

Birmingham City University

Assignment Guide: Referencing, Deadlines & Marking Explained

A practical guide to how assignments actually work at Birmingham City University — referencing, submission, grading, and extenuating circumstances.

□ Reading time: 8–10 minutes

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Assignment Guide: Referencing, Deadlines & Marking Explained

If you're studying at Birmingham City University (BCU), you'll quickly notice that "how to do an assignment" depends heavily on which university you're at. BCU has its own referencing conventions, its own submission system, and a clearly graduated late-submission penalty scale that's worth understanding before — not after — you're up against a deadline.

This guide draws directly on BCU's published policies on referencing, submission, extenuating circumstances, academic misconduct, and marking, so you can approach your next assignment with clarity rather than guesswork.

Please note: This guide is for general educational purposes. Always check your own module guide, assessment brief, and Moodle

announcements, as requirements can vary between schools and courses. AssignPro Solution provides tutoring, proofreading, referencing guidance, and structured feedback — we do not write or complete assignments on behalf of students.

1. Why BCU-Specific Guidance Matters

Generic study-skills advice found online rarely matches what a BCU marker actually expects. BCU uses Harvard referencing built on the Cite Them Right conventions, submits coursework through Moodle with Turnitin integration, and applies a precisely graduated penalty scale for late work rather than a simple pass/fail cut-off. Knowing these specifics in advance is what separates a confident submission from an unnecessarily stressful one.

2. BCU's Assignment Support System at a Glance

Four systems govern almost everything about how you produce and submit coursework at BCU.

Figure 1: BCU's Assignment Support System

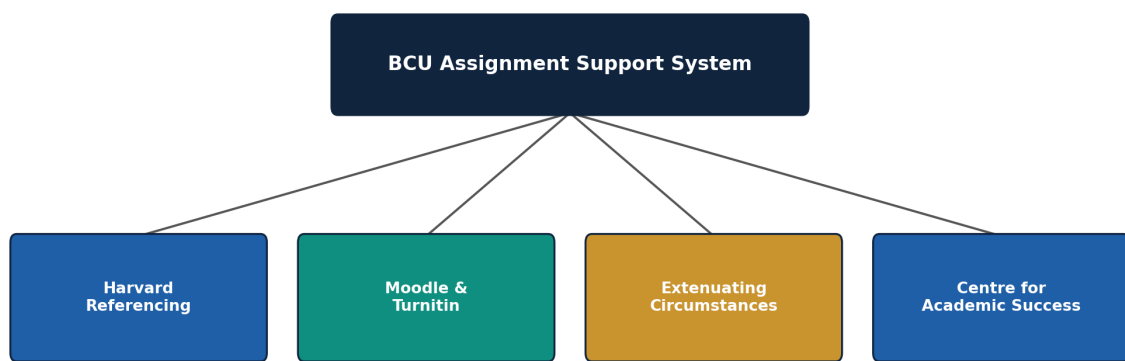


Figure 1: The core Birmingham City University systems that govern how assignments are referenced, submitted, supported, and resolved when problems arise.

System	What It Handles
Harvard Referencing	How sources are cited and listed, based on Cite Them Right conventions
Moodle and Turnitin	Submission, module materials, and originality checking
Extenuating Circumstances	Self-certification and evidenced claims for deadline extensions
Centre for Academic Success (CAS)	Workshops, drop-ins, and one-to-one tutorials

3. Referencing at BCU: Harvard

BCU's referencing system is **Harvard**, based on the widely used Cite Them Right conventions. The distinguishing feature of this style is its consistent use of parentheses — round brackets — around both publication dates and access dates in your citations.

Situation	What To Use
Most modules (default)	Harvard (Cite Them Right conventions)
Uncertain about a specific source type	Check the BCU Library referencing guide for worked examples
Subject-specific variations	Confirm with your module leader or assessment brief

⚠ **Common Mistake:** Copying a "Harvard" template from a generic online generator without checking it against BCU's own guide.

Punctuation, bracket placement, and author-ordering conventions vary between Harvard variants, and inconsistent referencing can cost you marks even when your sources themselves are correctly chosen.

The fix: Use the BCU Library's Harvard referencing pages directly, which include a dedicated "common questions" section addressing the errors students make most often.

4. Submitting Through Moodle

Coursework at BCU is submitted through **Moodle**, the university's virtual learning environment, where each module has its own page containing assessment briefs, module guides, teaching materials, and submission points. Where Turnitin is enabled on a submission point, your work is checked for text-matching against a wide database of sources, and BCU is explicit that a similarity report alone is never sufficient grounds for an academic misconduct finding — staff must review it carefully first.

Your official marks and student record are managed separately through **MySRS**, BCU's student record system, which is also where extenuating circumstances claims are submitted. Don't confuse the two: Moodle is where you submit work, MySRS is where you track your official results and make formal claims.

5. Late Submission: A Graduated Penalty Scale

Unlike universities with a single hard cut-off, BCU applies a clearly staged penalty scale, which is worth understanding in detail.

