



# Student Guide to Exams: 2021/22 Semester 1 assessment period

*Updated: 21 December 2021*

*It is strongly recommended that you download a copy of this guide, to use if you go offline. Check back to our [Exams and Assessments](#) page to make sure you have the most up-to-date version.*

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## Version History

Section	Updates in version 1.3
Alternative arrangements for exams (Disability Access Plans)	Additional information about rest breaks and DAP arrangements

## Introduction

This guide provides you with information on what you can expect during the Semester 1 2021/22 assessment period and provides advice on how to approach your assessments. Please also refer to any guidance provided by your department.

Our central webpage [Exams and assessments](#) will be updated regularly with information for your exams and includes a link to University Rule 2- Conduct of Examinations, which sets out the University's rules governing summative exam procedures.

## 'Inspira'

For this semester your assessments have been designed so that they can be taken digitally. These will be delivered through a system called [Inspira](#).

Inspira is an assessment platform that is used to plan, design, deliver and mark exams. It supports many question and answer types and allows anonymity for students taking exams. More information about Inspira, instruction videos, and access to the system can be found via our [Exams & Assessments](#) webpage.

You shouldn't worry if you can't see all your exams listed on your Inspira dashboard straight away. Exams for each unit will begin to appear gradually from the start of January, and you should see your exam listed 72 hours prior to it starting. If this isn't the case, please contact your Programme Administrator as follows:

- Students in departments in the Faculty of Engineering & Design should consult the [Faculty Student Centre pages on the self-service portal](#)
- Students in departments in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences should consult the [team contacts web page](#)
- School of Management students - undergraduate students should email [bsc@management.bath.ac.uk](mailto:bsc@management.bath.ac.uk) and MSc students should consult the [team contacts web page](#)
- Students in departments in the Faculty of Science should consult the [team contacts web page](#)

## Exam schedule and timings

The Semester 1 exam period for the 2021/22 academic year runs from Thursday 13 January 2022 to Saturday 29 January 2022.

Your exam schedule is available on our webpage [Semester 1 exam schedule for 2021/22](#). The exam schedule lists the date, start time and type of exam. It will also indicate the duration of the exam, expected work time and submission time allowance (where applicable).

Your exams will be scheduled to start between 9am and 5pm Greenwich Meantime (GMT), Monday to Friday. If you are taking your exam outside of the UK you will need to sit the exam according to UK time, as specified on the schedule. You are expected to plan your time accordingly.

### Types of exam

The Semester 1 exams will be one of three types: Fixed-time, Flexible-start, or Open-24.

Most exams for Semester 1 are Fixed-time exams.

**Fixed-time** exams are short-duration exams, scheduled in a specific time slot. The date, start time and end time will be specified on the exam schedule. These exams will only be open for the duration specified on the schedule. The exam duration includes the expected work time for the exam and a submission time allowance which is for checking your work, collating your answers, and uploading files. Both are indicated on the schedule. You are also advised to allow sufficient time within the submission time allowance window for minor technical issues when submitting your work. As you will not be able to submit an exam attempt after the end time of the exam, we strongly advise that you use the expected work time as a guide, so that you allow yourself sufficient time to submit your work.

**Flexible-start** exams are short-duration exams which you can start at a time of your choosing within a 24-hour window specified on the exam schedule. Your exam will end after the specified duration has passed or at the end of the 24-hour window if sooner. The exam duration includes the expected work time for the exam and a submission time allowance. The submission time allowance is for checking your work, collating your answers, and uploading files. Both are indicated on the schedule. As you will not be able to submit an exam attempt after the end time of the exam, we strongly advise that you use the expected work time as a guide, so that you allow yourself sufficient time to submit your work.

**Open-24** exams will be open for 24 hours. You will only be expected to work on the exam for the duration indicated on the schedule (such as two hours). The exam will close at the end of the 24-hour period, after which you will not be able to submit an attempt. The 24-hour window negates the need for submission time allowance, but you are advised to allow sufficient time for minor technical issues when submitting your work. You will not be able to submit an attempt after the exam has ended.

You may have a combination of these different exam types. Please bear in mind you may also have two exams in the same 24-hour period. The exams are designed with this in mind, and it is possible to sit both exams. You will need to manage your time accordingly to allow for a break in-between.

If you have a Disability Access Plan extra time may be arranged for you (see the section [Alternative arrangements for exams \(Disability Access Plans\)](#))

## Accessing exam papers

You will only be able to access exam papers for the units on which you are registered in SAMIS. You should [check your SAMIS record](#) before the assessment period. If you do not think you are registered on the right units, contact your Director of Studies as soon as possible.

