University College for
Interdisciplinary Learning

UCIL STUDENT HANDBOOK 2022-23

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

REFERENCING, AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AND LATE SUBMISSION

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

STUDENT FEEDBACK

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL). We are delighted that you have decided to study a unit with us. This handbook has been designed to answer your questions and assist you with your UCIL studies. It should be used in conjunction with the unit-specific information provided by the Unit Convenor in Blackboard.

Please note, you are responsible for checking assessment guidelines for your UCIL units e.g. deadlines, word or page limits, specific formatting requirements etc. These may vary from your home School so please check carefully.

WHAT IS UCIL?

UCIL offers a range of unique interdisciplinary units, developed and delivered by staff from across the University. We've created these units because we recognise that an interdisciplinary approach is critical for understanding our complex world and tackling the challenges we face in the 21st century. UCIL units will introduce you to current and critical issues, encourage you to make connections across your learning experiences, and support you to develop new ways of thinking. You will meet and study with students and staff from different degree programmes. Our interdisciplinary units equip you with highly transferrable knowledge and skills, adding value beyond your main degree and enhancing your employability.

UCIL welcomes students from all disciplines. Most of our units are available at undergraduate level, but we have one unit available to PGT students, and hope to offer more in the future. UCIL units contribute to your degree programme and are worth either 10 or 20 credits.

They are designed to be accessible to students from any degree. We take care to develop assessments that allow all students the opportunity to demonstrate learning and achievement, regardless of their prior training. Evaluation of student performance across UCIL units shows that they are no easier or harder than other units across the University.

UCIL CONTACTS

We have a team of UCIL Administrators who will be happy to help you with any queries. The easiest way to contact the team is by email to universitycollege@manchester.ac.uk

UCIL website: http://www.manchester.ac.uk/ucil/

UCIL COMMUNICATION TO STUDENTS

UCIL will need to contact you from time to time, to provide information and updates about teaching and learning activities and assessments. These communications will be posted in your Blackboard unit space or sent to your @student.manchester.ac.uk account. Please check Blackboard and your email regularly to make sure you don't miss anything. Failing to read messages which have been sent in good time cannot be used as mitigation for late or poor-quality work.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

DATES OF SEMESTERS AND EXAMS 2022-23

SEMESTER ONE

Teaching Weeks: 26 September 2022 – 16 December 2022

There is no University-wide Reading Week scheduled in **Semester One**. However, some UCIL units may have alternative arrangements. Please double check all units and any timetabled activities (either online or face-to-face) on the Blackboard page or check with your Unit Convenor.

Examination Period: 16 January 2023 – 27 January 2023

SEMESTER TWO

Teaching Weeks: (Part One) – 30 January 2023– 24 March 2023
Easter Vacation: 27 March 2023 – 14 April 2023
Teaching Weeks: (Part Two) – 17 April 2023 – 12 May 2023
Examination Period: 15 May 2023 – 9 June 2023

Resit Examination Period: 21 August 2023 – 1 September 2023

If you are a Level 1 or Level 2 student you must ensure that you are available for the resit Examination Period if you fail any units.

BLACKBOARD

In common with all other units you're taking, you should find your UCIL unit listed under the 'My courses' heading in Blackboard. Units are usually made available to students one week before teaching begins. If you enrol on a unit after this date, please note that it can take up to 24 hours for the unit to appear in your list of Blackboard courses.

If you cannot see a unit you expect to see, you should contact the UCIL administrators.

For general information on Blackboard and access to support information, please visit: my.manchester.ac.uk/portlet/user-guide

CONTACTING UCIL UNIT CONVENORS

The Unit Convenor, or a nominated GTA, will be your main point of contact during your UCIL studies. You should find their contact details on the unit Blackboard space. If you cannot find them, you can search for the Unit Convenor by name using the staff directory - http://directory.manchester.ac.uk/

The UCIL Administration team can also be contacted for more general queries: ucil@manchester.ac.uk

GUIDANCE ON ONLINE SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENTS

It is likely that some or all the assessment for your UCIL unit will be submitted in Blackboard via Turnitin. Please follow the guidance given below when submitting your work.

