

Students' Guide to Examinations Colchester Campus 2019-20

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Before the examinations

Checking you are correctly entered for the exams

The My Essex student portal at www.essex.ac.uk/myessex displays your module enrolments on the Education tab. These are the modules for which you will be entered for examinations, assuming those modules have an exam component. If My Essex does not display the correct information, please contact the Student Services Hub **immediately** (details at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page).

You are normally permitted to change modules within the first two weeks of the autumn term for module codes suffixed with 'AU' and 'FY', and the first two weeks of the spring term for module codes suffixed with 'SP'.

It is your responsibility to check your module enrolment record on My Essex and to follow the correct procedure to change a module. If you are an undergraduate student on a degree programme, or a full-time taught postgraduate student, you can use eNROL if it is open at www.essex.ac.uk/enrol. Prior to the main exam period, students are asked to specifically check that they are enrolled for the correct modules using My Essex.

Requesting individual exam arrangements

If you have a disability, diagnosed mental health condition, temporary medical condition or injury that will affect your performance in examinations, you can apply for individual exam arrangements. The purpose of such arrangements is to enable you to meet your expected learning outcomes and to compensate for the restriction imposed by any disability, without affecting the validity of the exams.

Arrangements vary depending on your requirements and supporting evidence, but can include:

- Allocating you extra time for writing or rest breaks
- Advising the marker about learning differences which affect your written expression, so that this can be taken into consideration
- Allowing you to use a computer to type your answers
- Allocating someone to read/write for you
- Giving you the exam papers in an alternative format, such as braille or large print
- Recommending that you do not sit your exams in the main exam halls
- Consideration of alternative furniture options, such as the use of cushions or footstools.

Apply and submit your supporting documentation before 31 October to ensure your arrangements are in place for any January exams, or before 31 January for the summer exam period. Applications relating to newly-diagnosed medical conditions, Specific Learning Difficulties, disability or injuries will still be considered after the deadline, however there is no guarantee that arrangements will be put in place in the current academic year.

If you have individual arrangements approved for the main examination period in April/May/June 2020, these will also apply to the resit examinations in September 2020 – unless these were put in place for a temporary injury or medical condition that will not affect the resit period.

If you apply after the deadline and it is not possible to put approved recommendations in place for the April/May/June exams, these can still be put in place for the resit exams in September, if appropriate.

There is no need to reapply each year if you are on the same course. If you transfer to a different course, or start a new course (such as a postgraduate course), please contact the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub (details at the back of this booklet), who will check if arrangements are in place.

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To apply for individual exam arrangements, please complete the form in Appendix A (or download it from <http://bit.ly/indneeds>) and return it, with **evidence**, to the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub. Contact details are at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page.

Last-minute injuries

If you sustain an injury which means you are unable to take your exams unless individual exam arrangements are in place, please contact the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub **without delay** – contact details and opening hours are at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page. Do not leave it until the day of your exam as the University cannot guarantee it will be possible to put arrangements in place at that point.

Notification of religious commitments

If, for religious reasons, you should not or do not wish to undertake examinations on a Sabbath, holy day or religious festival, you should notify the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub in advance – by 31 October for January exams and 31 January for the summer exams. Please use the form in Appendix B, or download it from <http://bit.ly/examsreligion>, and return it, with **evidence**, to the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub (details at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page). If you have queries about this procedure after the deadline, please contact the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub.

The University is not able to make alterations for individuals once the timetable has been published. If you have to miss an exam due to religious observance, you need to notify your absence by using the online form at <http://bit.ly/examabsence> and submit an Extenuating Circumstances form for an opportunity to sit the exam as a resit.

The Extenuating Circumstances form for all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and pre-sessional students can be found at <http://bit.ly/myessexEC>. Please read the guidance on extenuating circumstances very carefully before submitting your form, which can be found here: <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>. Your extenuating circumstances form must be submitted by the published deadline, shown at <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>

If your application for individual arrangements is accepted, the Exams Office will make every effort to schedule your examinations accordingly, although the University reserves the right to schedule exams on a Sabbath, holy day or during religious festivals where no suitable alternative is available.

If you would like to discuss the procedure or your application, please contact the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre (details at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page).

Preparing for the examinations

When are the exams?

The dates of centrally-organised examinations for 2018-19 are as follows:

Examination Period	Examination Dates
Essex Abroad (incoming) autumn term only students	Monday 16 th December – Friday 20 th December 2019
Christmas Vacation exams including: Biological Sciences PGT resit exams Biological Sciences MCQ CSEE first year autumn term module exams MBA exams Psychology stage 2 and stage 3 autumn term module exams Essex Pathways: International Diploma exams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EBS exams in BE413 and BE515 only 	Monday 6 th January – Friday 10 th January 2020 (Extended to include Saturday 11 th January if scheduling demands). Please keep this Saturday available for exams until your personal exam timetable has been confirmed and published at www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes .
Early exams (including Biological Sciences MCQ)	Monday 20 th April – Thursday 7 th May 2020
Summer exams	Monday 11 th May – Friday 5 th June 2020 (including Saturday 16 th May, Saturday 23 rd May and Saturday 30 th May 2020)
Resit exams *	Tuesday 1 st September – Friday 11 th September 2020

Note: Dates are subject to change. You can find the latest information at <http://bit.ly/exam-dates>.

*Students may resit exams only when required to do so by the Board of Examiners.

The Exams Office only manages centrally-organised examinations. If you have in-class tests or take-home exams, these may take place outside of the above periods and will not appear on your exam timetable as they are organised directly by your Department.

What days and times are exams scheduled for?

During the summer and January examination periods, exams will be held on Mondays through to Saturdays inclusive, usually starting at the following times:

Day	Morning exams	Afternoon exams
Monday	9.00am	2.00pm
Tuesday	9.00am	2.00pm
Wednesday	9.00am	2.00pm
Thursday	9.00am	2.00pm
Friday	9.00am	2.15pm
Saturday	9.00am	2.00pm

For the other examination periods, exams will **not** be held on Saturdays, and the start times will be the same as those above.

When is the exam timetable published?

On or around the publication dates stated below, you will receive an email to your Essex.ac.uk account asking you to check your exam timetable at www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes and to print a copy of your Exam Entry Form.