All exams will be on Inspira. You'll be able to log in to Inspira prior to the start of your exam to see the dates and times they are scheduled, as well as exam instructions (the 'rubric') and any additional guidance. The exam instructions will remind you of the expected work time for the paper and the length of submission time allowance (where applicable). Your Department will provide you with any further information specific to your exams.

Inspira can be used with a regular web browser. The two most recent, stable versions of the following web browsers are always supported:

- Microsoft Edge
- Mozilla Firefox
- Google Chrome
- Apple Safari (for macOS X)

This only defines the recommended browsers. Other browser versions and vendors that follow modern web standards can also be used.

**You must complete and upload your exam attempt by the submission deadline.**

## What if I am having difficulties?

If your study is being disrupted by COVID-19 related or other circumstances, please do seek out [support and advice](#) as soon as possible.

You should engage with your assessments as much as you can, and to try and complete them if you feel able to do so. If you are unable to attempt your exam, or you submit your examination but you feel your performance was affected you may be able to apply for [Individual Mitigating Circumstances \(IMCs\)](#).

## Digital exams

On-campus exams have currently been replaced with online exams.

While the submission window for these exams is longer than an on-campus exam could be, these exams are designed to be completed within a short time period, such as two hours. As a guide, the expected work time for completing the exam is on the exam schedule. We strongly advise you to revise as you would for an assessment taken under standard exam conditions, even though it feels a bit different.

Your exam will only relate to content that has been covered in your unit.

See [Preparing for your exams](#) for further advice.

You must attempt your exams on your own, in an appropriate space (such as your own home), within the time specified on the exam schedule. You are responsible for finding the most appropriate space in which to take your exam. It should be:

- Private, without any other person present unless required for reasons set out in a Disability Access Plan.
- Free from distraction, disturbance, and disruption.

## Question Types

The following question types may be used during the Semester 1 exams.

- Automatically marked within Inspira:
  - Multiple choice- Choose one answer from several alternatives.
  - Multiple response - Choose more than one answer from several alternatives
  - Text entry- The question is answered by typing a word or a short sentence.
  - Numeric entry- The question is answered by typing a numeric value.
  - Inline choice- The question is answered by selecting a value from a drop-down list.
  - True/False- This question is answered by selecting either true or false.
  - Matching/Pairing- The question is answered by matching values in rows and columns.
  - Composite- Where several questions types can be combined. Available question types are: *Multiple Choice, Multiple Response, True / false, Text Entry, Numeric Entry, Math Entry, Inline Choice and Math Working.*
- Manually marked:
  - Essay – Longer texts with the opportunity to use formatting such as tables, LaTeX, special symbols, and mathematical symbols.
  - Text area- Question that is intended for shorter text answers without formatting options.
  - Upload Assignment: The question is answered by uploading a file. For example, you hand-write an answer on paper, take a photo of it and upload the final answer as a PDF file in the question.
  - Programming- The question is answered by typing a snippet of code.

- Math Working- The question is answered by typing one or several lines with numbers and mathematical expressions.
- Not marked:
  - Document- The question is used to provide candidates with information.
  - Form- Question that allows the candidates to fill in additional information during a test.

Your department will provide you with information on the format.

In an open-book exam, you are allowed access to your textbooks, notes, and other resources, unless instructed otherwise by your department. However, you mustn't seek assistance from any person, persons or organisation, or speak to other students about the exam during the submission window for the exam unless your exam paper explicitly states this is allowed. For further information see [Academic Integrity](#).

Once you have finished, you will submit your work as instructed on your exam paper. You can also find instructions for submitting assessments through our [video guides](#) and [PDF guides](#). You are also advised to allow sufficient time for minor technical issues when submitting your work as you will not be able to submit an attempt after the exam has ended.

## **Academic integrity (including plagiarism and cheating)**

When you registered at the University you agreed to read and to abide by the University's [Regulations for Students](#) and your programme handbook, both of which include the references to, and penalties for, unfair practices such as plagiarism, fabrication or falsification. Your exam paper includes a rubric with instructions for completing the examination. Here, you will also be reminded of the requirement for academic integrity.

For open-book exams you may refer to your own course and revision notes and look up information in offline or online resources, for example textbooks or online journals. However, you may not communicate with any person, persons or organisation, or speak to other students about the exam, before the submission deadline, unless explicitly permitted to do so in the instructions on your exam paper.

