
MA Module Code: SPIR700 (Level: 7, Credits: 20)

Lecture and Seminar: Wednesday 10.00am-1.00pm Wells Street 306 (semester 1)

Module Leader: Professor David Chandler
(Room: Wells Street 504, email: D.Chandler@wmin.ac.uk)

Module Summary

Today the biggest challenge facing policy-makers appears to be the growing awareness of complexity. A complex world is seemingly much more difficult to govern and to act instrumentally in order to fulfil policy goals. The module introduces students to the theoretical frameworks and practices of the politics of complexity, the debates that have been triggered, and the way that complexity understandings have developed, especially in the 1990s and 2000s. Emphasis is placed upon introducing students to some of the conceptual frameworks deployed in understanding system effects on political, economic and social life and how these enable us to rethink governance, power and agency. However, this module is also very practically orientated, it engages with how complexity is reflected in new approaches to policy-making and understanding, particularly focusing on how problems are responded to and the distinctions between preventive policy-understandings, resilience/bouncing back approaches and more transformative understandings of how to engage with a complex world.
Module Aims

1. To introduce students to the theoretical frameworks and practices of the politics of complexity, the debates they have triggered, and the way that complexity approaches have developed, particularly over the last decade.
2. To consider the changing framework of discussions of governance in relation to questions of who governs, how governance is legitimated, the processes of governance and the objects of governance.
3. To trace discussion of policy-making in relation to agency and the politics of complexity, in particular the changing understandings of agency with more diversified ranges of actors and more circulatory, asymmetric and flatter concepts of agency.
4. To consider some of the contexts in which understandings of political power are expressed within the framework of complexity.
5. To analyse reflexive forms of governing, resilience and adaptivity as responses to the problem of governing complexity.
6. To examine the changing nature and dynamics of democratic practices, and to facilitate the development of analytical skills that enable students to understand different democratic initiatives within a wider framework of complexity approaches.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, students are expected to:
1. Critically evaluate a range of theories of complexity as they affect political understandings of the role and practices of government.
2. Demonstrate a sound critical and advanced understanding of the different ways in which complexity thinking is deployed as both a limit to political power and also as a way of enabling political change.
3. Analyse how different conceptualisations of politics and complexity developed in relation to different bodies of theory, such as pragmatism, neoliberalism, assemblage theory, complex adaptive systems, post-foundationalism, new institutionalism, actor-network-theory, new materialism and posthumanism.
4. Critically evaluate how the politics of complexity interrogates and challenges liberal modernist binaries of politics/economics, state/society, public/private, subject/object, mind/body, human/nature, threat/security referent, inside/outside, means/ends etc.
5. Rigorously evaluate the link between democracy as this is understood in terms of formal representation and in terms of social or societal processes.
Teaching, Learning and Assessment

One 3 hour seminar per week involving small group work and student led-discussions. Students are expected to prepare in advance as this involves discussion/interpretation of key readings.

The assessment for this module is one book review of 1,500 words and one essay of 3,500 words.

The books for review and the essay questions are available on pages 28-29 of this module guide.

The deadline for the book review is 10.00am Thursday 30 October 2014 and the deadline for the essay is 10.00am 11 December 2014.

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# Lecture Programme

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Essential Reading

Key Texts

Background Reading


**Periodicals and Other Sources**

Resilience: Policies, Practices and Discourses

Security Dialogue

International Political Sociology

Constellations

Ecology and Society

Economy and Society

Theory, Culture and Society

Millennium: Journal of International Studies
Week One: 24 September 2014
Introduction: What Do We Mean By Complexity?

This session intends to introduce students to the module as a whole and to the problematic governing complexity. We will begin to engage with the problematic at the most general level, especially as most of the class will not have had the chance to do much of the readings and discuss what complexity might be, how it might be measured and what the implications of complexity might be for governing and for our understandings of power and agency and maybe even for critical theorising.

Reading (readings asterisked are available on Blackboard course materials)

Anything on complexity or recent thinking in political theory, IR, philosophy, human geography and the social sciences more generally will be fine. There are some more specific suggestions below.