Examination Period	Planned Examination Dates	Timetable Publication Date
Essex Abroad (incoming) autumn term only students	Monday 16 th December – Friday 20 th December 2019	Friday 8 th November 2019, 5pm
Christmas Vacation exams	Monday 6 th January – Friday 10 th January 2020 (Extended to include Saturday 11 th January if scheduling demands).	Friday 29 th November 2019, 5pm
Early exams (including Biological Sciences MCQ)	Monday 20 th April – Thursday 7 th May 2020	Friday 20 th March 2020, 5pm
Summer exams	Monday 11 th May – Friday 5 th June 2020 (including Saturday 16 th May, Saturday 23 rd May and Saturday 30 th May 2020)	
Resit exams	Tuesday 1 st September – Friday 11 th September 2020	Friday 31 st July 2020, 5pm

Understanding your exam timetable

Your timetable and Exam Entry Form will show all the exams for which you have been entered in the forthcoming exam period. An example is below:

exam code	title	date	start	finish	duration	room	seat
BS101-4-MC	MOLECULAR CELL BIOLOGY	09-01-2013	10:00	10:50	0:50	5.300	5
BS113-4-MC	ANIMAL AND PLANT BIOLOGY	09-01-2013	14:00	14:50	0:50	5.300	11
BS141-4-MC	SCIENTIFIC AND TRANSFERABLE SKILLS FOR BIOSCIENCES	10-01-2013	10:00	10:50	0:50	PC J	8
BS131-4-MC	BIOCHEMISTRY OF MACROMOLECULES	11-01-2013	14:15	15:05	0:50	LTB 1	3

- **Exam code:** This is the module code and level of the examination. The level is the single digit in the middle of the exam code. Please let the Exams Office and your Department know immediately if the level is different to what you expected. The suffix ("MC" in the example above) may be different to the module you have been studying – for example, it may say "XX" or "MQ" instead of "AU" or "SP". This is normal.
- **Title:** This is the module title.
- **Date:** This is the date of the examination.
- **Start:** This is the start time of the examination.
- **Finish:** This is the end time of the examination.
- **Duration:** This is the duration of the examination. For students with individual exam arrangements, the duration includes any additional writing time you have been allocated, but does not include any non-writing time.
- **Room:** This is the room where the exam will take place. Please note you may be in a different room to other people taking the same exam.
- **Seat:** This is the seat number that has been allocated to you in the exam room. You must sit in your allocated seat unless an invigilator asks you to sit elsewhere.

Please check the details carefully and tell the Exams Office if you think there may be an error, such as a missing exam or a clash (two exams scheduled at the same time). The system has a link to an online form for you to report any exam timetable problems, or you can use the details at the back of this booklet on the 'useful contacts' page. Please get in touch immediately – do not wait until the exams are underway.

Your exam timetable is subject to change, so please check it regularly. Failure to consult your exam timetable will not be accepted as a reason for missing an examination or for failure to observe exam requirements.

If you have successfully applied to the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub for individual exam arrangements, you will see these listed towards the bottom of the page when you log in to the exam timetable system. Please use the Exam Timetable Problem form if your individual exam arrangements are missing, not what you expected, or you no longer require them, or contact the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub (details are at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page).

In addition to your name and registration number, your Exam Entry Form also shows your four-digit candidate number in large print in the centre of the page. This is the number you should write on your examination scripts. It ensures that your scripts can be marked anonymously.

How many exams must I take in a week?

The Exams Office will try to ensure that you only have one exam per day.

This is guidance only, not a regulation. There are occasions when you could be expected to sit two exams per day – particularly in the very short exam periods in January and September, or if you have any exams of one hour or less in duration.

other departmental staff should advise you during the year, but your Exam Entry Form will show the exact start and finish time of each of your exams.

If you have been granted individual exam arrangements, you may have been awarded extra time, usually calculated as additional minutes per hour. If you have been awarded additional **writing** time, this will be included in the duration stated on your form. If you have been awarded **non-writing** time (also known as rest breaks), this will **not** be included on your form – however, the exam invigilators will know you are eligible to receive it.

It is important that you look at your own form and do not rely on your classmates' information, as it may be different to yours.

What should I do if I miss my exams or cannot attend them?

Attendance at examinations is compulsory (see point 6.6 of the Regulations relating to Academic Affairs at <http://bit.ly/acad-reggs>). If you expect to miss an examination for good reason such as illness, or you have already missed an examination, please complete the online form at <http://bit.ly/examabsence> to notify the Exams Office. You must complete a separate form for each exam you miss.

The form does not constitute a report of extenuating circumstances. If you wish to notify the Board of Examiners of extenuating circumstances relating to your absence from an exam, please complete and submit an Extenuating Circumstances form by the published deadline.

The Extenuating Circumstances form for all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and pre-sessional students can be found at <http://bit.ly/myessexEC>. Please read the guidance on extenuating circumstances very carefully before submitting your form, which can be found here: <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>. Your extenuating circumstances form must be submitted by the published deadline, shown at <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>

What if I am ill while revising for my exams?

It is important that even if your revision is disrupted because of illness, you still try to prepare for the examinations as best you can, and attend them if you are well. If you do not turn up, you will be marked absent and you will receive a mark of zero for the exam.

You have an opportunity to inform the Board of Examiners if you feel that your performance has been **significantly** affected by illness by completing and submitting an Extenuating Circumstances Form by the published deadline. If you are ill, it is important that you visit your doctor to obtain a medical certificate to support any claim for extenuating circumstances you may choose to submit.

The Extenuating Circumstances form for all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and pre-sessional students can be found at <http://bit.ly/myessexEC>. Please read the guidance on extenuating circumstances very carefully before submitting your form, which can be found here: <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>. Your extenuating circumstances form must be submitted by the published deadline, shown at <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>

What should I bring to my exams?

You will not be allowed into any exam without your **registration card** and **Exam Entry Form**. Your Exam Entry Form can be printed by logging into the exam timetable system at www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes.

In some exams, you **may** be allowed to bring items such as relevant textbooks or other reference materials. Your module supervisor or other departmental staff should advise you of such entitlements during the year.

You must provide your own **pens, pencils** and **authorised calculator**. Your pens and pencils must be loose or in a clear plastic bag – pencil cases must not be taken to your desk.

Statistical tables will be provided where the exam requires them.

Do not bring in any form of scrap paper – you will be provided with a supplementary answer book for you to use for this purpose, if your exam requires it. If you need to make notes, you can do so in your answer book, and cross through anything you do not want to be marked.

What if I have lost or forgotten my registration card?

Your options are as follows:

1. During the summer exam period only, you can buy a replacement registration card from the Exams Office in LTB 4 at a cost of £5. The Exams Office can only accept cash. During the other exam periods, or during the summer if you want to pay by card, you can go to the Information Desk in the Student Services Hub on the first floor of the Silberrad Student Centre to buy your replacement card.
2. Go to the Exams Office (LTB 4 during the summer and resit exam periods and room 6.106 in all other exam periods) **on the day of your exam, at least 15 minutes before the exam starts** and ask for a form to give you access to the exam room. You will need to present the Exams Office staff with your Exam Entry Form and a form of photo ID, such as a passport, national identity card or driving licence. If you do not have any photo ID, the Exams Office will use other methods to verify your identity. You will then be given a blue form to place on your exam desk instead of your registration card. This form is valid for **one exam only** and can only be issued **on the day of the exam**, so you will need to repeat this process for each exam. The Exams Office opens at 8am whenever exams are running. The office can be very busy in the period before the exams start, so please allow plenty of time for your ID check.

What if my registration card has expired?

If you are resitting an exam in the September resit period and your registration card has expired within the last few months, you can still use it in an exam. If your card expired more than six months ago, please follow the procedure above to obtain a replacement card or a temporary entry pass.

