

De Montfort University guidance for taking examinations remotely

May-June 2021

This document provides guidance as you take your examinations in exceptional circumstances. De Montfort University (DMU) is doing everything it can to support you during the remote examination period and we ask that you to read this information carefully in advance of any scheduled examinations.

You will have been informed by your Module Leader via Blackboard if you are expected to take a remote examination. You will also have a scheduled date for your examination, the details of which can be found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/current-students/student-support/exams-deferrals-regulations-policies/exams.aspx>.

In some modules, examinations have been replaced with alternative assessments, and you should ensure you are aware of all the assessment methods used in your modules by reviewing the information available on Blackboard. If you have any questions please contact your Module Leader(s) or Programme Leader at the earliest opportunity.

This guidance sets out the examination procedure and describes the preparation required and behaviours expected from you when taking examinations remotely.

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1. General information regarding remote examinations

NOTE: You are expected and encouraged to take your remote examination in your home environment. If you feel this is not possible, you are required to contact your Student Advice Centre by no later than 16 April to discuss your concerns. If you are permitted to take your remote examination in an on-campus space, the following will apply:

- You will be booked into a specific window on time: either 8am-12.30pm or 1.30-6pm and will be required to leave the space at the end of the booked period (no exceptions)
- You will be booked into a specific room
- You will be required to wear a face covering at all times (unless exempt)
- No hot food will be permitted, or food or drink that could be judged to negatively impact those around you
- If you choose to bring your own computer to the remote examination, you will be responsible for ensuring it is fully charged and suitable for the examination
- You will be required to adhere to the room monitors' instructions

No student who has not booked a space will be permitted to take their remote examination on campus.

1.1 Check which examinations you are scheduled to sit

The examination schedule can be found at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/current-students/student-support/exams-deferrals-regulations-policies/exams.aspx>

You are advised to check here for any exams that you are due to be sitting at the upcoming examination periods. It is vital that you also consult your Blackboard module shells (or other locations as identified by Module Leaders) for details of the assessments you are required to undertake. You should also regularly check your DMU email for the latest information.

Please ensure that you have read the specific instructions and guidance from each Module Leader/Tutor. If you have any questions you should contact your Module Leader/Tutor in advance of the examination day.

1.2 Blackboard examinations

Remote (i.e., online) examinations will be accessed through the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment.

If you do not have access to Blackboard, you must contact ITMS Service Desk as soon as possible to resolve the matter. ITMS Service Desk can be contacted via email (itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk) or

phone on +44 (0) 116 2506050 or 0116 2506050 if you are in the UK. The ITMS Service Desk will be available from 8am-6pm during the examination working weeks.

An Out of Hours IT Service Desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days per week through the phone numbers above, and can resolve limited IT issues including resetting passwords. **This does not include resolving Blackboard or PC issues outside of the examination window.**

1.3 Examination timing

There are two tightly defined periods of time that will impact on your completion of remote examinations: the **Examination Window** (see 1.3.1) and the **Examination Completion Period** (see 1.3.2).

1.3.1 Examination Window

Access to start remote examinations will be available for a set period of time, and this is referred to as the 'Examination Window' throughout this guidance. The Examination Window is the period during which the examination can be started. A link will be provided in your module Blackboard shell to your remote examination. The examination will be available on the designated day and only during the Examination Window.

Examination Windows **will be 8am-6pm UK time on the date scheduled for the examination.**

Please note that the Examination Window does not define the length of time that you will have available to complete your examination. This is the Examination Completion Period (see 1.3.2).

1.3.2 Examination Completion Period

Remote examinations must be completed within a set period of time. This period is referred to as the 'Examination Completion Period' throughout this guidance and it means the duration of your exam. If you are entitled to additional time to complete your exam this will be automatically added to your Examination Completion Period.

The Examination Completion Period for your module will be fully explained by your Module Leader/Tutor in your module Blackboard shell. Please consult your module specific information to ensure that you understand how your examination will be run.

You should ensure that you complete and submit your exam by 6pm UK time. This means that you must begin your exam early enough to allow this. As an example: if your exam is two hours long, you should begin it no later than 4pm UK time; if three hours long then no later than 3 pm UK time, and so on. **If you choose to access your exam such that you are still at work after 6 pm UK time, you should be aware that IT and Module Leader/Tutor support will not be available past 6pm UK time.**

The Examination Completion Period begins when you begin your exam and ends in all cases when the duration of the exam has elapsed. As an example: if your exam is two hours long and you begin it at 10am UK time, the clock will stop at 12pm UK time and you must ensure you have submitted the exam.

1.4 Student Confirmation of Original Work

By submitting your examination, you are confirming that your effort is an individual effort, entirely your own work and that you have not engaged in bad academic practice and/or an academic offence. If you are unsure of the definition of bad academic practice and what might constitute an academic offence, please refer to [Chapter 4](#) of the General Regulations and Procedures Affecting Students 2020-21. Please note that the full disciplinary regulations will apply to any cheating behaviour, including possible referral to an Academic Offences Panel which has the authority to dismiss you from the university.