Ecologist Eric Berlow, 3 minute video ‘Simplifying Complexity’, 3 September 2013. 
http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/2013/09/simplifying-complexity-ted-talk/
http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03ls154

Week Two: 1 October 2014
The End of Modernity: The Anthropocene

This session will discuss whether complexity is new or not. You may have come across the term ‘the Anthropocene’, this is a term for a new geological epoch, one in which human activities can no longer be seen as separate from the Earth’s ecosystems, heralding a paradigm shift in governance theory and practice. This understanding of the end of an ‘outside’ - that human understandings of progress have reached a limit is crucial for understanding complexity. The entanglements of human actions with environmental processes is captured well in the work of sociologists Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck. For these theorists the complex world is understood as ‘late-modernity’, the ‘second modernity’, ‘risk society’ or the ‘globalised world’ and is a relatively recent phenomenon. Another position, that these entanglements of complexity are not new but merely involve the recognition that modernist assumptions rested on a false, reductionist set of understandings is perhaps most boldly articulated by Bruno Latour. What does Bruno Latour mean when he says: ‘Put quite simply, second modernity is first modernity plus its externalities: everything that had been externalized as irrelevant or impossible to calculate is back in – with a vengeance’? (Is Re-modernization Occurring’, p. 37)

Reading

Some awareness of the Anthropocene and any books or articles by Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck and/or Bruno Latour will be fine for this session. These are major social theorists and their work is easily accessible. Some suggestions are below.

The Anthropocene Project (website)
Welcome to the Anthropocene (website)
http://www.anthropocene.info/en/home
http://anr.sagepub.com/content/1/1/57.full.pdf

David Chandler, Resilience: the Governance of Complexity (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014) chapters 1, 2 and 3.


Bruno Latour, We Have Never Been Modern (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993).


Week Three: 8 October 2014

From Linear to Non-Linear Causality

In modernist understandings of governance, there was an assumption that certain sets of policies could be applied to achieve certain desired results. This was implied in the capacity to learn lessons from policy failures and the ability to export governance systems elsewhere in the world, from the spread of ‘civilisation’ under colonial rule to the contestation between liberal market economies and socialist state-based economic systems. However, these modernist views of linearity have been increasingly challenged by non-linear understandings of social causality which emphasise difference, plurality and social processes. Perhaps the classic study of the limits of linear government understandings is Scott’s Seeing Like a State. However it is also worth considering the development in more detail of non-linear perspectives, associated from the late 1970s with new institutionalist and neoliberal understandings, particularly in the field of international development (where North develops and applies Hayek’s approach) and now often articulated in the development of assemblage theory (see, for example, DeLanda). Non-linearity is at the heart of complexity understandings.

Reading

David Chandler, Resilience: the Governance of Complexity (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014) chapters 1, 2 and 10.
Week Four: 15 October 2014
Process-based Understandings of Resilience and Vulnerability

A good example of non-linear or “bottom-up” understandings is that provided by current policy engagements with vulnerability and resilience. The United Nations Development Programme’s 2014 Annual Human Development Report states: “Human resilience means that people can exercise their choices safely and freely—including being confident that the opportunities they have today will not be lost tomorrow. While being less vulnerable often goes hand in hand with being more resilient, resilience is more than just a mirror of vulnerability. It may be possible to reduce vulnerability by lowering the incidence of shocks and threats. But society’s resilience may remain unaffected unless other measures are also applied. Active policies to build community, to remove barriers to individual expression and to strengthen norms to help others in need all might be needed to build resilience. A useful way to view this relationship is as going ‘from vulnerability to resilience’.” (p.17) Rockefeller Global Resilience Partnership defines resilience as “the ability of people, households, communities, countries and systems to mitigate, adapt to, recover from, thrive, and learn in the face of shocks and stresses, in order to reduce chronic vulnerability and enable sustained development, inclusive growth, and learning and transformative capacity.” Resilience is not a state or an end point but a process. This builds upon Amartya Sen’s understanding of ‘Development as Freedom’ – as a process of removing ‘unfreedoms’ or vulnerabilities. How does this process work and how is it understood?