What if my registration card has a faded picture or is illegible?

The exam invigilators will be unable to verify your identity, so it is recommended that you either get a replacement card or come to the Exams Office on the day of your exam, at least 10-15 minutes before the exam starts, to obtain a form you can use instead of your registration card. If you do not do this, one of the invigilators will escort you to the Exams Office at the end of your exam, where your identity will be verified. This may mean you have to wait at the end of the exam until the invigilators have finished their work in the exam room.

What if my printer is broken or out of ink and I cannot print my Exam Entry Form?

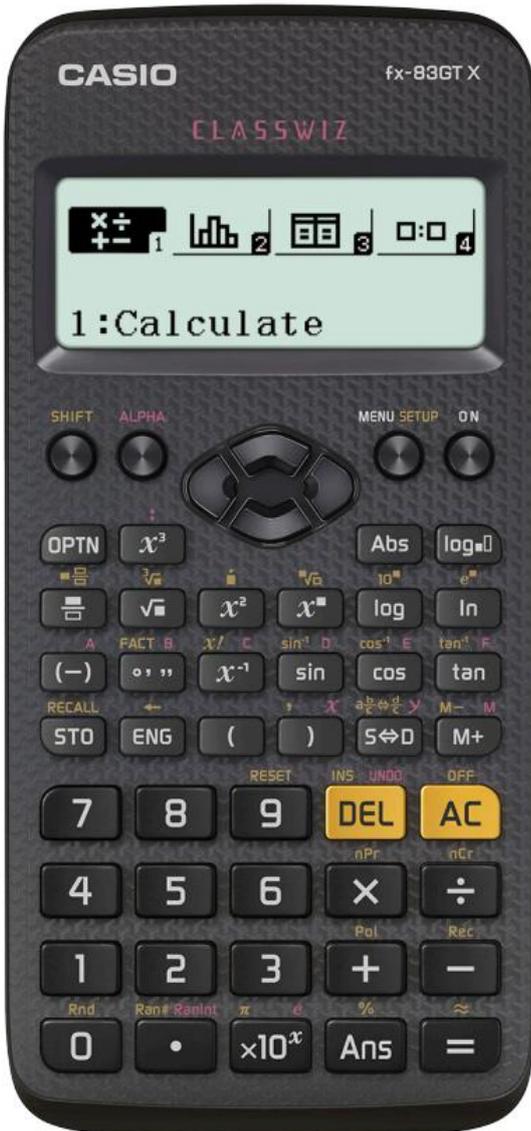
Go to the Exams Office (LTB 4 during the summer and resit exam periods and room 6.106 in all other exam periods) and we will print one for you.

Can I use a calculator in my exams?

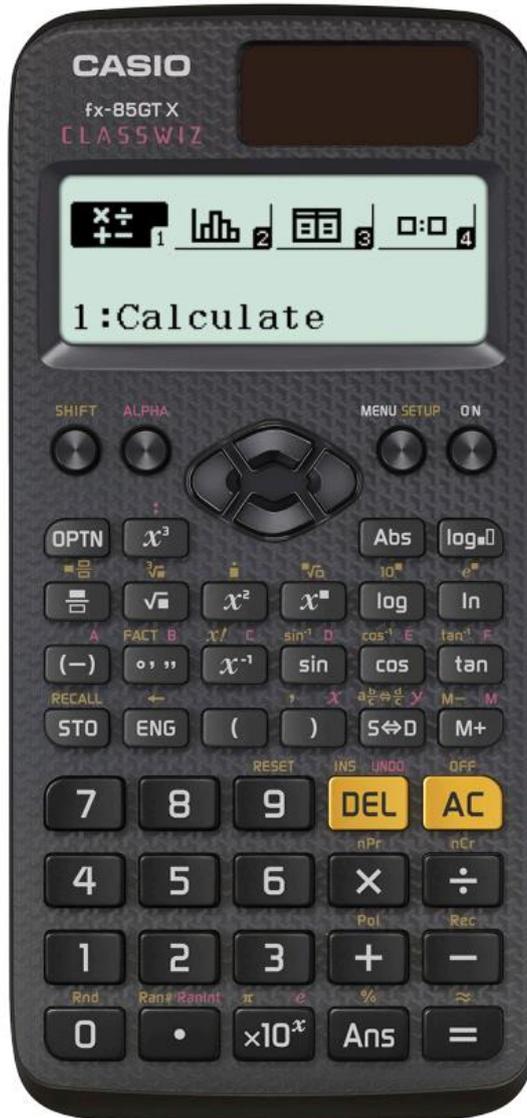
Calculators are permitted in some examinations. Your module supervisor or other departmental staff should advise you during the year whether a calculator can be used in the examination for each module. The rubric (front page) of each exam paper will also state whether use of a calculator is allowed.

The only models of calculator authorised for use in the majority of University of Essex examinations are the Casio FX 83-GT X and Casio FX-85 GT X (new models for 2019) and the Casio FX-83 GT PLUS and Casio FX-85 GT PLUS (both now discontinued, but still available in some shops).