Students should note that a sample of examination answers submissions will be subject to similarity testing, which may include being run through Turnitin software.

If your examination paper is open book, you will have access to sources of factual information, but the scope and nature of the sources you may use will be clearly indicated in the examination rubric including the use of your own notes. Please remember that cutting and pasting information directly from an internet source or reproducing a word for word reproduction of text without referencing, also known as citation, contravenes academic regulations. You should only submit work using your own words with a reference to the sources that influenced your thinking. It may not be a good use of your time within the examination window to try to access such sources rather than focus on answering the examination questions. It is strongly recommended that you access and prepare any material you might need before the examination date.

Students are advised to review the DMU [Bad academic practice webpage](#) if you wish to understand these matters further.

1.5 Ensuring the integrity of the remote examination process

DMU will use standard university methods (including moderation, Turnitin, and external examiner scrutiny) to ensure that the remote examination assessment process has been conducted fairly and in accordance with agreed processes and procedures.

2. How to prepare for the remote examinations

2.1 Examination preparation checklist

1. Check that you have access to Blackboard before the examination date. Report any issues immediately to the [ITMS Service Desk](#) via email or phone on +44 (0) 116 2506050 or 0116 2506050 if you are in the UK.
2. Consult Blackboard for details of the assessments you are required to undertake.
3. Ensure that you have read the specific instructions and guidance from each Module Leader/Tutor. If you have any questions you should contact your Module Leader/Tutor in advance of the examination day.
4. Make sure that you have fully consulted all instructions available on Blackboard, and have noted the availability and contact details of Module Leaders/Tutors (or nominees) should you have a query on the examination day.

5. Check the **examination schedule** at <https://demontfortuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/DMUHome/org/SAAS/Pages/ExamSchedule.aspx> for any exams that you are due to be sitting in the upcoming examination periods.
6. If appropriate ensure you are aware of your Individual Examination Arrangements and how these apply to your examinations.
7. Check your **DMU email** regularly for the most up to date information.
8. **Revise** for your examinations as you would normally do in advance of the examination date.
9. Think about where and when you will engage with the examination, ensure that you have access to the resources/facilities required.

2.2 Useful resources as you prepare for examinations

The following may be useful as you prepare for examinations:

- [DMU Library and Learning Services Support Online](#)
- [Healthy DMU](#)
- [DMU Spring Back](#)

3. Equipment and resources to facilitate examination engagement

3.1 Preparing your equipment and resources

Ensure you are prepared for your examination. This includes doing your best to ensure that you have:

- An internet connection and a computational device which can access and upload to Blackboard, and allow you to read and write emails:
 - You may need a smartphone, tablet, digital camera or any other device to scan graphs, diagrams or visual elements.
- As DMU uses Office 365 we ask students to use either Office 365 file types (i.e., Word, Excel, PowerPoint) or PDFs. You therefore need to ensure you can engage with Office 365 software. Please consult Blackboard for further details.
 - If you require support around using Office 365 software further details can be found at [Office 365 Student Support](#).
- Ensure that all updates to your computer's operating systems and anti-virus software have been completed prior to the start of the examination to prevent any unexpected updates occurring during the examination itself.
- For any battery-powered devices, make sure these are fully charged and that you have the mains adapter and a suitable nearby electric socket that you can access.
- You may need a suitable calculator or other device to perform numerical calculations. Please consult Blackboard for details of what is required and permitted for your exam and ensure you have one if required.

- Before your examination date, decide where you are going to be when you engage with the examination.
 - Is this a quiet space with minimal disturbances?
 - Will you have everything you need?
 - Does this space have appropriate reliable internet connectivity?
 - Should you have a problem on the day of the examination, do you know who to contact?

- If you need to travel to the place where you intend to engage with the examination you will need to check local details about whether travel is permitted under relevant COVID-19 related restrictions. If travel is allowed then you should allow suitable time to make the journey and settle yourself ready to start the examination, as you would for a formal on-campus examination.

3.2 Students who are entitled to individual examination arrangements

If you are entitled to an Individual Exam Arrangement for your examination, as confirmed through the Disability Advice and Support team or the Wellbeing Team, you will receive an email from the Exams Office in April confirming the details of the Individual Exam Arrangement and how it will be facilitated for your examination.

3.3 On-campus space for remote examinations

Should you envisage any problems with accessing, engaging with and/or completing your examination at home, you must consult with your Student Advice Centre no later than 16 April 2021. Your SAC will advise you as to your options.

If you are permitted to use an on-campus space for your exam, you will be booked into an appropriate room. **Please be aware that a space will not be available unless you have booked one through your SAC.**

4. During the examination

4.1 Communication with others

You should not communicate with anyone about the examination content while you are taking the examination (this includes family and friends, other students or outside agencies); doing so constitutes a major academic offence and it will be investigated and treated as such if discovered or reported. We also strongly recommend that you switch off any social media channels when undertaking your examination(s).