Reading

Amartya Sen is required reading:
Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, Intro and Chapter 1
Otherwise any material you can find on policy and academic understandings of resilience, vulnerability and human development would be fine, including the material here:
Rockefeller Global Resilience Partnership
http://www.globalresiliencepartnership.org/.


Week Five: 22 October 2014
Complexity: Determinate and Emergent Causality

The key shift in complexity understandings over the last couple of decades have involved a shift from a problem of knowledge of complex determinations to a problem of the ‘emergent’ nature of reality itself. Determinate understandings of complexity were central to week 3’s readings; new institutionalism and neoliberalism work at the level of knowing the complex path-determinations and this is replicated in some versions of assemblage theory which focus upon the internal properties of systems and complex interactions between external forces and internal structures. This view of complexity as knowable can also be seen in some US approaches particularly those based at the Santa Fe Institute which seeks to apply complexity understandings to social problems. The question of universalist knowledge assumptions is also uppermost for post-foundationalist Left thinkers concerned with liberal universal paradigms and their implicit hierarchies and exclusions. Other approaches begin to understand complexity in a more ontological way, as not a problem of knowledge of determinations but of a reality which emerges more contingently without hidden determinations. A key author in recognising the importance of this shift was Lyotard. However useful critiques of linguistic, discourse or knowledge approaches can be found in the work of vital or new materialists and posthumanists such as Karen Barad and Rosi Braidotti. We are only interested in drawing out the broad brush strokes of these distinctions so please do not get to hung up on the language if you are finding it difficult.

Reading


Articles from the *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 41:3 (June 2013) special issue ‘Materialism and World Politics’, including:


* Diana Coole, ‘Agentic Capacities and Capacious Historical Materialism: Thinking with New Materialisms in the Political Sciences’, 451-469.


http://www.davidchandler.org/pdf/journal_articles/Millennium%20World%20of%20Attachment%202013%20Published.pdf.


  
  Chapter 1 Deep Ecology – A New Paradigm
  
  Chapter 7 A New Synthesis
  
  Epilogue: Ecological Literacy


Week Six: 29 October 2014
The End of Power? Constituted vs Constitutive Power

What are the implications of complexity for power? Some analysts suggest that power is not what it was, that maybe its location has shifted and that power has become more distributed and diversified or shifted to other (lower) levels. For other analysts, power needs to be understood as a contest between the constitutive power of life, potentia, vis-à-vis the constituted power of government, potestas. We shall discuss how fluid, bottom-up, power is understood to have grown at the expense of traditional forms of government.

Reading

**Week Seven: 5 November 2014**

**The Implications for International ‘Liberal Peace’**

There are few areas where complexity and the awareness of nonlinearity (the gap between intentions and outcomes) is growing faster than that of foreign policy, particularly with regard to the difficulties of exporting Western norms or in terms of interventions in the cause of peace, development and democracy. It is increasingly held that local societies prevent linear outcomes and that therefore the local is the key to any attempt to successfully address these problems of the international sphere.

**Reading**


More general readings for International Relations:


* Emilian Kavalski, ‘The fifth debate and the emergence of complex international relations theory: notes on the application of complexity theory to the study of


Week Eight: 12 November 2014
The Implications for Law and Democracy

In modernist frameworks, law and politics operate in the formal sphere of political equality, detached from the inequalities of the social and economic sphere. Complexity approaches suggest that this division is artificial and problematic. We have already discussed, to a certain extent, the limits of power articulated in top-down ways and the rise of a societal focus. This week we develop the analysis to consider how the divide between the formal and informal is increasingly eroded in policy-making understandings. Issues we can focus upon include the rise of ‘Nudge’ approaches to change and shape behavioural choices; the increasing importance of culture and plurality as barriers to universalist forms of law; and the perceived problems with policy-outcomes in the form of laws and policy goals, seeking to direct social outcomes.

