



Policy on Remote Examinations

Document control table

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Policy development steps

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4. Consultation for this policy	
5. Related procedures/guidance	Digital Learning Environment policy (2020)
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1. Introduction and Definitions

- 1.1. This policy applies to all examinations which take place remotely.
- 1.2. In this context 'Remotely' is defined as examinations which are not campus based, meaning that they do not take place in a face to face format, either within University buildings, premises hired for assessments or overseas venues engaged by the University for the purpose of examinations.
- 1.3. All exams which are campus based (either on the UoL campus or other premises engaged by the University for this purpose) are governed by [Senate Regulation 8](#).
- 1.4. In this context 'remote examinations' may include but are not limited to open book or take home examinations, standard time limited examinations and time limited examinations taken within a defined submission window. Assessments which are deemed coursework or are otherwise not intended to be undertaken under examination conditions are not within the scope of this policy.
- 1.5. The logistical operation of remote examinations will be managed at School level.
- 1.6. Sections 1-11 of this guidance apply to all remote examinations. Section 12 of this guidance applies only to where remote examinations are required to be invigilated (proctored). As the

University does not currently operate a corporate system for online proctoring any requests for invigilation of remote examinations should be raised initially to the Quality Office, who will facilitate discussions with relevant stakeholders.

2. Information for Students

- 2.1. The format of assessment elements within modules should be set out to students both in module literature (module specification) and on the relevant Blackboard site. This should specify where any assessment is deemed an examination, whether this takes place on campus or remotely and the broad format for the examination including the assessment window (see section 7 below). Where there is a requirement for a remote examination to be invigilated/proctored (see section 12 below) this should also be specified.
- 2.2. The University standard technical requirements for blended learning and assessment are set out on the Ignite learning guide for students:
<https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/Digital-Learning/SitePages/IT-equipment-for-digital-learning.aspx>
- 2.3. Assessment events and processes for the majority of students will take place using the core tools that are available to all from within the University's Digital Learning Environment for off-campus use. In accordance with the DLE Policy, use of any periphery tools or other 3rd party applications for formative and summative assessment is the responsibility of those schools, who are responsible for providing local guidance and technical support for their use. .

3. Registering for Remote Exams

- 3.1. Students will be automatically registered for examinations on the basis of their module selections.

4. Examination Timetable

- 4.1. Remote examinations may be held within the published examination periods in January, May and July/August, but may also be held outside of these windows at the discretion of academic schools. Remote examinations will not be held outside of the term dates for the programme.
- 4.2. Academic schools will co-ordinate the examination timetables for assessments within the School. Students should be informed of the date and time of their examination at least 4 weeks in advance.
- 4.3. Where programmes include modules drawn from more than one school the schools in question should liaise to avoid clashes of assessment windows. Where schools or subject areas have large volumes of examinations within a particular period, consideration should be given to alternative means of organising the examination timetable, such as releasing assessments in greater bulk and allowing a longer period for students to complete the total volume of assessment.
- 4.4. The method of publication of the examination timetable will be managed at school level. Timetables will be published on Blackboard as standard. Schools may wish to surface examination through personal calendars but this is likely to depend on the format of the assessment. Advice on surfacing events locally is available from the [Timetabling and Room Bookings team](#).

- 4.5. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the examinations that they are due to undertake and check the timetables issued by their schools. Students should inform their schools as soon as possible if they believe that they have not been entered for the correct examinations or if there appear to be any clashes. Where a student is required to undertake time-limited examinations with shorter assessment windows resulting in clashes the schools will resolve these wherever possible.
- 4.6. Misreading the examination timetable will not be accepted as a mitigating circumstance.
- 4.7. Examination times will be listed using UK time (either UST or BST). Students who may be studying remotely are responsible for ensuring that they familiarise themselves with the relevant assessment windows with reference to the time zone in which they will be undertaking the assessment.
- 4.8. Special arrangements cannot be made to accommodate students' personal preferences, unless these arise from specific religious requirements identified by the student at the beginning of the academic year. The use of assessment windows, see section 7 below, ensures that all assessments are inclusive of students circumstances, and special arrangements will only be considered where it can be evidenced that the assessment window provided does not take appropriate account of religious requirements. Where remote assessments use shorter time windows consideration must be given to arranging these to ensure that they take account of religious observance.