Figure 2: BCU's Late Submission Penalty Scale

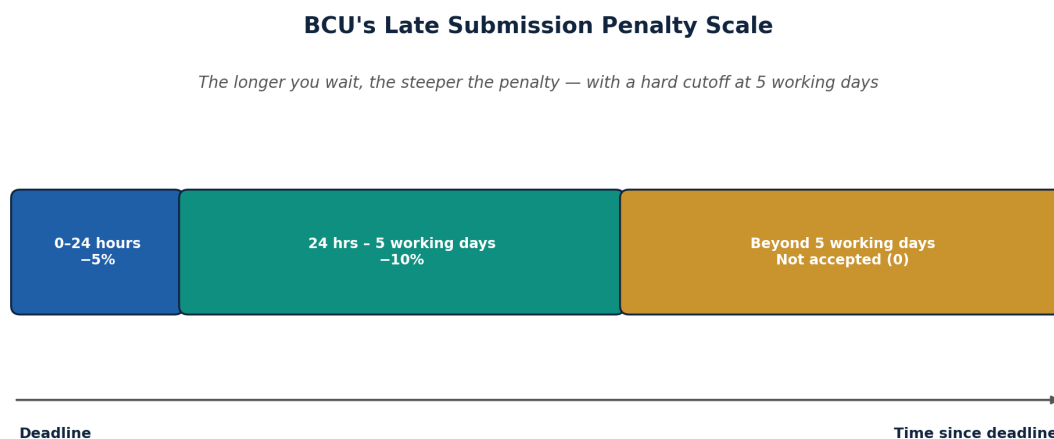


Figure 2: BCU's graduated late-submission penalty scale — penalties are set aside if you have an approved extension or extenuating circumstances claim.

Time Late	Penalty
1–24 hours after deadline	Mark reduced by 5 percentage points
24 hours to 5 working days after deadline	Mark reduced by 10 percentage points
More than 5 working days after deadline	Not accepted — recorded as 0 and a non-submission

Neither reduction will take your mark below the pass mark (40% undergraduate, 50% postgraduate) — but only if your underlying mark was a pass to begin with. Re-assessment attempts and group submissions follow stricter one-hour cut-offs, and pass/fail-marked components simply record a fail if submitted late. These penalties are automatically set aside if you have an approved extension or a successful extenuating circumstances claim covering the period.

6. Extenuating Circumstances and Self-Certification

BCU's current Extenuating Circumstances Procedure (effective from March 2025) gives you two routes, depending on how serious your situation is.

Route	Evidence Needed	What It Gives You
Self-certification	None required	Once per semester, a 5-working-day self-certification period that grants a 10-working-day extension on affected coursework
Full EC claim	Supporting evidence strongly recommended	Extensions or other adjustments for more serious or ongoing circumstances

Both routes are submitted through the Extenuating Circumstances area of your **MySRS** portal. Self-certification is designed to work like a workplace self-certified sick day — no questions asked, but limited to once per semester — while full claims are for situations that self-certification cannot reasonably cover.

❑ **Tip:** Because self-certification is capped at once per semester, don't use it casually for a minor inconvenience if you suspect you might need it later for something more disruptive.

7. Academic Misconduct at BCU

Plagiarism at BCU is defined as submitting assessed work that contains someone else's material in a way that presents it as your own — this includes copying from any source, failing to reference properly, using content from essay banks, or asking someone else to write your assessment for you.

Turnitin reports are used as supporting evidence, not automatic proof: BCU's policy is explicit that the university will not act on a Turnitin score alone without staff carefully reviewing the actual report first. Where misconduct is confirmed, a compulsory one-

to-one tutorial may be required, and failure to attend is taken into account if a further incident occurs later.

8. Module Credits and Degree Classification

A full-time undergraduate student at BCU normally takes modules totalling **120 credits per year**, split across two semesters of 60 credits each, at Levels 4, 5, and 6 (broadly Years 1 to 3).

Classification	Percentage Range
First Class	70% and above
2:1 (Upper Second)	60–69%
2:2 (Lower Second)	50–59%
Third Class	40–49%

Always check your own programme handbook for the specific weighting formula that applies to your course, as classification calculations can vary by award type.

9. Academic Skills Support: Centre for Academic Success

The **Centre for Academic Success (CAS)**, based in the Curzon Building, offers workshops on essay and report writing, referencing, dissertations, presentation skills, maths and statistics, computing, and project management. CAS also runs drop-in sessions with no booking required, one-to-one tutorials, and Student Life Coaches who can help with motivation and time management alongside your academic work.

10. A BCU Assignment Timeline

Figure 3: A Typical BCU Assignment Journey

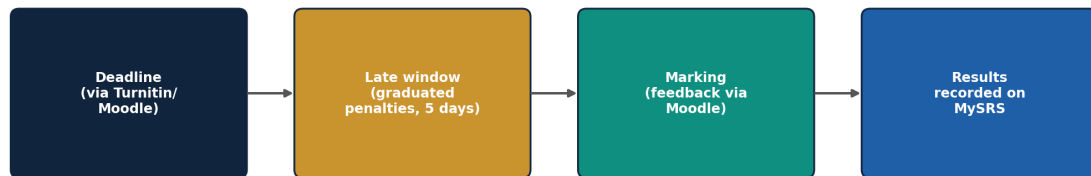


Figure 3: How a BCU assignment typically moves from deadline through to marked feedback and confirmed results.