Key reading is the work of Ed Miliband’s key policy advisor Mark Stears. As Cooke and Muir argue, Stears’ “critique suggests a politics that does not aim towards a known, identifiable end state. It rejects utopianism and embraces uncertainty. Taken to its logical conclusion, such an approach would be a radical departure for the centre-left, which has long defined itself in terms of a ‘vision’ for how society should be (in words such as ‘equality’). In its purest form, Stears’ argument is a call to abandon the pursuit of objective outcomes with politics coming instead to focus on the design of processes – especially ones that enable relationships. The specific ‘ends’ that people make of these ‘means’ – both individually and collectively – is then a matter for their own determination. This offers citizens, he argues, the prospect of both liberty and responsibility.” (p.9) Can politics exist without electoral goals? “In the past, politicians have tended to go into election campaigns promising better schools or more nurses. That might not work anymore, especially when the money to pay for such promises has dried up. If such pledges are abandoned, what comes in their place?” (p.16)

Reading


Readings for weeks 4, 5, 6 and 7.


### Nudge

Leo Benedictus, ‘The nudge unit – has it worked so far?’, *Guardian*, 2 May 2013.

http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/may/02/nudge-unit-has-it-worked.


### Neoliberalism


### Law


**Example of the Problematisation of The War on Drugs**

Week Nine: 20 November 2014
The Implications for Policy-Making: Reflexive Governance

This way of governing through learning the lessons of ‘life’ could thereby be understood as reflexive or adaptive governance. This form of governance starts from life or from the appearance of the world, rather than starting with abstract goals or political projects. Key to this approach is the work of John Dewey, especially his classic statement The Public and its Problems, which suggests that publics should be seen as formed through the emergence of problems rather than as formal pre-existing entities. Reflexive governance starts from the event or appearance of a problem, such as the increasingly ubiquitous ‘disaster’. Disasters were once seen as external events or shocks, and which necessitated recovery and ‘bouncing back’ are increasingly understood rather differently. Disasters are part of a learning/developmental/governmental process in ways in which they were not before. Disasters are reinscribed as the final point of processes which were previously hidden to us, or which we lacked awareness of; processes (or assemblages, in current parlance) in which we were all the time and already embedded within as actors with agency. Thus, in reflexive resilience-thinking, disasters do not require ‘bouncing back’ to the status quo ante, but rather require self-reflexivity, in the awareness of how to bounce back differently: how to learn from the bad forms of governance that the disaster reveals and thus to prevent or limit such events in the future.

Reading
Bruno Latour, We Have Never Been Modern (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993).


http://static.guim.co.uk/ni/1381763590219/-Some-thoughts-on-education.pdf.


Disasters
The Future of Disaster Risk Management, FLACSO/UNISDR, April 2013. 


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Week Ten: 27 November 2014
The Implications for Ethics: The Governance of the Self

(we will also be discussing essay questions and preparation)

William Connolly talks of an ethics of ‘presumptive responsibility’ or ‘critical responsiveness’ (Fragility of Things, 135). What is this ethic and how does it work in overcoming the liberal binary of consequentialist ethics (of private self-interest and outcomes) and de-ontological ethics (of altruism and the common public good)? How does this ethic work in terms of our response to events/disasters/apparances of the world and how does this ethical approach related to politics and social and political change?

Reading

Readings for weeks 5 and 6.


* Thomas Pogge, ‘Global Poverty as an Institutional Human Rights Violation’.
* Thomas Pogge, ‘Achieving Democracy’
Week Eleven: 4 December
The Implications for Theory: After Causality

If the world is understood to be complex, non-linear and contingent what implications does this have for theory? Is it still possible to theorise or does theory depend on linear causation and the possibility of making generalisations from theory? Many Post-Marxist approaches, which emerged after the Communist Party’s failure to reform post-‘68, suggested theorizing through the subject, enabling the subject to give voice to critique. This position is described by Boltanski as a displacement of critical sociology by the sociology of critique. Big Data approaches share the methodological and ontological assumptions of some of the complexity social science understandings, which have similarly rejected the search for causal connections and the development of social theory. At the level of epistemological assumptions, Big Data offers a broader variety of research techniques, reliant on computer generated data and analytics, but is essentially indistinguishable from actor network or other critical and empirically-driven approaches. Big Data approaches insist on ‘following the data’ while actor network theorists deploy their ethnographic skills and insist on ‘following the actor’.

