

Glossary of Common University Terms

Not sure what a "module," "EC," or "credit" actually means? You're not alone. Here's a quick guide to some terms you might come across during your time at Solent.

Academic Advisor / Personal Tutor

A staff member who supports your academic progress and personal development (e.g. someone you can go to if you're struggling).

Assessment / Assignment

The work you complete to be graded, such as essays, reports, exams, or presentations.

Assessment Brief

The official instructions for your assignment — what to do, how it will be marked, and the learning outcomes.

Credits (CATS)

Points you earn by passing modules. Each year of full-time undergraduate study = **120 credits** (e.g. most modules = 20 credits).

Course Leader / Programme Leader

The main academic contact responsible for your course.

Coursework

Assignments completed during the semester (e.g. essays, portfolios, lab reports).

Deferral

An approved chance to take an assessment later, without penalty (usually through Extenuating Circumstances).

Dissertation / Final Project

A large, independent piece of work in your final year (e.g. a long essay, research project, or creative piece).

Extenuating Circumstances (ECs)

Serious, unexpected issues (like illness or family problems) that may affect your ability to complete assessments.

Feedback

Comments from tutors on your work, explaining what you did well and how to improve. Feedback can be written, verbal (in class, meetings, or recordings), or notes on your assignments.

Formative Assessment

Practice work or activities that help you prepare for final (summative) assessments. They don't count towards your grade but often include informal feedback (e.g. quick tutor comments or class discussions).

Lecture

A large teaching session where a lecturer presents key ideas and information.

Learning Outcomes

Statements that describe what you should know or be able to do by the end of a module.

Library / LibGuides

Resources (books, journals, databases, and online guides) that support your studies, plus help from Library staff.

LinkedIn Learning

Free access to thousands of video tutorials (e.g. time management, study skills, or subject-specific software).

Marking Criteria

The standards used to grade your work (e.g. structure, critical analysis, evidence).

Module

A block of study on a specific topic (e.g. "Introduction to Psychology"). You must pass all modules to complete your degree.

Office Hours

Set times when lecturers are available for one-to-one support.

Plagiarism / Academic Misconduct

Using someone else's work or ideas without proper referencing. This is taken seriously.

Progression

Moving on to the next stage of your course (e.g. Year 1 to Year 2), based on passing enough credits.

Referencing

Acknowledging the sources you've used in your work (e.g. Harvard, APA).

Referral

A second attempt at an assessment you failed. The grade is capped at the pass mark.

Resit

Any second attempt at an assessment (can be a referral or a deferral).

Seminar

A smaller, interactive class where you discuss ideas, often linked to lectures.

SOL (Solent Online Learning)

The online platform where you access course materials, submit assessments, and see feedback.

Student Hub

The central place for academic and personal support.

Summative Assessment

Formal assessments that count towards your final grade (e.g. essays, exams, projects).

Suspension of Studies

A formal break from your studies, usually lasting up to a year.

Timetable

Your schedule of classes, lectures, and seminars (online or in print).

Transcript

An official record of the modules you've studied and the grades you've achieved.

Tutorial

A one-to-one or small group session with a tutor for tailored support.

VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)

An online system (e.g. SOL) where you access teaching materials, upload work, and view grades/feedback.