5. Production of Examination Papers

- 5.1. Examination papers should be produced in line with the standard University guidelines and pro-forma, unless dispensation has been given via the Exams Office. The standard examination paper format is set out in Appendix 1.
- 5.2. Examination papers should be drafted in sufficient time to complete internal review and, where required, review by External Examiners. Schools should, as a minimum, have examination papers drafted and approved through all relevant internal and external mechanisms one month before the commencement of the relevant examination period (or the date of the examination where this is outside of an examination period). Papers should be submitted to the Examinations Office following approval. This is for the purpose of a central record and audit. The Examinations Office will not co-ordinate or support remote examination processes.
- 5.3. Where schools are using remote timed examinations with a submission window of less than 24 hours they are strongly encouraged to consider the use of a large pool of questions from which a randomised subset can be used for individual students. Where a pool of questions is used the pool and randomisation process should both be reviewed to ensure that the intended learning outcomes of the assessment can be reliably and consistently met by any combination. There may be subject areas where, for disciplinary or professional accreditation reasons, this approach may not be possible.

6. Security of Exam papers

- 6.1. Academic Schools are responsible for the security of examination papers during the process of development and prior to their release to students, see appendix 2

- 6.2. In the process of drafting examination papers, schools should follow the principles set out in Appendix 1.
- 6.3. A copy of the Examination paper for every examination should be retained by the School to which the relevant module belongs. These should be stored on the x:drive and be password protected. The final version of the examination paper must be submitted to the Examinations Office x:drive for a central record.

7. Assessment windows

- 7.1. The University's Assessment Guidelines for 2020/21 require that all assessment delivered remotely should be designed to be accessible and inclusive. All remote examinations will as standard have a minimum submission window of 24 hours other than where a dispensation has been approved under 7.3 – 7.4 below. There is no University defined maximum period, but in defining assessment windows schools should take account of an appropriate balance between allowing students to manage their work and ensuring overall academic standards.
- 7.2. The 24-hour assessment window does not denote that each assessment should take 24 hours to complete. Schools should inform students of the intended duration of the examination and how much time a student should expect to spend on the assessment in question.
- 7.3. Academic Schools may apply for an assessment window of less than 24 hours for assessments where this may be required for reasons of professional accreditation or other discipline specific reasons. In each case, Schools will be required to justify the reason for the request and address how accessibility and inclusivity will be ensured through the revised assessment window. Any such requests should also consider where additional time may be required for technical procedures such as downloading of examinations and uploading of scripts.
- 7.4. All requests for an assessment window of less than 24 hours should be made in line with the requirements and template in the [Assessment Windows – Academic Year 2020/21 guidance](#), and will require approval by the College Dean of Education. All approved requests will be recorded in the Quality Office.
- 7.5. Where a shorter assessment window is approved, schools should make clear to students the duration of the intended assessment. This should specify whether the assessment should occupy the whole submission window, or where the intended duration is less than the assessment window provided.

8. Alternative arrangements

- 8.1. Students are eligible for equivalent adjustments within remote examinations, where these are possible, if they have a declared disability, or other condition confirmed by the AccessAbility Centre that means that they are eligible for alternative arrangements for campus-based examinations.,.
- 8.2. Where students are eligible for additional time or rest breaks in examinations these would typically be accounted for within a 24 hour assessment window, but it is recognised that disabled students may be disproportionately impacted by the operation of remote assessment and require more time to complete assessment. On this basis where an assessment uses a 24 hour assessment window and a disabled student is eligible for extra time they should be encouraged to submit within the standard window, but if required can submit late and penalties should not be applied until the student exceeds their proportionate extra time

allowance. For example, if a student is eligible for 25% extra time on a 24 hour window, late penalties should be waived until 6 hours after the deadline has expired.

- 8.3. Adjustments must be confirmed in advance and cannot be retrospectively put in place after the relevant assessment window has commenced.
- 8.4. Where an examination is operating a less than 24 hour submission window (or a timed examination within a wider window) the relevant School will be required as part of the approval process to confirm, in liaison with the AccessAbility Centre where required, if there is doubt about the way in which additional time or rest breaks will be accommodated for students who are eligible.
- 8.5. Under 8.4 as standard, where a student who is eligible for extra examination time or rest breaks is undertaking any time limited assessment, the extra time and rest break allowance should be added onto the total amount of time for the examination. This is in addition to any further time that all students may be allotted for downloading and uploading papers. Details are provided in the Advice to Schools on Alternative Arrangements and advice on the application of extra time and rest breaks is available from the AccessAbility Centre.
- 8.6. Students may be eligible for a range of other alternative arrangements in campus based examinations, such as readers or scribes. In the majority of cases these cannot be directly replicated in remote examinations but broadly equivalent provision is available through software that students in those cases will be familiar with. Where students are eligible for other forms of alternative examination arrangements, schools should follow the guidance in Appendix 3, with further advice from the AccessAbility Centre as may be required.