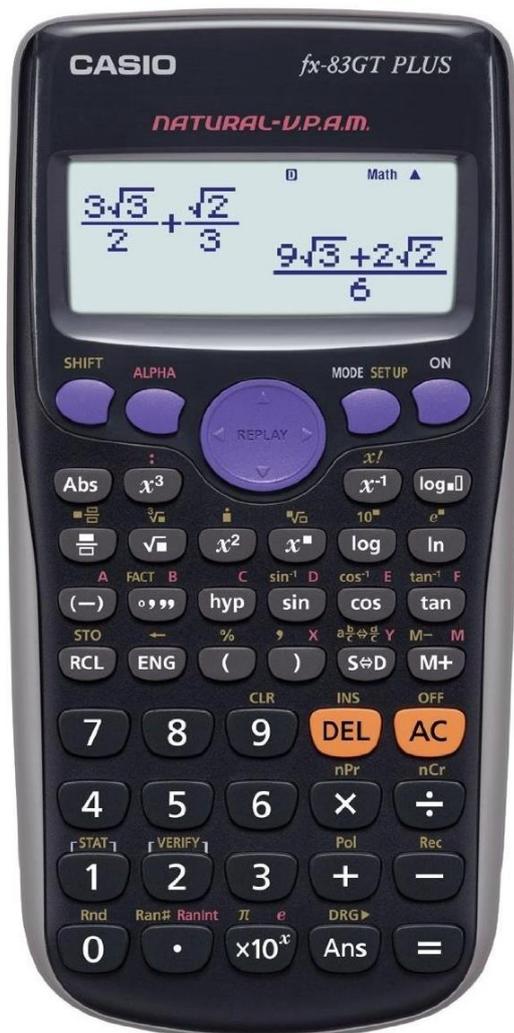
Casio FX-83-GT X



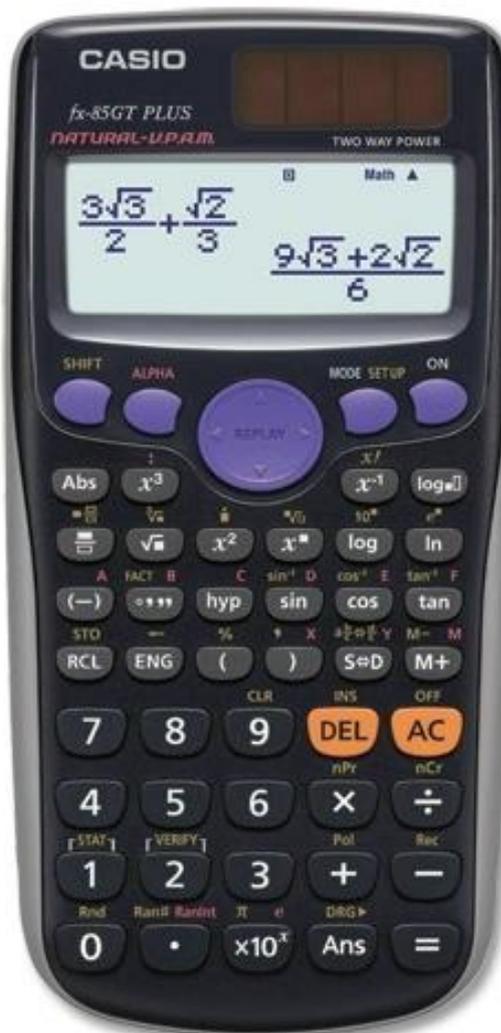
Casio FX-85-GT X



Casio FX-83GT PLUS



Casio FX-85GT PLUS



The FX-83 and FX-85 models are identical in operation – the only difference is that the FX-85 is both solar and battery powered (hence the small solar panel above the display), whereas the FX-83 only uses battery power.

What is the reason for the restrictions?

The calculator rules ensure that no candidate is able to gain an unfair advantage by using a more advanced calculator with increased functionality.

These particular models are widely available and are among the cheapest on the market. They are stocked in campus in Everything Essex and Waterstones. Alternatively, you may want to ask on [Small Ads](#) or look at www.campusboard.co.uk to see if you can buy second-hand from a student on campus.

Writing on your calculator

You must ensure that nothing is written or scratched onto your calculator, even if it is irrelevant to the exam. If any writing is found, you will be reported for a suspected academic offence (cheating).

What if I forget my calculator on the day of the exam?

The Exams Office have a small number of calculators (30), which may be borrowed by students on presentation of their registration card, on a first-come, first-served basis. **You must not rely on this** as the Exams Office will not be able to help you if the stock of calculators has run out, and it will remain **your responsibility** to obtain the permitted model of calculator for your exam.

The calculator will remain the property of the Exams Office and you must return it at the end of your exam, otherwise the cost of the calculator plus the security engraving will be charged to your University account.

Will an invigilator check my calculator?

An invigilator will inspect your calculator. If your calculator is not one of the authorised models, it will be confiscated, and a replacement may not be given. You will be able to collect your calculator from the Senior Invigilator at the end of the exam.

Batteries

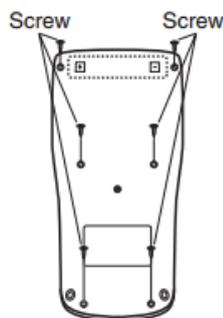
If you are using the **Casio FX-83 GT X** or the **Casio FX-83 GT PLUS**, please consider replacing the battery at the start of the exam period to ensure your calculator will be working normally for all of your exams. Your calculator uses one AAA-size battery. The battery panel is screwed down, so you will not be able to replace the battery during the exam. Please see below for instructions on changing the battery from the calculator manual.

Replacing the Battery

A low battery is indicated by a dim display, even if contrast is adjusted, or by failure of figures to appear on the display immediately after you turn on the calculator. If this happens, replace the battery with a new one.

Important: Removing the battery will cause all of the calculator's memory contents to be deleted.

1. Press **SHIFT** **AC** (OFF) to turn off the calculator.
2. Remove the cover as shown in the illustration and replace the battery, taking care that its plus (+) and minus (-) ends are facing correctly.
3. Replace the cover.
4. Initialize the calculator: **ON** **SHIFT** **9** (CLR) **3** (All) **≡** (Yes)
 - Do not skip the above step!



fx-83GT PLUS

© Casio Computer Co., Ltd

If you are using the **Casio FX-85GT X** or **Casio FX-85GT PLUS**, there is no need to carry out the above steps, as your calculator is both solar and battery powered.

Calculators for Finance exams

Certain Finance exams require the use of a **financial** calculator. Your module supervisor should inform you if this is the case and it will be indicated on the front page of the exam paper.

If a financial calculator is required, you must **only** use one of the following models:

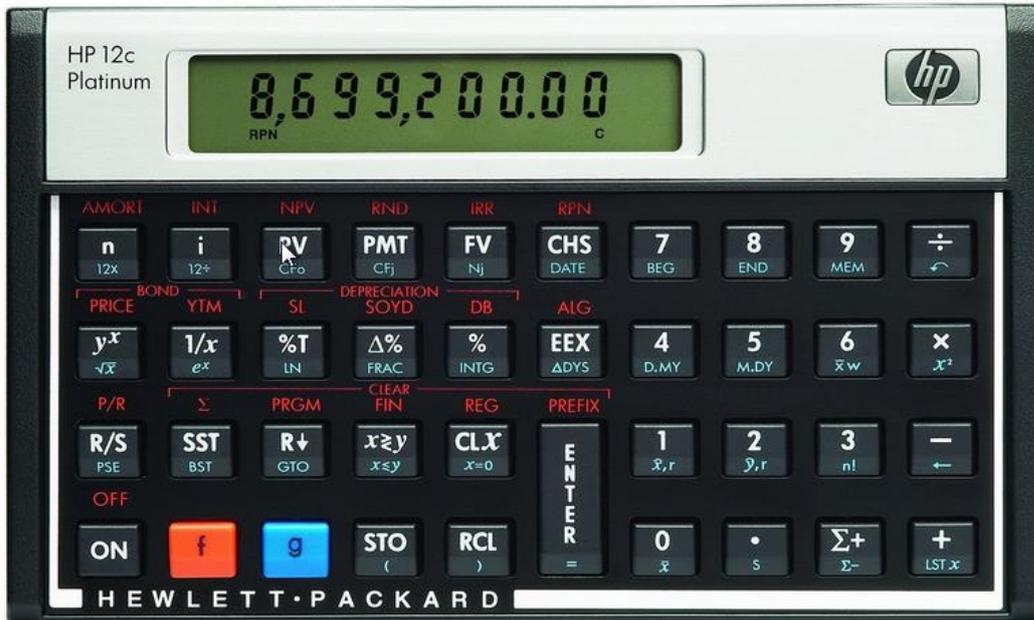
- Hewlett Packard (HP) 12c (including the 12c Platinum, 12c Platinum 25th Anniversary Edition, 12c 30th Anniversary Edition and 12c Prestige)
- Texas Instruments BAII Plus
- Texas Instruments BAII Plus Professional.

