



QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA 87 – PENALTIES FOR EXCEEDING ASSESSMENT SIZE LIMITS

This policy applies to all fine graded assessments that include a specific volume limit within the module descriptor.

Assessment Loads

Each assessment brief will include clear information on the maximum length of the assessment, as well as clear guidance on how to approach the task.

There is no minimum assessment size or length, however assessments that are significantly below the sizes indicated are unlikely to contain the level of breadth and depth required and will be reflected in the mark awarded.

Students are responsible for ensuring that work submitted complies with the assessment size limit and must declare these on their assessment front cover sheet. These declarations shall be checked by the marker where it appears that an incorrect word count has been stated. In such cases, students must provide a copy of their work in a format that can be checked.. Where it is suspected that a student has intentionally made an incorrect declaration to gain an unfair advantage, this may be investigated in accordance with the University's Academic Integrity and Misconduct policy.

What's Included in the Word Count?

The word count includes everything in the main body of the assessment (including in text citations and references).

Unless otherwise stated on the assessment brief, in conventional written assignments, the word count excludes:

- Numerical Data in Tables
- Figures
- Diagrams
- Footnotes
- Reference list
- Appendices (these will not normally be marked)

Penalties for Exceeding Word Limits

Students who exceed the word count up to a 10% margin will not be penalised.



For example, a 3000-word essay may be up to 3300 words without penalty: a 10-minute presentation may run up to 11 minutes without penalty.

Students should note that no marks will be assigned to work exceeding the specified limit once the maximum assessment size limit has been reached.

Penalties will be applied to the overall assessment mark (or overall assessment component mark for multipart assessments) and not to individual tasks within an assessment.

Policy Name:	Word Count Policy
Policy Reference:	QA87
Approval Authority:	Academic Framework, Regulation & Policy Committee
Last Approved:	April 2024
Responsible SMT Lead:	Academic Registrar
Responsible Department:	Academic Affairs
Policy Contact:	Kate Litherland, Head of Assessment (klitherland@arden.ac.uk)
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