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What to do if you need to defer your examination

Information about deferring an exam attempt in the 2020/21 academic year, if you need to do so because of COVID-19 or technical disruption, and what to do.

What is an exam deferral?

On this page

- [What is an exam deferral?](#)

The University has agreed a set of 'no detriment' 2020/21 measures which can help support you through COVID-19 disruption on your assessment attempts should you need them. Exam deferral is one of these measures.

If you are unable to do an exam properly, or at all, at its normally scheduled time, due to your circumstances, you can let us know that you need to defer your attempt. You can do this any time before the submission deadline/end of the exam.

Deferring your exam means that you will later take a different but similar exam designed to test the same learning outcomes; this is known as 'like for like' reassessment. The process for doing this is described on this page.

If you do not want to defer your exam and you attempt it, but feel that your performance has been impacted by your individual circumstances, you can make an [IMC claim](#).

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If you feel your circumstances are such that you cannot attempt any of your exams then you are strongly advised to contact your [Director of Studies](#), your personal tutor, or the [SU Advice & Support Centre](#) as soon as possible. Deferral may still be the right option but you should discuss the implications of this and what advice and support you may need.

The implications of deferring supplementary exams

If you defer an exam due to be taken in the supplementary assessment period (August 2021), then you are deferring your attempt until the 2021/22 academic year. You need to be aware that, depending on how you do overall, you could increase your risk of being unable to progress to the next stage in your programme or graduate if you are a finalist. Conversely, should you progress to your next year still having deferred assessment to do, this will mean more assessment and potentially more pressure during the next academic year.

These are things you should consider before you decide to defer your exam — however, you may find that it is preferable overall to wait until the disruption you are facing won't affect your assessment attempt. At this stage in the academic year you are very strongly advised to seek advice and support to help you make this decision.

You should be aware that the normal maximum number of times a specific examination can be deferred while preserving the same attempt number is two (twice), and the examination must be attempted before the finish of academic year 2021/22. If you defer now but do not attempt the exam in 2021/22 then a mark of 0NS will be recorded and the attempt number will increase if you need to take the assessment again.

You should also be aware that the University's assessment regulations mean you will not be allowed to progress or graduate if you still have outstanding assessment from previous stages. For example, if you are a first year student now and progress to year two but with a deferred exam from your first year, you must pass/be condoned in that unit in order to progress to your final year.

What happens if you defer an exam

Your deferred exam attempt will be in the 2021/22 academic year.

You will attempt the exam under the same attempt rules that you would have done if you had taken it at its normal time. This means, for example, if it is a first attempt you will keep your full mark when you eventually attempt it.

A mark of 0D will appear as your result for a deferred exam until you attempt it, and the unit that

the exam is part of will not be considered to be complete.

Process for notifying that you intend to defer your exam

If you are thinking about deferral, you are strongly recommended to speak to your Director of Studies, personal tutor, or the SU Advice & Support Centre about your academic circumstances.

If you still feel you need to defer your exam attempt after seeking advice, you must tell us of your intention to defer the exam attempt using the process described below. This is not an approvals process, but it is important that you follow these instructions so we can be clear about your intention.

Important: We must receive your notification **BEFORE** the exam submission deadline/end of the exam, otherwise it will be assumed to be a non-submission if you do not submit anything by the deadline.

- Notify your Faculty or School as detailed below (if you are deferring an exam for a unit in another Faculty/School your notification will be forwarded as appropriate):
 - Faculty of Engineering & Design: Please complete [this form](#) [Link disabled]

- Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences: Please complete [this form](#) [Link disabled]
- Faculty of Science: Please complete [this form](#) [Link disabled]
- School of Management: Please complete [this form](#) [Link disabled]

- We'll ask you the reason you're deferring. You can elect not to say, but telling us this will help the University understand better why students in general might choose to defer their exams, and to review the relevant guidance and support that a student might need in these circumstances. Any data we use for this purpose will be anonymised.

- Once you have submitted a form you will receive an auto-response confirming your deferral notification has been received. You do not need to take any further action and you do not need to attempt the exam you have said you need to defer.

- If you have not already sought advice or support, and you are concerned that other assessments may also be disrupted, you are strongly recommended to get in contact with your [Director of Studies](#), your personal tutor, or the [SU Advice & Support Centre](#).

- **Important:** If you send more than one notification about the same exam the most recent (by the sent day/time) at the point of the submission deadline/end of the exam will take priority and be actioned (see [Notifications on the day of the exam](#) below).

Notifications received after the exam submission deadline

If your deferral notification has been received **AFTER** the exam submission deadline/end of the exam (so the form submission is after the deadline) then normal non-submission penalties will apply. The exam attempt will not be considered as deferred and it will be considered a non-submission. You should contact your Director of Studies if you need further advice or wish to discuss the implications of a non-submission.

What to do if you change your mind

If you want to take the exam but have already notified us that you want to defer

If you change your mind and want to attempt the exam you may do so, but you must inform us of your decision to take the exam before the submission deadline/end of the exam by using the form described in the deferral notification process above.

Deferring on the day of your exam

If you need to defer once you have started the exam you will need to follow the [deferral notification process](#) above (using the [helpline](#) if you aren't able to use the form online because of technical difficulties) confirming that you need to defer your attempt and have any submission disregarded, before the submission deadline/end of the exam. Please note that if we do not hear from you in these circumstances your exam submission will be marked and will be considered your attempt.

After you submit

If you do submit but you are worried that disruption affected your performance you can consider making an [IMC report](#) about the exam.

Additional information

More information related to your exams is available via the [Exams and Assessment web page](#).

Support

You should speak to your [Director of Studies](#) or Personal Tutor as soon as possible if you are concerned about your ongoing academic performance or you feel that your studies and assessments are being disrupted. It is particularly important that you seek advice if you think you may need to defer an exam.

The SU Advice & Support Centre can provide independent guidance and confidential support to you and can assist you. They can also help identify further support available to you and provide ongoing support where needed.

Student Services' Wellbeing Service offers counselling and other student support.

Student Services' Disability Service offers support to students with a disability.

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