

Ts and Cs

Note, throughout this document, the Online Astronomy Society Academy is referred to as OASA

Tutor = Course adviser

Learner = student who will be taking the course

Last updated: 14/02/2024

Amendments, updates to exam centre policy and OASA role as a provider

Agreement between the Online Astronomy Society Academy (OASA) and the Learner

Role of Online Astronomy Society Academy,

We are education providers only. Our role is to provide the material and guidance to enable the student to sit their exams. We hold no formal relationship with any third parties including (but not limited to) publishers, exam centres, or Pearsons Edexcel themselves. As such we cannot be held responsible for any consequences resulting from change of policy or management (or both) which may impact the end point delivery of the course.

Mandatory notice – Students should pay special attention to the requirements of the Observational Tasks, these NEED to be completed and signed off by your course adviser. You cannot sit the exams without it.

Also

1. We as an academy will provide and be responsible for
 - A. Support of the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)
 - B. Providing of a suitably knowledgeable / experienced tutor
 - C. Provision of the VLE
 - D. Provision of materials including
 1. Electronic copy of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Astronomy Textbook
 2. Worksheets
 3. Study Planner
 4. Other material as required and supplied
 5. Hardcopy of textbook posted
 - 6- If the learner already has a copy, no discount will be offered as the book comes as part of the package
2. OASA will also be responsible for the enrolment of the learner but the course adviser will be the main point of contact for the student. The main role of the course adviser will be
 - a) the main point of contact for their learner
 - b) the main provider of guidance for their learner
 - c) Delivery is their liability we (OASA) are only responsible for the VLE

- g) the tutor is responsible for the signing off of all observational tasks

3. **The student is required to**

- a. Follow the agreed study planner as outlined by the tutor
 - b. Download and use the study material as prescribed.
 - c. Use the recommended course resources.
 - d. Expected to login to the VLE as frequently as possible to check for updates.
 - e. Manage their study and pastoral activities accordingly to cope with the demands of the GCSE Astronomy course
 - f. To ensure they are capable of completing the course based on information provided as refunds cannot be made otherwise.
 - g. To seek peer or academic advice as appropriate on topics they don't understand.
 - i. OASA is NOT responsible for student failure and / or not achieving the desired GCSE grade
 - j. Contact the course adviser to discuss any problems and ensure observational tasks are being carried out
 - k. To complete the final written exam.
 - l. Seek assistance and advice from their tutor as EARLY as possible in the event of any problems.
- J. The OASA tends to cascade information down via the newsletter and the course adviser, please regularly check your spam folder.

The OASA Certificate in Astronomy may be awarded in the event that the student chooses not to complete the GCSE Astronomy coursework and exam (but completed the course). Usually, the student should complete both observational tasks and pass a mock exam they take at their leisure.

4. Exam Centres and Fees

The OASA no longer includes cost of exam fees in their course fees. This is because we no longer deal with the one centre.

Also, though we do have a relationship with exam centres and can assist with arranging the final exam, it is up to the candidate to ensure they can sit the exam with their chosen examination centre. OASA will provide tuition and materials but is not responsible and accepts no liability for exam centres. Candidates are welcome to nominate their own exam centre. All fees for centre and exam fees are payable by the candidate, unless otherwise previously arranged. All admin involved with exam entry is the responsibility of the student, not the academy (tutor).

5. Use of material

It is reminded that the 'GCSE Astronomy: A guide for pupils and teachers' textbook is copyrighted material, as such is solely for the use of the students and their course adviser. As such learners are reminded that downloading of the material is permitted for use of study only and may not be distributed to third parties without prior agreement, however the publication can be read online, and pages printed.

In the event of problems with the VLE, please advise the OASA Support team, managed by Alastair Leith who will promptly investigate and implement back up procedures.

The contacts for this project are.

VLE Support and Project Manager and Coordinator

Alastair Leith, email: info@onlineastronomycourses.co.uk

Course Manager and Consultant

Dr Nigel Marshall (contact details to be provided).

Failed payments.

The OASA collects an admin fee so course advisers can be paid, and materials can be sent out. This must be paid in advance along with the direct debit before logging in details can be sent to the learner.

The learner then has a 14-day cooling offer period where they may request a refund and the deletion of their details.

A refund will ONLY be issued on the condition materials are returned to the Publisher (at the learner's expense) and arrive in mint condition such that they can be sent to another learner. Otherwise, the cost of the materials will be deducted from the final refund.

We use GoCardless to collect payments from our learners. As with any payment gateway, they charge for each payment they collect. This also includes those they FAIL to collect. We will permit one failed collection before we retry. If the second attempt fails, the support for the learner will stop and a payment of £10 will be payable to resume (in addition to the monthly subscription). This may sound excessive, but it costs us in both time and fines for failed payments. Please ensure monies are available at time of debit collection.

6. Cancellation

We all know the difficulty parents/ guardians have which is why we have moved from a wholly flat fee arrangement to also offer an instalment (subscription based) payment plan. We have done this to:

- a) Make the course more accessible to learners who could not otherwise afford the initial course fee.
- b) Ensure everyone gets the same kind of support for the same monies.