- To enable anonymous marking, your name should not appear anywhere on your work.
- Your work should carry a header on each page, which should include your student registration number (found on your library card) and the code and name of the unit.
- You should upload your work using the Turnitin submission link which you will usually find in the Assessment section accessible from the left-hand course menu on the unit's Blackboard landing page.
- **When uploading your work, include your student registration number and the question number/ title (e.g. 8000000_Q3) in the title field.**

Your responsibilities

- You are responsible for ensuring you upload the correct document.
- You are responsible for successfully uploading your coursework before the deadline on the date set by the Unit Convenor.
- You are responsible for keeping a copy of your coursework and a copy of the digital receipt containing your unique ID number and confirming your submission.

If you have any problems with your submission you should contact the Unit Convenor, UCIL Administrator, or the eLearning helpdesk:

http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/help/elearning/

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Full attendance is expected at all lectures and tutorials/seminars, including online activities and discussions in Blackboard. Attendance at tutorials and lectures will be monitored and attendance registers kept in line with the University policy. Your UCIL Unit Convenor will provide details of how attendance will be monitored. If you have any queries regarding attendance monitoring, you should contact your home School.

If you are unwell, unable to attend a lecture or tutorial or work through unit content online, or unable to complete any assignments for any reason, please let the Unit Convenor and your home School know.

If you have any concerns regarding any impact on your studies, please contact your home school urgently who will be able to advise you accordingly.
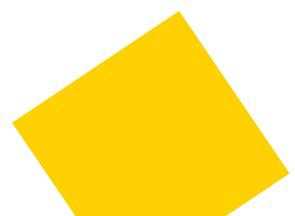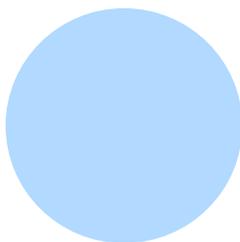
REFERENCING, AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AND LATE SUBMISSION

If you make use of another person's work, it is standard academic practice to acknowledge this by referencing the source you have used. This includes situations where you use direct quotations, and situations where you use your own words to present the information and ideas you have encountered. Accurate referencing is an expectation of all assessed work you submit for UCIL units.

REFERENCING SYSTEMS

Your Unit Convenor may specify which referencing system they would like you to use. Check the Unit Blackboard space for information or contact the Unit Convenor. If they indicate that they are happy for you to use any system, it must be a recognised academic referencing system, for example, Harvard, MLA, Vancouver, or APA.

The University library provides a referencing guide, with specific guidance on different referencing systems, and software that can be used to automate your referencing. You will find this guidance at the following link: Referencing guide at the University of Manchester

MY LEARNING ESSENTIALS

You will find further support for referencing, and other academic skills, via My Learning Essentials. My Learning Essentials is the University of Manchester's comprehensive programme of online resources, workshops and drop-ins designed to support students in their personal and professional development. It offers guidance and support for a wide range of academic skills, including many of those that you will draw on for UCIL assessments.

You can find the link to My Learning Essentials here:
http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/using-the-library/students/training-and-skills-support/my-learning-essentials/

PLAGIARISM

Academic Malpractice

Academic malpractice includes plagiarism, collusion, fabrication or falsification of results and anything else intended by those committing it to achieve credit that they do not properly deserve. In common with all academic programmes UCIL takes academic malpractice very seriously. Students who are found to have committed malpractice face serious penalties.

Plagiarism is taking the work of others and presenting it as your own.

The best way to avoid plagiarism is to ensure that any piece of work you hand in for assessment is fully and properly referenced, using a recognised referencing system.

The University has some helpful guidance on how to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice, including a few important dos and don'ts. Please see the links below.

All written assessment tasks will be automatically submitted to 'Turnitin', an online system used by the University for detecting plagiarism.

WHAT WILL WE DO IF WE SUSPECT ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE?

All cases of suspected malpractice will be investigated.