By submitting your exam attempt, you agree to the [University's academic integrity declaration](#) and confirm the work is your own. The use of the work of others, and your own past work, must be referenced appropriately. Your department will be able to provide you with further advice about the approach for your subject area.

Written work may be analysed by the University's plagiarism detection software, Urkund.

We take assessment offences very seriously and there are significant academic penalties. Seek advice from your Director of Studies before your exam if you are unsure as claims of inadvertence or ignorance will not be accepted as a basis for mitigation of a penalty.

If you are in any doubt about the rules for referencing, please refer to the University's [academic integrity training](#).

## Alternative arrangements for exams (Disability Access Plans)

Some students are entitled to alternative exam arrangements due to disabilities or long-term health conditions. These are set out in an agreed Disability Access Plan (DAP).

Additional time and rest breaks

If you're taking a time-limited exam (a ['fixed-time or a 'flexible-start' exam, as described on the exam schedule](#)) additional time may be added to your exam time, based on the recommendation in your DAP.

You might be given:

- extra time to complete the assessment, or
- extra time to take rest breaks, or
- both extra time to complete the assessment and time for rest breaks

Alternatively you may be taking [Open-24 hour exams](#). In this case, you'll already have more time to attempt your assessment, so additional arrangements like extra time and rest breaks won't be needed.

How your additional time is calculated

Your DAP may recommend additional time per hour to:

- complete the assessment, or
- take rest breaks, or
- complete the assessment and take rest breaks

This additional time will be calculated by taking into account the total exam duration, which includes:

- the standard amount of time for the exam (the 'expected work' outlined on the [exam schedule](#)) and
- the submission time allowance (also detailed on the [exam schedule](#))

For example, if you have a two-hour exam with a one hour submission time allowance, the additional time you need will be calculated on the basis of three hours (2 hours + 1 hour).



## Additional time for rest breaks

Any additional time you are given for rest breaks will be calculated using the total exam duration.

You won't be given further rest breaks to cover the additional time you have been allocated.

## Using your rest breaks

If you've been given additional time to take rest breaks you should only use it to take breaks; you should not work during this time.

To help you manage your disability, you can take your breaks at any stage throughout the exam, but you will need to take responsibility for managing the time you have been given to complete your work. Your disability advisor will be able to advise you on the best practices for doing this.

## How your additional time will be shown on Inspira

The additional time you are given will be incorporated into your exam time. On Inspira, you should be able to see it reflected in the start and end time for each of your exams approximately a week before the start of the assessment period.

If additional time does not appear to have been added to the duration of your exams, or if you think that you have not been allocated the correct amount of additional time, please contact [your department](#).

## Assistive software

If you are using any assistive software (e.g. screen reader, text-to-speech etc.) you should familiarise yourself with how it works with Inspira before the exam period. It is important that you establish your own way of working ahead of the exams so that you are relaxed and confident when they begin. [Assistive Technology](#) can help you identify any specialist equipment you might need (See also [Preparing for your Exams](#)).

## Exam support worker

You may have an entitlement to an exam support worker (e.g. reader/scribe/prompter). If you are taking up this support, we advise that you have a practice session prior to the exam period to familiarise yourself with the new process.

The [Disability Service](#) should be in contact with you about this and can provide further support and advice before and during the exam period. You can contact them if you are unsure about the disability support that might be available to you.

## Discussing your support requirements

If you would like to review or discuss your support requirements ahead of the exams period, please contact the [Disability Service](#) as soon as possible.

Whilst the deadline for applying for alternative exam arrangements for Semester 1 has now passed, you can still contact the Disability Service for an assessment. However we can't

guarantee your support requirements will be in place in time for the Semester 1 exams. Your department will notify you if they have been able to put last minute arrangements in place.

## Preparing for your exams

You should [prepare for your exams](#) as you normally would – through sticking to a reasonable revision schedule, accessing [past papers](#) and materials to practice questions etc. Make sure you also look after your mental and physical health by taking breaks, trying to get some exercise, and eating as you would normally.

All of the exams are open-book, and the exam duration will allow you to access and download the exam paper, consult any reference material if appropriate, check your responses and prepare and upload your script. It also takes account of the fact that there may be distractions or possibly minor problems, such as a poor internet connection. If you are working on your exam in Inspera, it will automatically save your work every few seconds, but if you are working in another programme such as Word or Excel, remember to save your work regularly.