9. Academic Integrity

- 9.1. Remote examinations are subject to the same expectations with regard to academic integrity as those undertaken on campus. The work submitted by students must be entirely their own and may not use answers or content provided wholly or in part by others. Students should also not share any information or discuss any aspect of the examination questions with others during the assessment window for the examination.
- 9.2. Remote, non-invigilated examinations will by their nature adopt a different format from those undertaken in closed examination conditions in recognition of the potential for collusion or other forms of academic misconduct. The University provides [guidance for designing examinations to be sat in a remote format](#), which includes an emphasis where possible upon the application of knowledge and problem solving over more standard recall of material. Schools are required to have reference to these principles when designing assessment as effective assessment design is the basis of creating an environment which promotes academic integrity.
- 9.3. Schools engage their External Examiners in the assessment setting process as standard. With regard to remote assessment schools should specifically ask the External Examiner to comment on the format and design of the assessment in terms of minimising the potential for collusion whilst still testing learning outcomes.
- 9.4. Senate Regulation 11 sets out the definition of academic misconduct. In relation to examinations this may include:

- Cheating in written examinations, including copying from the examination script of another candidate, obtaining improper assistance from another person or, where relevant, accessing unauthorised materials or devices within an examination
 - Allowing another person to impersonate them in an examination or impersonating another student
 - Copying work from or using work written by another person, including published work and online sources (plagiarism)
 - Paying another person to undertake work, buying work from an 'essay mill' or any other equivalent service
 - Allowing another person to copy their work
 - Pretending ownership of someone else's ideas
 - Submitting for assessment work that has previously been submitted for another assessment (self-plagiarism)
 - Actively cooperating with other students to jointly produce work where there is a requirement that it is produced independently (collusion)
- 9.5. The University operates a zero tolerance policy with respect to cheating in any form of examination. Where the University considers that there is evidence of cheating such as collusion or plagiarism this will be referred for consideration under the Regulations for Student Conduct.
- 9.6. Responsibility for reviewing examination scripts for evidence of plagiarism or collusion rests with the academic marking and moderation team. Where plagiarism or collusion is suspected this should be raised to the School Plagiarism Officer who will follow the processes and sanctions for this form of misconduct set out in Senate Regulation 11.
- 9.7. Where an unseen remote examination is operating under timed or otherwise restricted conditions and a student is found to have committed an examination offence, this will be raised to the School Plagiarism Officer who will follow the processes and sanctions for examination offences set out in Senate Regulation 11.
- 9.8. In certain disciplines committing an offence of academic integrity may also represent an issue for consideration under Fitness to Practise processes and, if confirmed, would be referred to that process after the completion of processes under Senate Regulation 11.
- 10. Operation of Examinations**
- 10.1. Individual schools will inform their students of the arrangements for the release of remote examinations. Students should have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the methods of remote examination within their school before undertaken the assessments.
- 10.2. All schools should ensure that students are aware of the requirements with regard to academic integrity set out in this policy. Ahead of each examination period (or ahead of individual exams where this takes place outside of the main examination periods) schools should circulate the standard statement set out in Appendix 4 to all students undertaking remote examinations.

- 10.3. Papers will be released to students at the start of the assessment window and will typically be available for students to download at any point within the assessment window. Where an examination operates an alternative format, for example a limited period to complete an assessment once the paper is downloaded, this will be approved via the mechanism set out in 7.3 – 7.4 above.
- 10.4. Where an examination is deemed 'open book' students will be able to access their study notes, other materials and devices such as calculators while undertaking the examination. Where an examination is unseen or otherwise operates under restrictions with regard to permitted materials (for example due to Professional Body requirements) this will be specified to students in advance of the assessment. Such assessments may be subject to invigilation/proctoring, the processes for which are set out below.
- 10.5. Schools will inform students how to submit their examined work. Depending on the format of the examination, submissions may be subject to similarity and other checks for plagiarism. There may be formats where it is not possible to do so, for example hand written examinations or those focussing upon the application of formula or calculation.
- 10.6. As standard, examination submissions may be either word processed or handwritten and scanned or photographed. Where there are particular requirements for the format of an examination script these should be notified to students at least 2 weeks in advance of the assessment. Where examinations are handwritten and then scanned or photographed, students should as standard be required to write on A4 lined paper.