Reading

Readings for weeks 4 and 7.
http://static.guim.co.uk/ni/1381763590219/-Some-thoughts-on-education.pdf.

Big Data


Week Twelve: 11 December 2013
Conclusion: Beyond Complexity?

In this concluding session we will reflect on the module as a whole and the implications of complexity for our understandings of governance, power and agency as well as considering whether the global world will continue to become more complex or whether complexity itself has limits and if so how these may be understood.
Assessment

Book review  Deadline 10.00am Thursday 30 October 2014

Choose one of the following ten books. Write a 1,500 word review on how the book relates to rethinking governance, power and agency today (do not just provide a summary of the book, treat it analytically).


3,500 word Essay  **Deadline 10.00am Thursday 11 December 2014**

Choose one of the following six essay titles

1. What are the implications of complexity for our understanding of how governance should operate?

2. How is complexity linked to posthumanist approaches?

3. What are the implications of complexity for our understanding of power?

4. What is the link between resilience and complexity?

5. Do we still need theory in a world of complexity?

6. What are the implications of complexity for our understanding of democracy and agency?
**Assessment Rationale**

The assessment regime is designed to encourage research expertise in the area of politics and complexity. It aims to develop advanced understanding of the concepts, frameworks and approaches of complexity thinking as applied to the rethinking of governance, agency and power. The assessment by essay and book review enables students to develop a critical understanding and to apply key theoretical accounts to current debates and problems with regard to the impact of complexity.

In particular, the book review is designed to develop analytical skills and to ensure that basic concepts and frames of debate are understood at an early stage of the module. The review encourages students to focus on their capacity to digest, comprehend and contextualise concepts, theories and policies key to governance and complexity.

The research essay allows students to develop an extended analysis of key concepts, theories and/or policies, to engage in an in-depth evaluation of competing interpretations and theoretical approaches, and to explore the application of governance practices both domestically and internationally. The essay challenges students to critically engage with their chosen topic and demonstrate their critical and analytical ability.

**Assessment Criteria**

In marking essays, I will consider the following:

1. extent to which the essay question has been addressed using relevant material from the module reading list. These need to be combined with material acquired through independent research;
2. structure, coherence and justification of the argument put forward;
3. clarity and accuracy with which ideas are expressed;
4. degree to which different concepts and theoretical approaches are sufficiently described, discussed and integrated;
5. range of research and collation of information and material;
6. selection and correct attribution of sources in support of an argument.

More specifically:

**Structure and Quality of Argument**

Is the thesis of the essay stated in the introduction?  
Is the overall structure of the argument clear and coherent?  
Are the points made in a logical sequence?  
Is the argument sufficiently analytical?  
Is there a conclusion?  
Does the conclusion address the essay question directly?  
Is the conclusion adequately supported by the preceding argument?

**Contents**

Is the writer’s argument adequately backed up rather than just asserted?  
Are the sources used subjected to analysis and critical reflection?
Has the student researched the topic sufficiently?
Are there any important omissions?
Has the student thought about what s/he has read or simply reproduced material from sources?
Is there evidence of critical thinking or an original synthesis?
Has the student gone beyond the essential reading?

Use of Evidence
Are the points made supported by evidence from cited sources?
Are the sources drawn on sufficient and appropriate?
If empirical evidence is used, is it described clearly and in appropriate detail?
Does the evidence presented support the conclusions reached?
Is the interpretation of the evidence presented appropriately qualified (i.e. have overgeneralisations and sweeping statements been avoided)?

Writing Style and Presentation of the Essay
Is the essay referenced correctly?
Are quotations identified and fully referenced?
Are the ideas presented fully credited?
Is the essay fluent and readable?
Is the grammar and spelling adequate?
Has the student made an effort to use their own words?