You can find help with your exams and assessments on the [Academic and Employability Skills blog](#) produced by the Skills Centre. As well as advice on revision and short presentations on academic writing there is useful advice and tips including:

- [Top ten tips for exam preparation](#)
- [Top tips for taking open book exams 1 – preparation](#)
- [Top tips for taking open book exams 2 - on the day](#)
- [Mastering multiple choice question exams](#)
- [Fixed-time exams: your questions answered](#)

[How to use Inspera for exams and assessment](#) is a short self-access Xerte module created by the Skills Centre which collates university guidance on how to use Inspera for completing exams.

The Skills centre are running new [one-hour Exam Skills sessions](#) in weeks 10 and 11 to help you prepare for exams and practise essential writing techniques.

The Skills Centre are also running a limited number of [one-to-one 50-minute exams skills appointments](#) in weeks 10, 11 and 15, from 6 December 2021 to 12 January 2022.

These are bookable on [MySkills](#).

Familiarise yourself in advance with how to upload your assessment

You may find that for your exam you are asked to create and upload an assessment in a way that you've not previously been required to do. For example, you will normally need to

convert your completed paper into a PDF, create a PDF from your photos of handwritten notes, or create a video for a presentation. Your work must be legible, with each page upright, and all pages in order. If you have been given permission to write all or part of your exam by hand, dark (black or blue) ink must be used.

Before each of your assessment windows opens, it is strongly recommended that you attempt a practice run at creating files in these formats using our [video guides](#) and step-by-step [instructions](#). This will help you feel more at ease during the assessment window and better able to concentrate on getting your exam work complete.

You are also advised to allow sufficient time for minor technical issues when submitting your work as you will not be able to submit an attempt after the exam has ended.

## On the day of your assessment: key points

### Key activity

*A few key things to think about when taking an exam are:*

- **Punctuality:** make sure you are prepared to start and finish your assessment within the times given, and that you have a way to keep track of time – you might find it helpful to set alarms.
- When the ‘clock starts ticking’: stay calm and take the time to read instructions and the questions carefully.
- **Technical aspects:** whenever possible test your internet connection and computer in advance. Make sure you have any chargers or cables with you – you might want to use an Ethernet cable if your Wi-Fi is unreliable.
- Alert your family or house-mates to the fact that you are doing an exam. They should avoid distracting you and may also be able to limit their broadband usage while you are working.
- If you are working on your exam in Inspera, it will automatically save your work every few seconds, but if you are working in another programme such as Word or Excel, remember to save your work regularly.

### Create your own exam conditions

You should try as much as possible to create a quiet, comfortable space in which to take your assessments. A checklist of things you may find useful to have is:

- A desk or table
- A comfortable chair
- Adequate lighting
- An internet-connected computer with Microsoft Word or equivalent
- An Inspera compatible web browser (see [Accessing exam papers](#) for more details)

- If you are hand-writing your answers, you will need to be able to scan or photograph pages for submission.
- Heating or cooling arrangements
- A way to monitor your time, e.g. regular alarms
- Your books, notes, and other resources
- Your student number, single sign on (SSO) and password
- Drinking water and snacks, etc

You should check in advance of the assessment what materials you are permitted to have with you during the exam (e.g. calculators, textbooks, notes etc.) and ensure these are easily accessible.

## How to submit your exam

Full instructions on submitting your exam are available via our [video guides](#) which include guidance on accessing a demo test and checking your requirements before your exams.

Inspira saves your work as you're going along, and it will automatically submit anything saved at the submission deadline. If you are uploading your answers as an attachment, please allow yourself enough time for the upload (your submission time allowance indicates how much time you should be allowing to submit). Once your submission deadline has passed you will not be able to submit your work

**You must submit your exam by the deadline set in Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).**

## Issues submitting your exam

You should make every effort to submit your assessment by the deadline indicated on Inspira. The exam schedule indicates the length of time you are expected to spend on your exam, and (except for 24-hour exams) the length of submission time allowance allocated. The submission time allowance is designed to account for problems encountered when submitting your exam. You are not expected to spend your submission time allowance working on your exam as it is in place to allow for any problems when submitting your work. If you miss the deadline you will not be able to submit your attempt. We advise you to try to complete the assignment in the expected work time and try to upload it well in advance of the submission deadline.

If you think you may be unable to attempt or submit an exam by the deadline, for any reason, contact the [exams helpline](#), who will be able to advise you on the options available to you.

If something goes wrong during the exam, try to stay calm. In most situations the submission time allowance will give us enough time to resolve any difficulties and you can access support through the exams helpline that will be available.