Cancellation of the flat fee option

Learners who choose to pay the full amount for the first year (1 year accelerated course), may cancel within 14 days of signing up (14 days begins from the day enrolment details are sent out, not from initial payment). Only during this time is it possible to receive a full refund, provided course materials are

returned to the publisher (at the learner's expense) and arrive in the mint condition they were sent. Otherwise, the cost of the materials will be forfeit from the refund.

Cancellation of the instalments.

As with payment the accelerated one off payment package, learners have a 14 day cooling off period (starting from the day logging in details are sent out where a learner may cancel. As always a full refund will only be given in the event the learner returns the material to the publisher (at their own expense) and it arrives in the condition they were sent. Otherwise the cost of the materials will be deducted from the refund.

As with any contract you might take out be it with a gym or mobile phone contract, we need to apply minimum sign-up terms to our learners. These may vary depending on the package you sign up to.

We believe in a transparent fair way of doing business. That's why our customers are offered two options before signing up

To pay the full amount up front

OR to pay by instalments.

Learners have a 14-day cooling off period from the time their logging in details are emailed to them to ask for a refund. (We do not think it's fair to start the clock from initial payment as we do say there could be a delay between payment and adding the learner. If details are sent after 5pm, the 14 day countdown begins the following day. (this applies to ALL our payment plans)

Once the 14-day period passes, the learner must then pay each of the instalments of the package they have signed up to, or the final balance owed at the time cancellation is desired.

In the even a learner (or parent/ guardian) wishes to cancel, the full balance of the plan will be payable. This amount will be advised on receipt of email.

Please note learners who simply cancel without notice or prior agreement, will be emailed to ask if everything is OK (we accept there can be technical issues with banks say). In the event you reply wishing to cancel, you will be invoiced for the outstanding balance of the account and details removed from the system after payment with the direct debit is cancelled.

For learners who choose to ignore the first communication, a second email will be sent with a week for the learner to reply. Failure to reply or pay the outstanding balance will result in a final email being sent outlining the outstanding monies due and account details with which to pay along with a 2 week notice of the account being passed to a debt collector who will be instructed to recover outstanding monies. This will automatically add a further £75 to the outstanding balance (we do not like doing this, but it's a risk for us to trust our learners to fulfil their commitments to us as they trust us to deliver to them). Many have cancelled with no notice, costing us money. So now this is in place.

If you have difficulty paying, please get in touch, we are not unreasonable.

9. Course Access

Online Astronomy Society Academy provides the VLE 24/7 for access to its tutors and students. It is not hosted by themselves but a third party. Our support agreement with them is by email only. As such we may only be able to resolve any third-party issues as quickly as they are able to respond. Further to this if any update results in the fact that the main VLE fails we will do our best to provide access to another (near as

identical environment) with login details as soon as possible (this would be seen by us as an urgent matter and dealt with at earliest opportunity).

OASA Certificate of Astronomy

Will be provided electronically in the event that the student fore fills all that is required to earn a GCSE in Astronomy without taking the final exam. In the event the student completes all required work and passes their GCSE exam they will earn a GCSE in Astronomy and no OASA Certificate of Astronomy will be earned.

Finally, in agreeing to accept the terms and conditions the student (and where applicable the parent/ guardian) has been made aware of all pre requisites and requirements of the course. They will be aware of who their tutor will be and where and if any travel would be required for the completed of supervised projects and the final exam.

Complaints procedure

As an academy we take the views of our students very seriously indeed. If you feel for any reason, the need to complain about either the course, tutor, or otherwise then in the first instance please speak to your tutor. In the event where you do not feel you can speak to the tutor then please speak to the course manager whose email can be obtained either directly from him or OASA itself. If the complaint is seen as being serious enough it will be escalated to the Academy director, Alastair Steele-Leith where an investigation will be carried out as required.

Safeguarding

We take the safety of all adults and children very seriously indeed. Although the course environment is a very safe and secure platform where it is impossible for unauthorised personnel to gain access, we cannot take responsibility for any student giving their access to another party. We can however offer swift response in event of any problems or concerns. We can also assure parents/ students/ guardians that no part of the VLE appears on any search engine searches and all email are treated in strictest confidence. We do however request that where appropriate students should be accompanied by an adult to any supervised practical writeup and the final examination. It goes without saying that supervision may be required by the parent / guardian if a student is required to visit a dark site to collect data.

14 days cooling off period.

The learner has 14 days cooling off period where we can refund the admin fee. However please note, any materials will need to be returned to the publisher in the condition they arrived in. In the event the publisher cannot resell the material to another learner, the cost of £10 will be deducted.

No refund will be offered once the debit payments are made. However, as discussed, in event of cancellation, an email will be sent asking if this was a mistake (that happens!) or in the event it was deliberate, learner details will be deleted after one month of previous payment. Or immediately if the latest payment failed for some reason.

Please ensure you have read and are happy with these terms before signing up to any of the GCSE Astronomy payment options. As any enrolment will be treated as though the learner has read and

understood these. A copy is available to download from the website and will be sent with joining instructions.