

A Guide to the Referral Process for Access to HE

All the information needed regarding the process for dealing with the referral process can be found online in the QAA Grading Scheme handbooks (C & E)

QAA Grading Scheme Handbook Sections C and E

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/access-to-he/access-to-he-resources/access-to-he-grading-scheme>

What you need to know:

1. What is a referral?

A referral is a moderator-approved additional attempt to complete a unit's learning outcomes and assessment criteria. A referral can only be granted if:

- A student originally handed in work on time and resubmitted but has still not met all the assessment criteria and learning outcomes.
- A student with a legitimate extension to a submission deadline, but failed to meet the assessment criteria and learning outcomes on submission and resubmission.
- A student whose original submission was late without an agreed extension and has not met all the assessment criteria and learning outcomes. In this situation, the student will not be granted a resubmission and will go straight to the referral process.

Requests for referrals will not normally be considered where the total credit value of the units which have already been achieved through referral or might be achieved as an outcome of a further referral is more than 15.

2. When to request a referral?

Referrals should be requested during the course as soon as the process is required.

Requests for referrals at the end of the course (for example, as the consequence of assessments taken in the last weeks of a course), the recommendation is taken to the Final Awards Board. Referrals at this stage of a course have implications for staffing, resources and results that need to be fully considered and carefully managed.

3. The referral process

Every referral request must be sent to the moderator for approval. No member of a centre can authorise a referral. Before requesting a referral, ensure that:

- The student's resubmission has failed to achieve all the learning outcomes for the work being referred
- Tutors have discussed with the student the best way for the student to progress
- The student has been informed that the referral is not automatically approved. The moderator grants a further opportunity to submit based on the evidence presented (during the course) or by the Final Awards Board (at the end of the course).

The centre will make available evidence to support the case for a referral, including:

- any extenuating circumstances affecting the individual student
- the particular assignment for which the student has been referred
- details of the achievement in the original submissions and resubmissions for the unit(s) in question (including any other assignments that contribute to the assessment of the unit which have been achieved)
- an indication as to the time required to complete the outstanding work

Once all supporting evidence has been presented to the moderator or the Final Awards Board if the request is at the end of the course, decisions about referrals must include the following:

- Whether a second resubmission is granted
- The nature and extent of the requirements for resubmission.
- The deadline for a second resubmission. The deadline will take into account:
 - the need to inform the student
 - the need to allow a limited but reasonable time for the student to complete the resubmission
 - the need to assess the resubmitted assignment(s)
 - where possible, re-assessment and achievement can be confirmed within a timescale to enable the student's results to be certificated at the same time as other students' results are certificated.
- Where responsibility will lie for confirming the result of resubmission, and the process for confirmation.

Decisions concerning recommendations for a referral must be made known to the student as soon as possible.

4. Outcomes from a referred resubmission

If a referred submission is successful and all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are achieved and confirmed, approval can be given for the award of credit. Where there have been no previous late submissions for the unit, grading can take place, and the unit grade is not capped.

If the referred submission is successful but results from a late submission without an agreed extension or extenuating circumstances, the unit grade will be capped at pass.

If a referred submission is unsuccessful, where all learning outcomes and assessment criteria have not been met, no credits or grades for the unit can be awarded.

Students whose referral is unsuccessful cannot be awarded the Access to HE Diploma. Such students will be awarded credits and grades for any level 3 (graded) units achieved.

5. Keeping track of referrals

The maximum number of credits awarded to a student derived from referrals should not exceed 15 credits. Therefore, the centre must keep a record of each referral. Referrals will also be subject to external moderation, and documents will be requested during sampling activities.

Action should be taken if evidence suggests that features of how a unit is written or an assessment designed lead to ambiguities or unreasonable difficulties for students in providing appropriate work for the assessment.

For information and review, a complete record of all referral requests and their outcomes must be provided for the Final Awards Board.

Contact Details

If you are unsure or have a specific query, please email the support team at access@gatewayqualifications.org.uk.