Students are advised to see section 1.4 above and review the DMU [Bad academic practice webpage](#) if you wish to understand these matters further.

4.2 Technical instructions

It is important to note that if you are required to type an answer, please remember to save your work regularly; at least every 20 minutes whilst logged in is recommended.

It is strongly recommended that if your examination requires you to write text-based answers into Blackboard, you type your answers to the examination questions into a separate Word document, and copy and paste these answers into the examination paper itself. You must ensure that you are only cutting and pasting *your* answers to the specific examination questions. Please go to 1.4 above and to [Chapter 4](#) of the General Regulations and Procedures Affecting Students to be reminded of what constitutes an academic offence and bad academic practice.

Writing your answer as a Word document initially is also recommended in case of technical issues at the point of submission (see 4.3).

Handwritten answers will not be accepted.

4.3 Should a problem arise on the day of the examination

- If you have **an account or password issue** on the day of the examination, you should contact the [ITMS Service Desk](#) via email (itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk) or phone on +44 (0) 116 2506050 or 0116 2506050 if you are in the UK. The Service Desk will be available from 8am-6pm during the examinations working week.
- If you have **technical issues** on the day of the examination such as loss of internet connection, power loss, faulty devices, corrupted uploaded file or similar and you are unable to resolve these issues within the examination window (e.g. with your internet provider), you should keep a detailed note of the time and nature of the issue and any evidence that might be available to you (e.g. by taking photos or videos documenting the problem). If this causes you to be unable to complete the examination within the time allowed you must contact the appropriate Module Leader/Tutor as soon as you can to inform them.
- If you have **an academic query** (i.e. you believe there is an error on the examination paper/questions) you should contact the appropriate Module Leader (or the nominated examination contact as published on the Blackboard module shell) immediately.
 - Your Module Leader (or nominee) will be available from 8am-6pm UK time on the day of your exam. Whilst awaiting a response you should still continue to attempt the questions to the best of your ability and add a note to your answer explaining the issue with the question, plus reference to the time at which you contacted the Module Leader (or nominee). Such queries must be limited to matters concerning the examination paper itself, for example any formatting queries or questions about the presentation of a question. The Module Leader (or nominee) will under no circumstances be able to advise you as to the technical content of questions, or provide you with advice as to how to proceed with your answer, such queries will not be answered.
 - Any errors in the examination paper/questions will be taken into account in the marking of the examination. **You must consult Blackboard for details of how to**

contact the Module Leader (or nominee) and their availability during the examination period.

- **If you cannot reach your Module Leader/Tutor (or nominee), don't worry: please note your query on the exam and continue with the question.**
- All students should consult Blackboard ahead of their scheduled exam for any module-specific guidance.

- If you have **problems uploading your examination answers to Blackboard** within the examination window, you should upload your examination answers as a PDF file to OneDrive.
 - Instructions on how to do this can be found on the [Supporting your Learning](#) page of the DMU Library and Learning Services website and at [Support 365 OneDrive upload](#).
 - Once you have uploaded your examination answers as a PDF file to OneDrive, contact the appropriate Module Leader/Tutor immediately with the link to your PDF file in OneDrive.
 - If you have attempted this and this fails or does not work you must email your completed examination answer file to the appropriate Module Leader/Tutor immediately as evidence that you have completed the examination within the time allowed.

- **In case of serious emergencies** (earthquake, fire, or similar) you should stop working and reach safety. Once safe, you should notify your Module Leader/Tutor by email as soon as possible, copying in your Personal Tutor and Student Advice Centre.

- If you have any **unforeseen issue on the day of the examination** you should attempt to resolve this wherever possible, and as long as it remains safe to do so. If it is not possible to resolve the issue in a way that enables you to complete the examination you may wish to make an application for deferral of the examination. Please refer to the guidance regarding deferrals on [the DMU Student Gateway](#) and to relevant Your DMU Future [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

4.4 Late submissions

It is **your responsibility** to ensure that your examination answers are submitted before the end of the Examination Completion Period at 6:00 pm UK time on the day of your exam and that the document/material submitted is provided in the format requested. Please be aware that if you access your exam such that you are working past 6pm UK time, **IT and Module Leader/Tutor support will not be available (see 1.3.2).**

If your examination answers cannot be accessed by the examiner, the submission will not be marked.

If you have any doubt about whether your examination answers have been submitted or are in a readable format you should follow the steps above under section 4.3 around 'problems uploading your examination answers to Blackboard'.

4.5 Illness on the day of the examination

If you are ill and unable to start or continue the examination on the examination date you should firstly seek appropriate medical advice; once you are feeling well enough and as soon as possible, you should make an application for deferral of the examination. Please refer to the guidance regarding deferrals on [the DMU Student Gateway](#) and to relevant Your DMU Future [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

DMU hopes that you keep well and safe during this exceptional period and wishes you every success in your examinations.