Please note that if you do not submit your exam by the submission deadline, non-submission penalties will apply. If your attempt has been disrupted, you should seek advice from your Director of Studies and the SU Advice & Support Centre as soon as possible. You may also be able to submit an [IMC claim](#).

## Technical issues and queries

Before the assessment window opens

Contact your Director of Studies, Personal Tutor or Unit Convenor, as appropriate, with any questions about your assessments.

Once the exam has started

You should not normally approach your department. During your exam, [help and advice](#) will be available.

If you need to speak to someone *urgently*, please call our Exam Helpline. This is emergency telephone support on +44 (0)1225 387500. The line will be open from 8am to 6pm Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), Monday to Friday, throughout the assessment period.

What to do in the event of a technical failure

If there is a technical failure with a University system that affects your assessment, for instance with Single Sign-On or Inspira, please wait until the relevant system is available again to continue or to submit your assignment. Information on the status of systems is available at: <https://status.bath.ac.uk/>. We will attempt to notify you that the system is up and running once the problem is fixed.

If you think you've spotted an error in the exam

If you believe you have found an error in the exam questions or instructions, if possible, make a note of the error on your submission and attempt the question or task to the best of your ability. There is no need to notify a member of staff as they will not be able to take any action to rectify the error.

The impact of any errors will be taken into consideration when results are reviewed by the Board of Examiners for Units.

## Your wellbeing during exams

We recognise you may be entering into a potentially stressful period during your assessments and, given the current circumstances around COVID-19, this could become amplified, so it is very important you look after yourself. Please find below some recommendations on simple strategies you can implement and access on how to maintain a healthy balance:

### *Creating a study routine*

We are all getting used to new ways of working and studying, so firstly it is important to create a clear dedicated study space that is free from clutter and distractions. Set up a calm and dedicated study environment and have a daily sweep of this to make sure it is conducive to study. (See also [Create your own exam conditions](#)).

Set a clear plan for the day. Give tasks your full attention, switch off all distractions and have dedicated time to focus on your revision. You could try the 'Pomodoro technique' - where you study in short, sharp bursts with breaks in between.

### *Focus on self-care*

In response to the current pandemic, lots of apps and services from fitness to mindfulness and meditation have been offering free access. Gentle and regular exercise can also provide natural breaks within your day and allow you to recharge and refocus.

It is important to try and not overindulge in sugary foods and to try and maintain stable blood sugar levels to facilitate good levels of concentration.

### *Try to avoid speculation*

The news can be a constant source of distraction, and if viewed too much can unhelpfully raise our anxiety levels. Try to follow the news in a time-limited way and avoid continually refreshing screens for updates as this can make you feel 'on-alert' or 'on-edge'. We also recommend sticking to reputable sites and well-established news corporations.

### *Undertake positive reflection activities*

It is very easy at the moment to get drawn into thinking about the bigger picture of this situation and the future with catastrophic thoughts about what is going to happen. We advise bringing things back to the here and now. Think about what you are grateful for, reflect on what has gone well during your day – no matter how small that thing is - and set yourself small achievable tasks, ensuring you do something for yourself just for you each day that you enjoy. This will help centre and promote a more balanced frame of mind, which will contribute towards being more effective and present in the here and now.

### *Reach out and get support if you need to*

We are all individuals who need support at different times and in different circumstances. Please do think about your support network, family or friends and reach out to them where you feel comfortable. You can also arrange a phone or video call with the [Wellbeing Service](#) for support and guidance.

[Be Well – Talk Now](#) is a 24 hour confidential support service offered by Student Services which gives you immediate advice and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Further sources of wellbeing support

The [Student Services](#) team are available for support.

The [Exam Stress Podcast](#) has general guidance on understanding exam stress, how to manage it and tips to prepare for the exam period.

[Read Well](#) provides a selection of over 50 books that can support your health and wellbeing, with topics including anxiety, stress and general development.

[Anxiety Aid](#) is a free online course for Bath students struggling to keep worry and anxiety in check.

You might find headphones useful to block out noise, and we would also recommend turning off any devices (for example, your phone) which might distract you.

## **Further sources of exams support**

During the assessment period, a wide range of support and guidance across the University continues to be available to you. This includes:

- [Exams & Assessments web page](#)
- [Inspira how-to videos](#)
- [How to use Inspira for Exams and Assessment](#)
- [Your Director of Studies or Personal Tutor](#)
- [Skills Centre](#)
- [Student Services](#)
- [Wellbeing Service](#)
- [Therapeutic Services and Mental Health](#)
- [Disability Service](#)
- [The SU Bath Advice & Support Centre](#)
- [University Library](#)