Stage	What Happens
Deadline	Assignment due via Turnitin on Moodle
Late window	Graduated penalties apply up to 5 working days late
Marking	Feedback and provisional marks returned via Moodle
Results	Confirmed marks recorded on MySRS

11. Common BCU-Specific Mistakes to Avoid

Mistake	The Fix
Using a generic online "Harvard" generator	Check formatting against the BCU Library's own Harvard guide
Assuming any lateness is an automatic fail	Remember the graduated 5%/10% penalty scale applies first

Mistake	The Fix
Using self-certification for a minor issue	Save it in case you need it for something more serious later
Confusing Moodle with MySRS	Moodle is for submission; MySRS is for your official record and EC claims
Ignoring your Turnitin similarity report	Review it before the deadline and address any referencing gaps

12. A Self-Audit Checklist

- ☐ I have checked my reference list against BCU's Harvard referencing guide
- ☐ I know my submission point and deadline on Moodle
- ☐ I understand the graduated late-submission penalty scale
- ☐ I know whether self-certification or a full EC claim is right for my situation
- ☐ I have checked my Turnitin similarity report before the deadline
- ☐ I know where to find Centre for Academic Success workshops if I need extra support

13. Frequently Asked Questions

1. What referencing style does Birmingham City University use? Harvard referencing, based on the Cite Them Right conventions, with round brackets used for both publication and access dates.

2. Where do I submit my assignments at BCU? Through Moodle, BCU's virtual learning environment, using the submission point set up for your module.

3. What happens if I submit my coursework 1–24 hours late? Your mark is reduced by 5 percentage points, unless this would take a pass mark below the pass threshold.

4. What if I'm between 24 hours and 5 working days late? Your mark is reduced by 10 percentage points, subject to the same pass-mark protection.

5. What happens if I'm more than 5 working days late? Your work is not accepted and is recorded as 0 and a non-submission.

6. What is self-certification? A no-evidence-required route allowing one 5-working-day self-certification period per semester, granting a 10-working-day extension on affected coursework.

7. When should I make a full extenuating circumstances claim instead? When your situation is more serious or ongoing than self-certification can reasonably cover, and you can provide supporting evidence.

8. Where do I submit an extenuating circumstances claim? Through the Extenuating Circumstances area of your MySRS portal.

9. Will Turnitin alone get me in trouble for plagiarism? No — BCU requires staff to carefully review the actual similarity report before taking any action; a high score alone is not proof of misconduct.

10. How many credits do I need to study per year? A full-time undergraduate typically takes 120 credits per year, split across two 60-credit semesters.

11. How is my degree classification calculated? Using standard UK percentage bands (First 70%+, 2:1 60–69%, 2:2 50–59%, Third 40–49%), though you should confirm your programme's specific weighting formula.

12. Where can I get help with essay writing or referencing? The Centre for Academic Success (CAS) in the Curzon Building offers workshops, drop-ins, and one-to-one tutorials.

13. Can AssignPro Solution write my BCU assignment for me? No. We provide tutoring, proofreading, referencing guidance, and structured feedback to help you

improve your own work — we never write or complete assignments on a student's behalf.

14. Key Takeaways

- ☐ BCU uses Harvard referencing based on Cite Them Right conventions
- ☐ Submission happens through Moodle; your official record and EC claims are on MySRS
- ☐ Late submission follows a graduated scale: -5% within 24 hours, -10% up to 5 working days, then not accepted
- ☐ Self-certification gives a no-evidence extension once per semester; full EC claims cover more serious situations
- ☐ Turnitin reports are supporting evidence only — staff must review them carefully before acting
- ☐ A full-time year is 120 credits across Levels 4, 5, and 6
- ☐ The Centre for Academic Success offers free, practical academic skills support throughout your studies

Conclusion

Doing well at BCU isn't about following generic assignment advice — it's about understanding BCU's own systems for referencing, submission, and support, and using them deliberately. The policies above are drawn directly from BCU's published guidance, but they can change, so always check your current module guide and Moodle announcements for the latest requirements.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for educational and informational purposes only. AssignPro Solution offers tutoring, proofreading, referencing guidance, and academic feedback services, and does not write or complete assignments on behalf of

students. Always refer to official Birmingham City University sources for the most current policies.

Sources and Further Reading

Source	Topic
Harvard Referencing – BCU Library	Harvard referencing conventions
Extenuating Circumstances Procedure (March 2025)	Self-certification and full EC claims
Late Submission of Assessment Policy	Graduated late submission penalties
Academic Misconduct Procedure (September 2025)	Plagiarism and academic offences
Turnitin at BCU	Moodle and Turnitin submission
Academic Regulations: Undergraduate and Integrated Masters	Module credits and classification
Centre for Academic Success	Academic skills workshops and tutorials