11. Technical disruption

- 11.1. Students are expected to ensure that they have in place appropriate IT resources and internet access to be able to study their programme and undertake assessment, in line with the standard technical specification set out above. Where a student does not have appropriate access the University has a limited supply of IT equipment available to loan. Some support is available for students through the University for securing appropriate IT access to undertake remote assessment.
- 11.2. Where a student has not successfully sourced appropriate IT and internet access in advance of the scheduled examination to undertake this assessment this will not be considered a mitigating circumstance, unless a student can demonstrate that it was genuinely not possible for them to obtain in advance via the above mechanisms.
- 11.3. Where a student has sourced appropriate access in advance but experiences unforeseen disruption during the assessment period which affects their ability to complete the assessment, they should contact the school examination invigilator immediately for assistance. Invigilators should respond as soon as possible and students should be granted the lost time to complete the assessment. Where disruption cannot be overcome, students may submit a claim for mitigating circumstances, setting out the impact that this had on their assessment attempt.

12. Invigilation / Proctoring

- 12.1. Under certain circumstances, such as the requirements of Professional Bodies, it may be necessary for remote examinations to be invigilated (proctored).

- 12.2. The use of time limited and remote proctored examinations will be subject to approval by the College Dean of Education. The University does not operate a corporate IT solution for remote proctoring and therefore individual requests for remote proctoring should be first raised with the Quality Office, who can advise.

Appendix 1: Format of Examination Papers

All Examination Paper cover sheets should use the University pro-forma

Instructions for completing the pro forma are as follows:

- Insert the Module Code in the top right hand box (e.g. EC1001, LW2022).
- Insert which candidates the paper is for using the drop down box (e.g. All Candidates, 2020/21 Candidates Only, 2019/20 Candidates Only and so on). Please ensure that question papers are not marked as All Candidates if a separate paper is required for resit students to ensure that the correct paper is distributed to students.
- Insert the School setting the examination paper.
- Type the Module Number and Module Title in block capitals (e.g. EC1001 MACROECONOMICS I). If there is a variant of a paper for a specific student or group of students, these details should be incorporated in the title of the special paper (e.g. LW2022 EMPLOYMENT LAW - Resit without Residence candidates only).
- Insert the Assessment Window and type the Duration written as words, e.g. Three Hours. Where reading time is allowed, this should be incorporated as follows, Three Hours (plus 15 minutes reading time). This should represent the amount of time that student should be expected to spend on the examination, rather than the whole assessment window. This expectation regarding the actual time that should be required for the assessment should be made clear to students.
- Insert the Number of Pages and the Number of Questions contained in the paper in the relevant boxes.
- Type the Instructions to Candidates. Please be as explicit as necessary and include essential points, such as the number of questions to be answered, the requirement to use separate files or documents for different sections/questions.
- State if the use of Calculators should be used for the examination paper, using the drop down box.
- Ensure that the page numbers, where used match the previous reference to Number of Pages

Layout of Question Paper

- All papers undertaken electronically must be Accessibility compliance (WCAG 2.0)
- All examination question papers should be produced using font Arial or Verdana, font size 12.
- A margin of approx. 1.5cm must be left at both sides and at the foot of each page.
- The Question Number should stand in the margin outside the first and subsequent lines of the question.
- No questions should be included on the first page (pro forma) of the question paper.
- Please add 'END OF PAPER' at the end of the paper (Font Size 16).

