

# Assessment—coursework and exams



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These slides will be emailed to students afterwards



# Topics for this meeting

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- Assessment.
  - What to aim for—what is a *good* result?
  - Types of assessment
- The results...
- Applying for a Master's
- Holidays
- Requests to Student Office

# Good marks and bad marks

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- The usual requirement for admission to a Master's course is a first (average of 70+) or upper second (average of 60+)
- A **fail** is a mark <40. (Visiting students get **no** credit for modules they fail)
- A **bad fail** is a mark <25. (If you fail a module this badly **you have to re-sit** the exam in August in order to obtain DipHE or to pass the year for 2+2)

# Passing the DipHE or passing the year (2+2 students): more details

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- 40% in every module gives a pass overall
- A mark <40 in **one or two** modules *may* be compensated for by good performance elsewhere. More than 2 failures **cannot** be compensated for and have to be taken again.
- A mark <25 **cannot** be compensated for by good performance elsewhere.

For the **precise** rules see **Progression, Determination & Classification of Results** on

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/socscinet/ug/forms.html>



# Types of assessment

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- Informal tests during the course—'mid-terms'.
- Submitted coursework.
- Formal exams at the end of each semester in January and May.

# Mid-terms—what can go wrong

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- You do not turn up. If you are ill you should tell the lecturer responsible for the module.
- You appear to cheat. The mid-terms are often held in the lecture theatre used for the course. Students sit very close to each other and it is tempting to talk to your neighbour or look across at your neighbour's work. **Resist the temptation.**



# Coursework—what can go wrong

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- ❑ You miss the deadline. There are penalties for later submission. If you are ill you should tell the lecturer responsible for the module.
- ❑ You (or your group if its group work) plagiarise the work of somebody else.

# Plagiarism

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Plagiarism is presenting somebody else's work as your own.

It is form of cheating.

And is punished.

There are 2 aspects

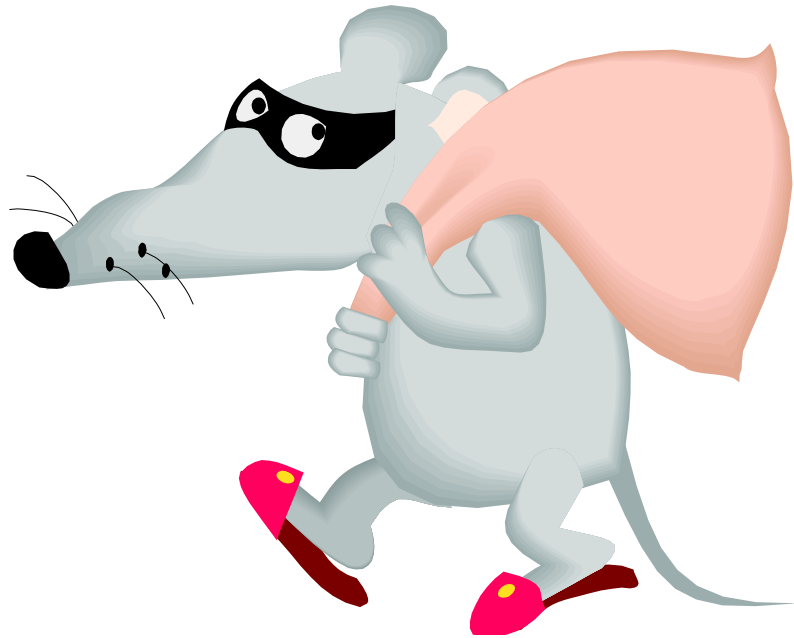
Using somebody else's work

Presenting it as your own.



# What is Plagiarism?

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Plagiarism is using someone else's work but not indicating that it is not your own

- ❑ In some countries/cultures students may expect to copy Teachers may want students to repeat exactly what is in text books or lecture notes.
- ❑ At the University of Southampton all work you submit for marking **must be** your own original creation
- ❑ Presenting another's work as if it was your own is called "plagiarism" and is the **wrong thing to do.**
- ❑ **Plagiarism** is what you do when you copy without acknowledging your sources
- ❑ There are academic conventions to acknowledge sources
- ❑ We have clear university regulations against plagiarism

# I have been *guilty* of plagiarism

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- I wanted to impress you with my skill but I **should have acknowledged** that the previous slide was taken from

<http://www.soton.ac.uk/library/subjects/e/cs/plagiarismecs.ppt>



# So ...

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- **Always** refer to your sources and put any passage you reproduce in quotes.