Assessment Grading Scheme
Essay assessment is a complex process that cannot be reduced to a simple formula. However, it is possible to articulate some of the features that your lecturers will expect to find in each of the marking categories.

First class essays (70-100%) will: address the question or title; develop a well-informed argument; demonstrate familiarity with the relevant literature; present an analysis and evaluation of the ideas and theories discussed; reveal internal integration and coherence; use references and examples to support the claims and arguments made; provide detailed references and sources in the bibliography or reference section; be written in good and grammatically correct English. Differences within the range are usually attributable to differences in the quality of analysis and evaluation and internal integration and coherence.

Upper second class essays (60-69%) will: address the title; develop a clear argument; demonstrate familiarity with relevant literature; use references and examples. The difference between essays in this class and a first class piece of work is often the quality of the analysis and evaluation presented and the degree to which it is integrated around its central theme.

Lower second class work (50-59%) may show weaknesses with regard to a number of the features mentioned above. Generally, the analysis and evaluation may be poor, so that the work fails to convey an unified consideration of the topic under discussion. Often, for example, ideas and theories will be presented but not related to each other, so that the reader is left to draw his/her own conclusions. This may also mean that the material presented is not used to address the question but is simply included as vaguely relevant. Finally the sequential structure of essays in this category could usually be improved.
Failed essays (40-49%) are, at best, manifestly failing with regard to a number of the features mentioned above. In particular, their demonstration of familiarity with the literature is usually poor and their structure difficult to discern.

Essays which are of extremely poor quality will receive marks that are under 40%. We use the full spectrum of marks.

Assessment Submission Information

All coursework on this module is submitted via Blackboard only. It will automatically be scanned through the Turnitin Plagiarism Detection Service software.

• You DO NOT need to attach a copy of the CA1 form;
• You DO need to include your name and student ID on the first page of your assignment.

To submit your assignment:
• Log on to Blackboard at http://learning.westminster.ac.uk;
• Go to the relevant module Blackboard site;
• Click on the ‘Assessments’ link on the left-hand side;
• Click on the link to the relevant assignment;
• Follow the ‘upload’ and ‘submit’ instructions.

A two-minute video showing the submission process can be found by following this link: http://www.youtube.com/user/SSHLUniWestminster#p/u/0/I-ZQs4nSWL4

IT IS A REQUIREMENT THAT YOU SUBMIT YOUR WORK IN THIS WAY. ALL COURSEWORK MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 10:00 AM ON THE DUE DATE.

IF YOU SUBMIT YOUR COURSEWORK LATE BUT WITHIN 24 HOURS OR ONE WORKING DAY OF THE SPECIFIED DEADLINE, 10% OF THE OVERALL MARKS AVAILABLE FOR THAT ELEMENT OF ASSESSMENT WILL BE DEDUCTED, AS A PENALTY FOR LATE SUBMISSION, EXCEPT FOR WORK WHICH OBTAINS A MARK IN THE RANGE 50 – 59%, IN WHICH CASE THE MARK WILL BE CAPPED AT THE PASS MARK (50%).

IF YOU SUBMIT YOUR COURSEWORK MORE THAN 24 HOURS OR MORE THAN ONE WORKING DAY AFTER THE SPECIFIED DEADLINE YOU WILL BE GIVEN A MARK OF ZERO FOR THE WORK IN QUESTION (PLEASE SEE ALSO THE SECTION ‘PENALTIES FOR LATE SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK’).

LATE WORK AND ANY CLAIM OF MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO COURSEWORK MUST BE SUBMITTED AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO ENSURE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THAT THE WORK CAN STILL BE MARKED (PLEASE SEE ALSO THE SECTION ‘MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES’). LATE WORK WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED IF IT IS RECEIVED MORE THAN FIVE WORKING DAYS AFTER THE ORIGINAL COURSEWORK DEADLINE. ONCE THE WORK OF OTHER STUDENTS HAS BEEN MARKED AND RETURNED, LATE SUBMISSIONS OF THAT SAME PIECE OF WORK CANNOT BE ASSESSED.