Photographs are shown on the following page. **Any other models will be confiscated and no replacement will be given.**

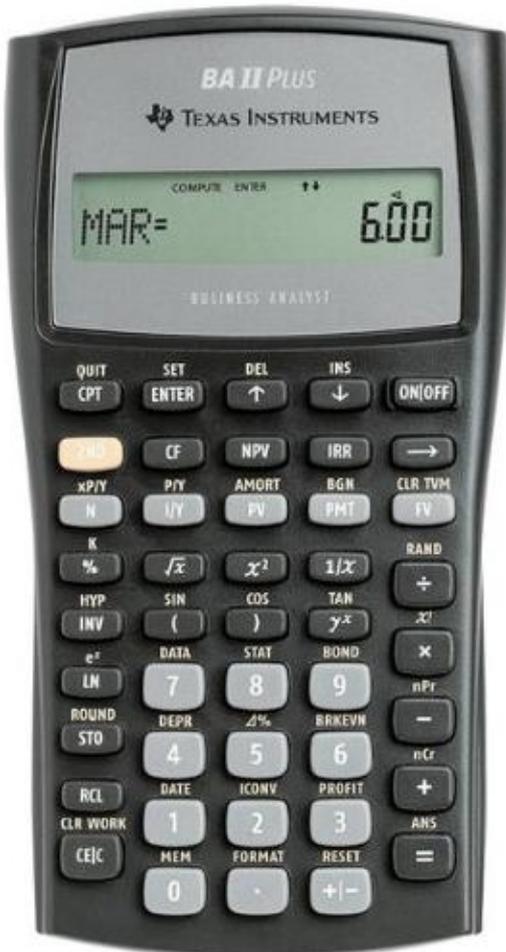
Financial calculators – for use only when specified on the front page of the exam paper

HP 12c series

(The picture shows the 12c Platinum, but the other 12c variants are also permitted and are similar in design)



Texas Instruments BAII Plus



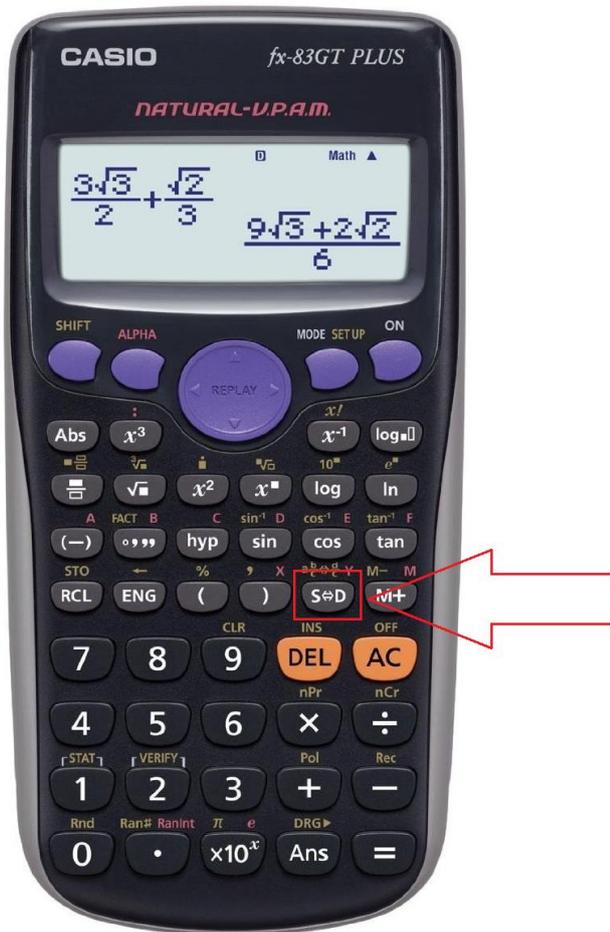
Texas Instruments BAII Plus Professional



Other models will be confiscated. If the front page of the exam paper does not explicitly state that a financial calculator may be used, you **must** use either the Casio FX-83GT PLUS/X or FX-85GT PLUS/X.

Calculators displaying fractions instead of decimals

If your Casio FX-83 or FX-85 calculator is displaying your calculation as a fraction instead of a decimal, this can be corrected with a single press of the S<->D button, shown with a box around it on the picture below:



You should perform their calculation as normal, and then press the S<->D button to toggle between fractions and decimals.

Calculators and cheating

Some calculators, and other electronic devices that function as a calculator, enable the user to store textual information. If you take stored information into an exam on your calculator or any other device, you will be reported for committing an academic offence (suspected cheating). It is an academic offence to introduce any written, printed or electronically-stored information into an examination, or to attempt to access any unauthorised material during the examination. See the section on Academic Offences and Cheating for more information.

The models of calculator that are authorised for use in exams do not have a memory capable of storing text. This is another reason why you should not bring any other model of calculator to an exam.

Can I use a dictionary in my exams?

Dictionaries may only be used where the exam paper specifies that a dictionary is allowed. It will specify the type of dictionary allowed.

Electronic dictionaries are not permitted in examinations – if you take one to an exam, you will be reported on suspicion of committing an academic offence.

Where should I put my mobile phone during my exams?

The Exams Office would prefer that you did not bring your mobile phone to your exams. The University accepts no liability for any loss or damage to your mobile phone if it is brought into the exam room or left in your bag or coat pocket.

If you do bring your phone, you must ensure that:

- all alarms have been cancelled or deactivated
- the phone is switched off (not put in silent mode or airplane mode)
- the phone is placed **underneath** your desk in the clear plastic bag provided
- you leave your phone under your desk if you need to leave the exam room temporarily for any reason.

If a phone rings or vibrates in the exam room, it becomes a disruption to candidates. If the phone is in someone's coat or bag, the invigilators are authorised to search through that property until the device is found and silenced.

If your phone rings or vibrates in the exam room – either on your desk or amongst your belongings – it will be confiscated until such time that the Exams Office can confirm that it does not hold any unauthorised material. This may cause a delay in returning it to you of at least 24 hours, particularly if professional help is required to access the phone or translate a foreign language. An academic offence report will be filed against you.

Your mobile phone is potentially a disruption to other candidates and a method of storing unauthorised material. The penalty for phone-related incidents, whether intentional or not, may be more severe than you realise. A student may be found guilty of an academic offence whether or not there has been intention to deceive. This means that a judgement that negligence has occurred is sufficient to determine guilt. Don't take the risk – please leave your phone at home.

Can I bring my tablet computer or laptop into the exam room?

Again, the Exams Office would rather you did not – but if you do, please deactivate any alarms, switch it off (not just into standby or silent/airplane mode) and keep it in your bag at all times. Remember, the University accepts no liability for any loss or damage to these items in the exam room.

Arriving at the exam room

What time should I arrive?