## However

- It is usually a **bad idea** to copy and paste text—even if you acknowledge the source.
- A ***bad idea*** because the marker will know you are lazy and will probably think you do not understand what you have copied.
- Putting matters in your own words is better—but always acknowledge the source.



# Examinations

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- The exam is the most important form of assessment—accounting for 80-90% of the mark for the module.
- There are university procedures for everything connected with exams. You will receive information on these procedures.

# Exams—when?

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- The first semester exams are held in a two week period at the end of the semester between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of January.
- You should receive your timetable near the end of November.
- You also receive information about exam procedures. Study the rules carefully.

# Exams—what can go wrong

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- You are ill or something happens that is **not** your fault to prevent you from taking the exam. You may ask for *special considerations*.
- You are not well prepared. This is **your fault**.

# Illness & Special Considerations

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- If you are absent from an examination you must contact the Student Office on the day of the missed examination or at the very first opportunity after the illness to discuss the reasons for missing the examination.
- If you have grounds for believing that your performance in examinations or coursework merits special consideration, you must ensure that this **information**, with supporting documentation, is submitted to the Student Office.

For details see **Special consideration form** at <http://www.soton.ac.uk/socscinet/ug/forms.html>  
and **University student medical guidelines** at <http://www.soton.ac.uk/socscinet/ug/forms.html>



# Preparing

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- You should go to the exam knowing the subject

**AND**

- knowing what you will be expected to do



## *What is expected*

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You should ask the lecturer and consult

- The exam rubric
  - on the module's Blackboard site
  
- Past Examination Papers
  - Accessible through SUSSED
  
- The lecturers' feedback on past exams
  - <http://www.soton.ac.uk/socscinet/ug/examfeedback/index.htm>



## *In the exam—the rubric*

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- The rubric is the set of instructions printed at the top of the exam paper.
- **Follow** the instructions
  - Thus if you are told to do FOUR questions, then answers to 3 can give no more than 75% and answers to 5 will include one wasted effort.
  - If questions are unequally weighted, then pay attention to the weights when organising your time during the exam.

# Your answers

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- ❑ Read the questions carefully and try to answer the questions *asked* rather than ones you *wish* had been asked.
- ❑ Show your reasoning: the examiner is interested in your reasoning and can only give marks for what is on the page.
- ❑ If a question should take 40 minutes and you write your answer in 20, then most likely you are not including enough detail.

# The results—in February

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- If you have failed any modules you will receive a letter from the Student Office.
- You should consult your tutor about resits.
- You **cannot** resit a paper you have passed. Resit marks are **capped** at 40%. So there is no point in failing deliberately!

# Making sense of your results

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- Read the Exam feedback for the units you have taken.
- It *may* be worth seeing your script. If you wish to, you should contact your tutor NOT the module lecturer.

## Note that

- Marks are **not** negotiable.
- Scripts are **not** re-marked.



# Looking ahead for 2+2s: applying for Master's courses

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For a Master's course in 2015/16 you apply in semester 1 of 2014/15.

This year there is nothing to do except

- get the best marks you can in your courses
- talk to third years about their experience in applying for Master's courses.



# Vacations

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**Only** take holidays during university vacations, viz.

Christmas: December 13 – January 6

Easter: March 28 - April 28

Summer: June 14 –

Do **not** take holidays during term, reading breaks or exam periods. To do so may violate the terms of your visa.



## *Not* overloading Student Office

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At certain times the Student Office is very busy writing letters on behalf of students.

You can speed the flow for yourself and other students by

- making sure that all your details are correct
- by not returning to ask for the same letter to be rewritten.





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**Any Questions?????**