

## St Stephen's House Over-Length Work Policy 2025/26

- (i) Students must declare an exact word count when submitting written assessments. Deliberately misrepresenting the length of an assessment will be treated as an act of dishonesty under the 'Academic Disciplinary Procedure (Common Award Students)' set out in the Academic Discipline Policy.
- (ii) There are no penalties for under-length work. Work that is significantly under-length is likely to be self-penalising.
- (iii) The penalties for over-length work specified below apply to all assessments for which there is a word limit.
- (iv) For assessments with a word limit of 1000 words or more there is a grace interval of 100 words. Students will not be penalised for exceeding the word limit by 1-100 words. If a student exceeds the word limit by more than 100 words, the grace interval is ignored when calculating the penalty to be applied (see vi below).
- (v) For assessments with a word limit of less than 1000 words there is no grace interval. In these cases any piece of work which exceeds the word count should be subject to the penalties set out below.
- (vi) The penalties for over-length work are as follows:
  - a. One percentage point will be deducted for every 50 words, or part thereof, over the limit indicated for the assessment (i.e. for 1-50 words over the limit, one percentage point is deducted, for 51-100 words, two percentage points are deducted etc.).
  - b. These penalties are calculated disregarding the grace interval (where this applies) if the student has exceeded the word count by more than 100 words.
  - c. E.g., for an assessment with a word limit of 1000 words or more:
    - i. 1-100 words over the limit: no penalty (grace interval applies);
    - ii. 101-150 words over the limit: deduction of 3 percentage points;
    - iii. 151-200 words over the limit: deduction of 4 percentage points.
  - d. In cases where the work is 50% over-length or less, if the application of a penalty for exceeding the word limit would reduce the mark of an assignment which would otherwise pass to a mark below pass level, then the mark for the assignment should instead be capped at pass level.'
  - e. When a piece of work is more than 50% over-length a mark of zero will be given.
- (vii) The word limit on assessments includes front matter (including title and abstracts), all the main text including tables, and all referencing (including footnotes).
- (viii) The word limit excludes headers, bibliography, graphs and images, and declarations. The word limit also excludes appendices. Appendices should only contain supporting material relevant to the main body of the assessed work and must not contain any additional analysis or argument.

*Revised July 2025*