Appendix 2: Security of Examination Papers

To ensure the security of examination question papers, the following procedures are recommended:

- All staff involved in the preparation of examination question papers must ensure that students are not able to see or gain access, either accidentally or deliberately, to examination question papers or other related materials.
- The preparation of examination papers should take place wherever possible on a UoL laptop or PC accessed through a confidential username and password. Where this is not possible draft papers may be edited using a personal device, but must not be saved to personal devices and should be saved to UoL remote storage, or using the virtual desktop function.
- Final examination papers should not be stored on 'local' drives but rather on the Z: or X: drives which can be accessed remotely via the Virtual Private Network (VPN). Ensure that where the X: drive is used, the access permissions are set correctly. To do this, consult the person in your department responsible for managing this or IT Services). Where it is not possible for staff to access the x:drive remotely schools should use Microsoft Teams with appropriate permissions controls.
- Examination question papers must be encrypted using a strong encryption method such as that provided by Microsoft Word.
- Examination question papers should not be sent on portable storage devices such as CDs, flash drives, etc. Documents may be sent via email as long as they are password encrypted, and the password is sent via separate message.
- Care must be taken when disposing of earlier versions of unwanted copies of examination question papers. As above, no versions should be stored on personal devices. Hard copies must be destroyed by confidential shredding.
- Where there is any suspected or actual breach of security, all examination papers affected must be re-written.
- The final version of the examination paper for each remote examination should be submitted to the secure area on the x:drive. Schools should contact exams@le.ac.uk for permissions to be granted. All relevant materials for the assessment should be submitted with the paper. NOTE: this is for the purposes of central record keeping only, the Examinations Office will not be supporting or co-ordinating remote examinations.

Appendix 3: Guidance on alternative arrangements for students

Please see section 8 of the Policy on Remote Examinations for guidance regarding extra time and rest breaks within remote examinations.

The following guidance is provided for other forms of alternative arrangements. Schools should contact the AccessAbility Centre for further advice on arrangements for individual students.

Readers

- a. It will likely be the case that a reader will not be necessary because students would adopt the strategies they use when they complete coursework and they are not supplied with a reader for coursework assessments.
- b. Students who usually use a screen reader such as *Texthelp Read and Write* or *Claro* could use this software to read out the assessments set. For students who do not have this kind of software there is a reader in the online version of MS Word called *Immersive Reader*.

Scribes

- c. Students may usually use a dictation package such as *Dragon Dictate Naturally Speaking* to replace the scribe function. A small number of students use this software to take an exam in a formal setting.
- d. Students could also use *Dictate (Microsoft Word)* which is a dictation tool in the online version of MS Word.

Furniture/ separate rooms

- e. Alternative arrangements relating to things such as different furniture, separate rooms, will need to be resolvable within a student's usual workstation. Where this is not possible, there would have to be a case by case approach.

Technology

- f. An assumption is made that students will have access to technology but this is not always the case and these difficulties could be further heightened where alternative examination arrangements are more technologically intensive in design. Checks should be completed with students one month before an examination to ensure that they have access to the correct IT equipment.

Appendix 4

Statement for circulation to all students ahead of remote assessment RE: Academic Integrity

In advance of your upcoming examinations which will be taken remotely, we want to take this opportunity to remind all students of the University's expectations with regard to academic integrity.

Remote examinations are subject to the same expectations with regard to academic integrity as those undertaken on campus. The work submitted by students must be entirely their own and may not use answers or content provided wholly or in part by others. Students should also not share any information or discuss any aspect of the examination questions with others during the assessment window for the examination.

The University operates a zero tolerance policy on any form of cheating in assessment, whether this be undertaken on campus or remotely.

Senate Regulation 11[link] sets out various different forms of cheating, which include:

- Copying from the examination script of another candidate, obtaining improper assistance from another person or, where relevant, accessing unauthorised materials or devices within an examination
- Allowing another person to impersonate you in an examination or impersonating another student
- Copying work from or using work written by another person, including published work and online sources (plagiarism), pretending ownership of someone else's ideas or allowing another person to copy your work
- Paying another person to undertake work or buying work from an 'essay mill'
- Submitting for assessment work that has previously been submitted for another assessment (self-plagiarism)
- Actively cooperating with other students to jointly produce work where there is a requirement that it is produced independently (collusion)

Where a student is on a programme that carries professional accreditation, a breach of regulations may also lead to the removal of accreditation or, in some areas, referral to Fitness to Practise processes. [can remove where not relevant]

Where a student is suspected of cheating or using unfair means within a remote assessment this will be investigated. Where it is concluded that a breach of regulations has taken place sanctions may be imposed such as the award of zero marks for the assessment in question, the downgrading of degree classifications or, in cases of extensive cheating, expulsion from the University.

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the requirements regarding academic integrity regarding remote examinations, and further advice and guidance is available [link to any advice that may be available in schools.]