Online Feedback via GradeMark

The Department of Politics and International Relations offers online feedback on written coursework via GradeMark (accessed via Blackboard). Failure to submit your
essay via Blackboard will mean that your coursework will not be graded and subsequently will not count towards your assessment for this module. GradeMark gives academic staff a full-featured digital environment for grading and commenting on student work. After grades are posted, students can access GradeMark to review comments and print or save a copy of the graded files. Further information about GradeMark can be found online: http://www.submit.ac.uk/resources/documentation/turnitin/sales/GradeMark_Overview.pdf

**Penalties for Late Submission of Coursework**

The University operates a two-tier penalty system for late submission of coursework and in-module assessment. This regulation applies to all students registered for an award irrespective of their level of study. All University coursework deadlines are scheduled between Monday and Thursday inclusive. Where possible, the submission day will coincide with the day the module classes are normally taught. However, the University does not allow submission deadlines to be set for Fridays.

If you submit your coursework late but within 24 hours or one working day of the specified deadline, 10% of the overall marks available for that element of assessment (i.e. 10%) will be deducted, as a penalty for late submission, except for work which obtains a mark in the range 50 – 59%, in which case the mark will be capped at the pass mark (50%). If you submit your coursework more than 24 hours or more than one working day after the specified deadline you will be given a mark of zero for the work in question.

Late work and any claim of Mitigating Circumstances relating to coursework must be submitted at the earliest opportunity to ensure as far as possible that the work can still be marked. You will normally have the right to submit coursework 10 working days after the original deadline. Once the work of other students has been marked and returned, late submissions of that same piece of work cannot be assessed.

**Referral Opportunities**

A referral in an item of assessment gives you the opportunity to resubmit coursework for the module. A referral opportunity (or re-sit) may be awarded to those students who have an overall module mark of greater than or equal to 40%. If you have been given the opportunity to resubmit coursework the work will normally be due to take place in July 2014.

**NB:** It is your responsibility to contact the registry/module leader to obtain details of the referral coursework deadlines and requirements.

**Plagiarism and Academic Honesty Information**

If carried out knowingly, cheating and plagiarism have the objectives of deceiving examiners and gaining an unfair advantage over other students. This is unethical. It also threatens the integrity of the assessment procedures and the value of the University’s academic awards.
While you are studying here your academic performance will be assessed on the basis of your own work. Anyone caught cheating through coursework assignments will be subject to formal investigation in accordance with Section 10 of the University Academic Regulations.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are not vulnerable to any allegation that you have breached the assessment regulations. Serious penalties are imposed on those who cheat. These may include failure in a module or an element of a module, suspension or exclusion from your course and withdrawal of academic credits awarded previously for modules which have been passed.

**What is Plagiarism?**

When you submit work for individual assessment, the work **must** be your own. If you have included sections of text from other sources without referencing them correctly, then you may be accused of plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as submission for assessment of material (written, visual or oral) originally produced by another person or persons, without acknowledgement, in such a way that the work could be assumed to be the student’s own. Plagiarism may involve the unattributed use of another person’s work, including: ideas, opinions, theory, facts, statistics, graphs, models, paintings, performance, computer code, drawings, quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words, or paraphrases of another person’s spoken or written words. Plagiarism covers both direct copying and copying or paraphrasing with only minor adjustments. You must keep a careful record of all the sources you use, including all internet material. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand correct referencing practices. If you use text or data or drawings or designs or artifacts without properly acknowledging who produced the material, then you are likely to be accused of plagiarism. Here are some simple dos and don’ts, to help you avoid plagiarism:
**Do**
- Include references to all sources at the point where they appear in your text, either via a direct reference or footnote.
- Always use quotation marks to indicate someone else’s ideas.
- Reference diagrams, tables and other forms of data.
- Ensure the work you submit for the module has not been previously submitted for other modules or assessments on your course.
- Include full website references which make clear exactly which page you referenced and the date you accessed the website.

| See: http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/sep/18/university-life-academic-cheating |
| Date accessed: 23/12/13 |

**Do not!**
- Rely on citing sources in your bibliography without making clear where they appear in your text.
- Take parts of other people’s sentences and incorporate them into your own writing without making clear that they are not your own words.
- Assume that plagiarism only refers to written words in prose narrative.
- Recycle assessments of text from previous assessments. This will also count as plagiarism and may result in you being referred for an academic offence.
- Simply cite the top-level page and expect your tutors to search for your source.