If evidence of malpractice is found, it will be passed to your home School who will investigate further and decide if a referral for academic malpractice is appropriate. In extreme cases, not only will the piece of work in question receive a mark of 0, but there could also be consequences in terms of degree progression, class of degree awarded, or exclusion from the degree programme altogether, depending on your School, and year of study.

The following links will take you to information provided by the University concerning plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice such as collusion. However, you should also check the information about academic malpractice provided by your School.

- University Guidance on Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Malpractice
- A Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism
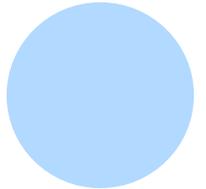
PENALTIES

Unit Convenors are asked to provide clear guidelines, via Blackboard, on the submission of assessed work for your UCIL unit. This should include information about the focus and format of your work, the marking criteria that will be applied, submission deadlines, any limits on work length and penalties that could be incurred. Please be aware that guidelines for your UCIL unit may differ from those you are familiar with in your home School. It is your responsibility to make yourself aware of the guidelines for your UCIL work. If anything is unclear, you should contact the Unit Convenor for clarification.

LATE SUBMISSION OF WORK

UCIL follows the University policy regarding late submission.

Definition of late submission
"Any work that has been submitted after a deadline has passed is classed as late except in cases where an extension has already been agreed via mitigating circumstances procedures and DASS extensions. There should be no discretionary periods or periods of grace. A student who submits work at 1 minute past a deadline or later will therefore be subject to a penalty for late submission."

Late penalties
"Any work submitted at any time within the first 24 hours following the published submission deadline will receive a penalty of 10% of the maximum amount of marks available. Any work submitted at any time between 24 hours and up to 48 hours late will receive a deduction of 20% of the marks available, and so on, at the rate of an additional 10% of available marks deducted per 24 hours, until the assignment is submitted, or no marks remain."

Please note that this is in accordance with the University's Guidance on late submissions and it is not at the discretion of the unit convenor to waive a late penalty.

To avoid late penalties, we advise that you allow yourself sufficient time to upload your work in Blackboard.

Work length

Most of your assessed UCIL work will be subject to a maximum work length (e.g. a maximum word or page count, or a maximum presentation length). In some cases, a minimum length will also be specified. Penalties will be applied if you submit work which falls outside of these limits. The Unit Convenor should provide clear information on work length, and outline possible penalties. Please contact the Unit Convenor if you cannot find clear information on the unit Blackboard space.

All coursework marks and feedback are provisional until ratified by the UCIL Examination Board, which takes place in June every year.

If you have any queries regarding your mark or feedback, please contact the Unit Convenor in the first instance.
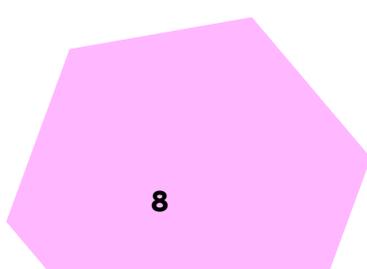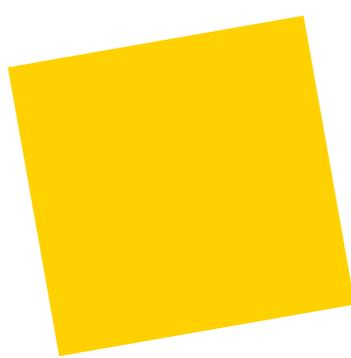
MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Sometimes, factors beyond your control may interfere with your ability to attend classes or keep up with your academic studies. The University's mitigating circumstances procedures exist to try to mitigate against the impact that this could have on your grades. The full mitigating circumstances policy can be accessed via the following link: http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/study-support/mitigating-circumstances/.

If personal circumstances mean you are unable to keep up with your UCIL unit, we recommend that you contact a member of staff in your home School for guidance and support (e.g. your Academic Advisor). You can also contact the Unit Convenor if you would like advice on how to catch up with missed work, and you should inform them if absence or delays are likely to impact other students (e.g. if you are working as part of a group). If your personal circumstances are likely to result in late submission of work, or impact your performance, you should follow the guidance on mitigating circumstances, provided below.