The time shown on your Exam Entry Form is the actual start time, i.e. the time when the Senior Invigilator will let you open the paper and start writing. Please arrive **15 minutes** before this time – this is when the exam room will open, and it can take several minutes to find your seat and get settled before the exam starts. The senior invigilator will also read out important announcements before the exam begins.

There can be large queues outside the exam venues beforehand, particularly at the Sports Hall, Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall and Lecture Theatre Building. If you need peace and quiet to gather your thoughts, please arrive in good time but wait quietly nearby, until you see that the candidates are starting to enter the room. Once in the room, all candidates are required to be silent so that you can concentrate on the exam.

- Please check where your exam rooms are located in advance. Every year, students are late for exams because they are looking for the room at the last minute! If you need help finding a room, you can use the FindYourWay website at <http://findyourway.essex.ac.uk>, or search for 'FindYourWay@Essex' on the Apple App Store or Google Play to install the smartphone app.
- If you arrive more than 55 minutes late to any examination of more than one hour in length, **you will not be allowed in** (see point 6.8 of the Regulations relating to Academic Affairs at <http://bit.ly/examregs>). You will receive a zero mark for the exam. For examinations with a duration of up to one hour, candidates will be admitted to the exam room up to ten minutes after the start of the examination.
- Every year, some students miss an exam because their alarm didn't go off. Why not set two alarms, or ask a friend to phone you? Also, please allow plenty of time for traffic or public transport delays.
- If you are late, you will **not** be given extra time at the end of the exam, regardless of the circumstances.
- The time stated on your Exam Entry Form and timetable uses the 24-hour clock – e.g. 2 o'clock in the afternoon is 14:00.

Where should I put my coat and bag?

Please leave your coat and bag at the front of the room, or in another part of the room designated for the purpose. Please keep entry and exit routes clear.

- You must not bring pencil cases, diaries, folders or revision notes to your desk.
- You must not bring textbooks to your desk unless these are specifically authorised for use during the exam.
- You must not bring any outdoor clothing such as hats and scarves to your desk or wear them during the exam, unless for reasons of religious observance.

The Senior Invigilator will remind candidates about unauthorised items during the starting announcements. If you have taken anything to your desk by mistake, you must tell an invigilator at this point, so it can be removed before the exam starts.

You risk being reported for suspected cheating if you do not follow these instructions.

The Exams Office and the invigilation staff cannot accept responsibility for your personal belongings, so please bring only essential items to the exam room.

Can I bring a suitcase with me to the exam venue?

Due to a lack of space in most venues, you should avoid bringing large items to luggage to the exam venue.

Where should I sit?

Your Exam Entry Form shows the seat number allocated to you for each of your examinations. Candidates are seated in a particular order (not alphabetical) that helps the invigilators to run the exam room efficiently. Large exams are spread over several rooms and there may be more than one module being examined in each room, so please check your exam timetable carefully and do not assume you will be sitting with other people on your module.

- Do not follow your classmates or assume that you are in the wrong room because there are people that you do not recognise.
- You **must** sit in the seat allocated to you, unless an invigilator tells you otherwise. If you sit elsewhere, you risk being marked absent and your script may not be marked.
- All the desks are clearly labelled with numbers. The numbers start at the front of the room. If you cannot find your seat, please ask an invigilator for assistance. You must not talk to other candidates once you are in the exam room.

What is the role of the invigilators?

Invigilators and Senior Invigilators are employed by the Exams Office to run examinations and to ensure that they are carried out in accordance with the University's policies, procedures and regulations. Invigilators are trained staff who are familiar with academic life and will understand that exams can be very stressful. They are obliged to ensure that the exam environment is fair to all students.

Each exam room has one Senior Invigilator, who is responsible for everything that happens in the room, gives instructions to the other staff, and makes the announcements before, during and after the exam.

The invigilators must ensure good order in the exam room. This requires them to communicate with each other, with University staff and with candidates, either individually or en masse. It is not possible for every exam room to be completely silent from start to finish. If candidates have questions or problems during the exam, the invigilators must respond, which would necessitate their talking. This can be for your own benefit – for example, to correct an error on the exam paper or to resolve a problem with the physical environment of the room.

Sometimes invigilators have to adapt their procedures or announcements depending on the size of the venue or the number of exam papers that people are sitting. This means your experience of exams in a large venue like the Sports Hall may be different to your experience in a smaller venue like a seminar room. Please follow all instructions carefully, as they may vary in each exam.

- Do not hesitate to ask an invigilator if you need assistance.
- You should also draw their attention to any irregularities that you feel they may be unaware of, such as a mistake on the exam paper or students talking to each other.
- Please co-operate with the staff and they will do their best to ensure your exam is as stress-free as possible.

What are all the announcements for?

The Senior Invigilator will remind you as you enter the room that you must not talk and that all personal belongings are to be left in the designated area.

When everyone is seated, a few minutes before the exam starts, they will make the starting announcements. Please listen carefully, even if you have taken exams at the University before. The announcements remind you of the rules and procedures and advise you what to do if you need assistance during the exam. There may also be some specific instructions regarding your exam paper or answer books.

Please see Appendix D for an example of the announcements you can expect to hear.

During the exam

Starting the exam

- Check that the question paper in front of you has the correct module code and title. If it is wrong, notify an invigilator immediately – either you are in the wrong seat or room, or the wrong paper has been laid out on your desk.
- Do not open the exam question paper or write on your answer book until you are told to do so by the Senior Invigilator. Otherwise you may be reported for suspected cheating.
- **Read the rubric.** The rubric is the front page of the question paper, which details the instructions to candidates. It tells you how many questions must be answered or whether there is any choice of questions. You should read the rubric carefully even if you think you know what is expected.
- **When the exam starts**, write your four-digit candidate number in the space provided on the front of your answer book. Your candidate number is in large print in the centre of your Exam Entry Form. This number is used to mark your script anonymously. Please check that you have written the number correctly, and do not write your name or any other number on the answer book.

Identity checks

Shortly after the exam starts, the invigilators will pass quietly alongside your desk and check that the photo on your registration card matches your face, and that your name appears on the attendance list. If there is a problem with your identification, or the invigilator is unsure, you will be allowed to continue your exam – but you will be escorted to the Exams Office by an invigilator at the end of the exam, where a further brief identity check will be made.

If you wear the niqab or burka, an invigilator will ask you to briefly show your face so you can be identified, or they may ask you to do this at the end of the exam. You can ask for this to take place outside the room if you prefer, and/or you can ask for a female member of staff to perform the check. If you are concerned about when, where, how and by whom this check will be conducted, please speak to the Senior Invigilator before the exam starts.

Using material from your coursework

Exam papers are carefully constructed in order to eliminate, as much as possible, the opportunities for replicating material from your coursework assignments. You are reminded that you should not draw heavily on the content of previously submitted coursework in order to answer examination questions, as this is likely to affect the marks you receive for your exam. It is important to read the questions carefully – if an exam question refers to the same topic, literary text or case study as something you have covered in a coursework assignment, it is likely that the exam question will be constructed differently and will require original thought to answer it well.