Students are also not permitted to re-present any assessment already submitted for one module as if for the first time assessment in another module. Double counting of assessed work is not normally allowed. If submitting work previously included in another assessment the student should attribute the section of text from the earlier work. This may be taken into account by the markers.

Always check with your Module Leader or Course Leader if you are unsure about subject-specific conventions concerning referencing and attribution (e.g. in design-based and creative subjects where there may be particular expectations about referencing and/or copyright). You can access a helpful tutorial about plagiarism in Blackboard. After signing in the tutorial can be accessed from any page in Blackboard by clicking on the ‘Skills Resources’ tab. Please consult the relevant Module Leader if you need any further advice.

**Plagiarism Detection**

To help eradicate plagiarism and thereby protect the value of your qualification all modules include the requirement that your coursework must be submitted electronically and checked by text-matching software. All coursework must be submitted via Blackboard.
Mitigating Circumstances

If illness or other unforeseen circumstances unavoidably prevent you from completing your assessed work, or submitting it on time, you can submit an application for Mitigating Circumstances (MCs) to be taken into consideration. If your MC claim is accepted it will result in one of the following outcomes:

- Your original mark will be reinstated (for late work submitted up to 10 working days after the published deadlines);
- You will be offered an opportunity to sit the assessment without penalty at the next available opportunity as a Deferral (in cases where you have missed an assessment entirely).

The University operates a fit-to-sit policy for assessment. This means that if you submit a piece of coursework or other time-limited assessment, you are deemed to have declared yourself fit to attempt the assessment and must accept the result of the assessment.

If you have missed a significant part of your studies due to ill health or other personal problems, you must speak to your Course Leader and Personal Tutor, to discuss whether you should suspend studies or request deferrals either for the individual assessments, or entire modules.

If you miss an assessment or submit work late, you should submit an application in writing using a Mitigating Circumstances claim form to your School Office, supported by original documentary evidence (e.g. a medical certificate), at the earliest available opportunity.

Mitigating Circumstances Boards meet throughout the year and it is in your best interests to submit your claim as quickly as possible, normally within one month of the circumstances occurring, as you will receive a decision on your claim much earlier and will be in a better position to plan your studies for the remainder of the year. Information about the final deadlines for claims is available via the Mitigating Circumstances website: http://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/your-studies/forms-and-procedures/mitigating-circumstances.

Please note that retrospective claims will not normally be considered, especially in cases where the claim is being made after the release of the results for the assessment in question.

If you do submit an MC claim, you should not assume that it is necessarily going to be accepted; it is your responsibility to make sure that you complete all assessment requirements in a module as far as possible.

It is very important that you read Section 11 of the Handbook of Academic Regulations, on Mitigating Circumstances, to find out what to do if you miss the deadline for any piece of work; in most cases it is crucial that you submit the work or participate in the assessment as soon as you possibly can. Late work will not normally be accepted if it is received more than ten working days after the original coursework deadline. If other students have already had their marked work returned, the same assignment cannot be marked once submitted late.
Your MC claim will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Board. The Mitigating Circumstances Board makes a decision on your claim that is later communicated to the Assessment Board which meets at the end of the year to formally ratify all of the results for your course. The Mitigating Circumstances Board’s decision will be communicated to you by email within 5 working days of the Board meeting and you will also be able to check SRSWeb to see which deferrals you have been granted.

The University-wide criteria by which claims will be judged are standardised for reasons of fairness and these are published in detail in Section 11 of the Handbook of Academic Regulations, which you should read before submitting any claim. The criteria for acceptance or rejection of an MC claim reflect work-based standards of conduct and performance, and only those circumstances which are demonstrably serious and likely to have affected your academic performance will be considered.