

To: All UG/PGTs
Date: 15 April 2021
Subject: Preparing for your exams

Dear <name>,

I hope you're feeling prepared for the exams period, although it is quite normal for students to become nervous or worried. This year may feel more challenging than usual, so remember you can speak to your Academic Tutor or Support Centre (or Henley Helpdesk or ISLI Admin Office) who are here to support you with any general concerns you may have.

Preparing for take home online exams (23-hour and time restricted)

You should prepare for your exams as you would normally. Our Study Advice team offers [one-to-one study advice](#), [drop-in sessions](#), [appointments with an Academic Liaison Librarian](#), webinars and have [several guides](#) available to support you. You can [read our blog post](#) and [watch a video](#) on how to revise and prepare, and explore our [exams webpages](#).

Take the time to:

1. Make sure you can access Blackboard. If you are unable to do this, please email take-home-exam@reading.ac.uk using your University email address and quoting your candidate number (found on your exam timetable) and the module codes for your exam(s).
2. Make sure you have access to your University of Reading OneDrive account and check your Remote Service Access. Saving files to your [University OneDrive](#) is the best way to ensure that your work is saved, and can be recovered, in case of an error. We strongly encourage you to [read the DTS guide](#) on Remote Service Access and One Drive.
3. Make sure well in advance that you have set up [Multi-Factor Authentication](#) on your mobile device. If you have any problems with this, [please contact DTS](#).
4. Take the opportunity to practice on the practice 'take home' exam area on Blackboard (under 'My Modules' on the 'My Blackboard' tab). Get used to the system, work out the best arrangements for taking the exam in your current environment and test your internet connection.

If you have in-person exams, please review our guidance on the steps you should take before attending your exams in our ['what you need to know'](#) document.

We are here to support you – remember that our Student Welfare Team continue to be available online and by telephone to offer one-to-one appointments and advice.

Where to take your take home online exams

Take home online exams are designed to be completed at your current address – whether that's student accommodation or elsewhere. Please make plans now based on your exam timetable as you are responsible for creating your own exam conditions:

- speak to those you live with to ensure they are aware of the dates of your exams;

- in discussion with those you live with, choose the best time within the 23-hour window for you to allocate for this;
- consider writing up an 'exam timetable' to post on your own door, or a version for your whole household to post in the kitchen (for example), to ensure everyone is aware of these timings.

Our Library and study space will be available this summer term for students on campus to use for revision and exam preparation, for example. However, campus may be busy and, while we will make every effort to create a quiet environment, unfortunately we cannot guarantee this. We hope you will be able to make arrangements to create a suitable environment to take your exams at home. Please also review [our response to the latest government guidance](#) for information on returning to campus.

A very small number of in-person exams are taking place on campus where this is necessary and permitted, for example, for some programmes with professional accreditation requirements. You will have been notified if this applies to you. Access to these exam rooms will be for those students undertaking these specific exams only.

If you have specific circumstances that mean you are unable to take your exams at home or using the spaces available on campus, please speak to your Academic Tutor or your School Director for Academic Tutoring and they will provide further advice based on your situation.

Assessment support package: Supporting you to succeed

As you will know, this year we have adapted our processes in direct response to COVID-19 to support you in the current circumstances, including:

- Permitting extenuating circumstances requests where it has not been possible to provide independent supporting evidence.

You can apply for [Extenuating Circumstances](#) using the existing form and should continue to provide evidence where at all possible. If you are unable to provide evidence on the Extenuating Circumstances form on RISIS, you must clearly explain why and describe the impact of your circumstances on your assessments so that your school can understand how you have been affected when assessing your case, and to decide what mitigation is appropriate or if we can provide other support.

- Introduction of a new post-results Extenuating Circumstances process for the summer.

We understand that you will be better able to evaluate the impact any adverse circumstances have had on your exam performance after the publication of your results. Therefore this year you will have the opportunity to submit a post-results Extenuating Circumstances form, allowing you to make an informed decision after you receive your exam results. Read more details about the new [post-results Extenuating Circumstances process on Essentials](#).

Academic integrity

I would also like to remind you about the importance of [academic integrity](#) and not colluding in the context of take home online exams. Plagiarism and submission regulations apply to take home online exams. You must not communicate with other students on the topic of this assessment for the whole time the assessment is live, nor obtain advice or contribution from anyone, including proof-readers,

friends, or family members. We will investigate instances where plagiarism is suspected, and any proven cases of cheating will be dealt with firmly in accordance with our normal processes.

Further advice on academic integrity is available in the Library's [Academic Integrity Toolkit](#), and you may also want to review the [academic misconduct regulations](#), which include reference to cheating via plagiarism.

Please remember that we are here if you need any help at all. If you have specific questions about exams, please contact take-home-exam@reading.ac.uk.

I wish you all the best of luck with your summer exams.

Best wishes,

Paddy

Patricia 'Paddy' Woodman

Director of Student Services