Making rough notes

Scrap paper is **not** provided during examinations and you should **not** bring your own. All rough work must be written in the answer book(s) provided. A line should be drawn through any rough work to indicate to the examiner that it is not part of the work to be marked. **Never tear pages out of your answer book.** For certain exams, a supplementary answer book will be provided specifically for making notes, and this will be labelled as such.

Never make notes on any part of your Exam Entry Form, either front or back – the invigilators will be unable to determine whether you wrote the notes during the exam or brought them in with you, and therefore you will be reported for suspected cheating.

If you have a learning difficulty and Student Support have determined that you require separate answer books for rough work and final answers, these will be provided – but you must hand them all in at the end.

Writing clearly

As we make increasing use of technology for everyday learning and study, it becomes very difficult to write by hand for extended periods of time, such as in an exam. It is important that you write legibly – if the marker cannot read any part of your script, they will not be able to allocate any marks for the illegible work and you risk failing the examination.

Why not practice writing out some of your revision materials by hand if you normally use a computer? If you revise with friends, check that you can read each other's handwriting so you can be confident of writing a legible script.

Asking for help

If you have any questions at all about the exam, you must ask an invigilator. If you speak to another candidate, you will **both** be reported for suspected cheating, as it is against point 6.22 of the University regulations (<http://bit.ly/acad-regs>).

Please raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to your desk. They will either help you immediately, refer the matter to the Senior Invigilator, or contact another member of staff by telephone. You must tell an invigilator if:

- You think another student is cheating.
- There is a problem or disturbance caused by another candidate or something outside the room.
- You do not understand the instructions on the exam paper.
- You think there is a mistake on the exam paper.
- You need an additional answer book.
- You feel ill or you need to leave the room.

Do not wait until after the exam – it is impossible to remedy any problems after the exam has ended.

Can I eat and drink?

You can take a small bottle of water (up to 500ml) to your exam desk, but no other drinks are allowed. If you do not bring your own water or it runs out, one of the invigilators will bring you a cup of still water on request. Unwrapped boiled sweets may be consumed quietly, but the invigilators can ask you to stop eating or drinking if you are disturbing other candidates. You cannot eat snacks during the exam. Plan ahead – see what time your exams are and eat a good breakfast or lunch beforehand.

Can I vape/chew tobacco/chew nicotine gum?

E-cigarettes (vaping), snus (such as Skruf), nasal snuff, chewing tobacco, dipping tobacco, Makla, Naswar, nicotine gum and similar products are all prohibited and must not be brought to your exam desk.

Can I visit the toilet?

We advise you to visit the toilet before you enter the exam room. If you need to visit the toilet during the exam, you will not be given any additional time. All students using the toilet during exams are escorted by an invigilator, and you may have to wait until a member of staff is available.

The invigilators can refuse you permission to visit the toilet if they feel that it will cause unnecessary disturbance to other candidates – for example, if it is close to the end of the exam.

Students' Guide to Examinations (Colchester Campus)

- The toilets are checked carefully before, during and after exams to make sure that candidates have not concealed any notes to be retrieved during the exam.
- If you are seen or heard looking at any notes or electronic devices during a toilet visit, you will be reported for suspected cheating. If you see anything in the toilets, do not pick it up – instead, tell the invigilator.
- If you finish your exam early but the regulations do not permit you to leave, please do not visit the toilet just to pass the time or stretch your legs as it disturbs other candidates and takes up time that your invigilator could put to better use in the exam room.

Leaving early

For examinations of more than 90 minutes in length, you cannot permanently leave the exam room during the last 30 minutes (see point 6.8 of the Regulations relating to Academic Affairs at <http://bit.ly/acad-regs>). For exams of 90 minutes' duration or less, candidates may not leave unless the Senior Invigilator gives permission.

- If you have finished and you want to leave, you must raise your hand and wait for the invigilator to come to your desk and collect your script. Never leave your exam desk while an exam is in progress without the permission of an invigilator.
- You will not be allowed back into the exam room once you have left. We advise students to stay for the whole of the exam so that they can be sure to have demonstrated their potential to the full.

Finishing the exam

Before the exam ends, check that you have completed the details on the front of your answer book(s).

At the end of the examination, you **must** stop writing when told to do so by an invigilator, even if you are only completing the front of your answer book. If you continue to write after being told to stop, you will be reported for suspected cheating.

If you have used more than one answer book, check that they are securely fastened together with a treasury tag. If you do not have a tag, ask an invigilator.

The invigilators may have as many as 380 answer books to collect, often for more than one exam paper. Please be patient – it may take around ten minutes for all the answer books to be collected and counted. When the Senior Invigilator is sure that all candidates' work is accounted for, you will be allowed to leave the room.

Do not talk to other candidates while the answer books are being collected and counted.

If there are other exams continuing in the same room or nearby, please collect your belongings and leave as quietly as possible to avoid disturbing other candidates. Next time, you may be the one trying to work while others are leaving!

Academic Offences and Cheating

Why does the University take cheating seriously?

The University strives to provide a controlled and fair examination environment for all its students, to enable candidates to demonstrate their real potential in written examinations. This ensures that the standards of our academic awards are maintained and respected in the UK and internationally. To achieve this, in addition to providing suitable facilities and staffing for examinations, the University must prevent, detect and punish students that cheat, so that those who are honest can be confident that exams are run fairly.

At Registration you signed a declaration agreeing to abide by the Regulations of the University. These are published online at <http://bit.ly/acad-regs>.

What could be considered cheating in an exam?

The invigilators will report every student that they suspect of cheating. The following actions will result in you being reported (this list is not exhaustive):

- Communicating in any way (or attempting to communicate) with another student in the exam room, even before the exam has started
- Looking at the exam questions or writing in your answer book before the Senior Invigilator has announced that you may start the exam
- Writing on either side of your Exam Entry Form either before or during the exam
- Taking a calculator (or calculator case) that has been written on to your exam desk
- Taking a calculator to your desk that contains electronically-stored information
- Taking any books, written materials or notes – no matter how short – to your desk, other than those that are specifically permitted
- Inserting notes or used scrap paper into a permitted textbook or reference document
- Taking an electronic dictionary to your desk
- Retrieving notes concealed in the toilets or elsewhere in the building
- Using a mobile phone in any way whatsoever or having one on your person instead of under your desk
- Continuing to write after the Senior Invigilator has instructed you to stop.

Every year, students are reported for suspected cheating because they have taken revision notes to their desk. It is quite usual to do last-minute revision as you are waiting to go into the exam room. Once you enter the room, you must leave all notes and papers with your coat and bag in the designated area.

Do not take the risk – think carefully about what you are taking to the exam desk and follow all instructions.

What happens to suspected cheats?

The Senior Invigilator compiles a written report of the suspected offence. The Student Progress Team (based in the Student Services Hub) then invokes the Academic Offences procedure. The candidate will be required to attend a meeting with the Dean or the Academic Offences Committee where the details of the offence will be heard and the outcome will be determined.