If you feel that illness, or some other unforeseen personal problem, has adversely affected your performance in any part of the assessed work for a unit, then mitigation might be applied. Advice on how to apply for mitigating circumstances or an extension in relation to your UCIL unit is given below.

HOW CAN I APPLY FOR MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES OR AN EXTENSION FOR A UCIL UNIT ASSESSMENT?

You will need to contact your home School directly if you need to request mitigating circumstances or an extension for any reason. Your Undergraduate Programme Office or Student Support and Guidance Office will be able to advise you further regarding late submissions or mitigating circumstances.

Your home School will then notify UCIL of any confirmed extensions or mitigating circumstances. You can find the full University Policy on Mitigating Circumstances here: http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/policy-on-mitigating-circumstances/

The UCIL Unit Convenor or UCIL team cannot agree an extension or approve mitigating circumstances.

DASS STUDENTS

The UCIL Unit Convenor will be made aware of additional support via your University Support Plan. If you have any questions regarding your support needs, please contact the Unit Convenor.

Further information is available here: http://www.dso.manchester.ac.uk/what-support-can-i-get/

If your University Support Plan states that you should have an Automatic Extension, the Unit Convenor should be aware of this. Please note that automatic extensions do not cover all types of assessment.

Assessments which are **NOT** included in the Automatic Extension scheme include:

- Group/teamwork
- Presentations
- Formative coursework
- Assessments limited by logistical constraints: e.g. where assessments are to be submitted weekly, such as posts to weekly discussion boards.

See the link below for further information and guidance:
 http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=37272
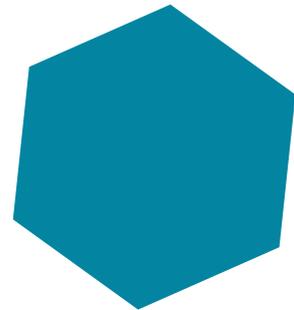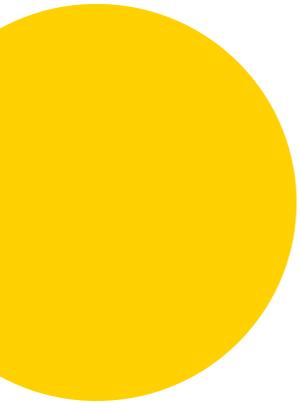
STUDENT FEEDBACK

STUDENT FEEDBACK AND REPRESENTATION

The University of Manchester is committed to working in partnership with students in order to bring about improvement in the quality of the student experience and the development of learning and teaching.

STUDENT STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE

Student representation is via the UCIL Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) and the UCIL Teaching and Learning Panel. Representation enables dialogue between the student body and staff to aid development of UCIL units, including new units.

The UCIL Student Staff Liaison Committee is a consultative body and consists of student representatives across a range of UCIL units, the UCIL Academic Director and the UCIL Teaching and Learning Panel members. Student members represent the UCIL student cohort and engage in discussion with academic staff to bring ideas, suggest units, and to provide feedback on the UCIL unit portfolio, unit content and to make any suggestions or comments to enhance the student experience.

Student representatives are invited to sit on the UCIL Teaching and Learning Panel, which discusses policy relating to examinations and assessed coursework, and the portfolio of UCIL units.

If you wish to become a UCIL student representative, please contact ucil@manchester.ac.uk. UCIL administrators will email all students regarding UCIL student representatives at the beginning of the academic year should you wish to apply for a position.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS AND SURVEYS

UCIL is keen to develop new units that are in line with student interests. We therefore run several focus groups and surveys in addition to unit evaluation and SSLC to gain student feedback on current unit development and ideas for new units.

UNIT EVALUATIONS

UCIL values all student opinion and feedback. Each unit has a unit survey at the end of the semester. Feedback/comments are anonymous and will be looked at by UCIL Unit Convenors and the UCIL Academic Director.