The penalties for cheating can be very serious. Marks for individual papers or entire modules can be reduced or set to zero, affecting your overall degree result. In very serious cases or for repeated offences,

the ultimate penalty is that you are required to withdraw from the University. This happens to a few students each year.

Warning on exam conduct

Where your conduct leads you to be reported for suspected cheating, but the case does not warrant the Academic Offences Procedure, you may instead receive a Warning on Exam Conduct, in the form of a letter from the Assessment and Progress Manager in the examinations team. This does not affect the outcome of the exam, but will be taken into account if you are reported for cheating in any future examinations.

If you think another candidate is cheating

Please tell an invigilator. It is much more difficult for the University staff to take action after the exam. Please do not ignore the issue. We appreciate your help to stamp out cheating.

If you feel tempted to cheat

An Essex degree is highly respected worldwide and the University has a reputation for producing quality graduates. This reputation would soon be damaged if it tolerated cheating, so the Exams Office and the invigilation staff dedicate significant time and resources to preventing and detecting it, and the consequences for any student caught cheating are severe. Please do not jeopardise your academic progress and future prospects – put your effort into your revision instead.

Extenuating Circumstances

Disturbance in the exam room

If, during the exam, you feel that your performance is being affected by a disturbance to the exam room, such as noise from building work or gardening equipment, please tell an invigilator. The Senior Invigilator will then attempt to resolve the problem themselves or will ask the Exams Office to liaise with the Estates team to see if the noise can be silenced. If the problem cannot be resolved or the disturbance lasts a long time, and you feel your performance has been significantly affected, please complete an Extenuating Circumstances form.

The Extenuating Circumstances form for all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and pre-sessional students can be found at <http://bit.ly/myessexEC>. Please read the guidance on extenuating circumstances very carefully before submitting your form, which can be found here: <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>. Your extenuating circumstances form must be submitted by the published deadline, shown at <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>

Mistakes on the exam paper

If you or a fellow student reports a suspected error on the exam paper, the Senior Invigilator will submit an incident report to the Board of Examiners via the Exams Office at the end of the exam, so that the Board knows the time taken to correct any error and the impact upon candidates' ability to answer the question. You do not need to submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form for this. It is the University's policy that additional time is **not** awarded in such cases, owing to the difficulty of ascertaining which candidates had attempted the erroneous question and which had not.

Poor performance due to illness or personal problems

You may wish to draw the Board of Examiners' attention to difficulties of a medical or personal kind that you believe have **significantly** affected your examination performance and/or your general academic performance during the academic year. You can do this by completing an Extenuating Circumstances Form. If you are ill, it is important that you visit your doctor to obtain a medical certificate to support a claim for extenuating circumstances.

The Extenuating Circumstances form for all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and pre-sessional students can be found at <http://bit.ly/myessexEC>. Please read the guidance on extenuating circumstances very carefully before submitting your form, which can be found here: <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>. Your extenuating circumstances form must be submitted by the published deadline, shown at <http://bit.ly/ext-circs>

Please read the guidance at the above link before completing the form for advice on what supporting evidence is required and how extenuating circumstances claims are processed.

The deadline for submitting Extenuating Circumstances Forms is very important because the Boards of Examiners operate to a tight schedule, starting soon after the end of exams. Forms submitted late will not be accepted and cannot be considered by the Board of Examiners. Even if you have discussed your case with a member of staff, **you** are responsible for submitting a form. You will not be able to appeal against your results on the grounds of extenuating circumstances if you could reasonably have reported them by the deadline.

Complaints

If you have any complaints or feedback about how an exam was conducted, please contact the Exams Office – details are at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page. The Exams Office will investigate your complaint.

Exam regulations

Detailed information relating to exam regulations can be found at <http://bit.ly/acad-regs>.

After the examinations

Lost property

If you leave anything behind in the exam room and it is found by one of the invigilators, it will be held by the Exams Office for a couple of days. After that time, it will be passed to the Estate Management Helpdesk in room 6.003.

Lost registration cards can be reclaimed from the Exams Office during the summer and resit exam periods. At other times, they can be reclaimed from the Information Desk in the Student Services Hub, on the first floor of the Silberrad Student Centre.

If you leave your Exam Entry Form in the exam room, it will usually be destroyed. Please print a new one at www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes.

Publication of results

Undergraduate students

The schedule at <http://bit.ly/results-dates> shows the dates on which the Undergraduate results are expected to be released.

Taught Postgraduate students

The schedule at <http://bit.ly/results-dates> lists the dates of the actual Board of Examiners' meetings for Taught Postgraduate students, not the dates the results are published. Postgraduate results are usually published **approximately five working days** after the Board of Examiners meets.

Checking your results

When the results are published, an email notification will be sent to your Essex.ac.uk account. You should check your results and view the decision of the Board of Examiners about your progress at www.essex.ac.uk/results.

You will need to log in to the results website with your Essex account username and current password. Your password will have expired if you have not used your account at all since Registration, or if you did not change your password when the final reminder email was sent. If this is the case, you must ensure that you reactivate your account by the end of term, so that you can access your results when they become available. For assistance go to the IT Helpdesk on the ground floor of the Silberrad Student Centre, call them on +44 (0)1206 872345 / StudentCom 224 2345, or email it.helpdesk@essex.ac.uk quoting your Essex.ac.uk username.

The University is not able to send results by email or post or give them over the phone. We do not publish pass lists on noticeboards. It is **your responsibility** to check your results online.

Final year students

Please note that your results for the early and summer exam periods will only be accessible online until mid-July, as computing accounts for departing students are deactivated after this point. When you check your exam results online you will be asked to supply an external address (such as a webmail account) and a chosen password if you wish to continue to access your exam results after your account is closed.

Transcripts

Final-year undergraduates will receive a transcript and degree certificate at Graduation, or by post if they do not attend the ceremony. Postgraduate students who require an interim transcript should order this online at <http://bit.ly/studentdocs>, or in person at the Information Desk in the Student Services Hub, on the first floor of the Silberrad Student Centre.

If you're an undergraduate and started in 2014 or after, you have access to your [HEAR](#) which **replaces** the Academic Transcript. You'll need to activate your account using the link you have been sent from Gradintel.

If you haven't received an activation email, email hear@essex.ac.uk to request a new one. When you graduate, your HEAR will be finalised and you'll have full access to it for life.

The Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) is a secure digital document that you can access and share for life. It replaces the hard copy academic transcript. You can use your HEAR as you go through your degree as a record of all your achievements. You can also use it to apply for internships and placements, as it's a fully certified record of your academic results. When you graduate, you can share a secure digital version of your HEAR with employers and other universities, providing them with a University-certified record of your achievements.

If you require a copy of your transcript or certificate at some point in the future, you can order online at <http://bit.ly/studentdocs>.

Resitting your exams

If you are required to attend a September resit exam by the Board of Examiners, it will take place between **Tuesday 1st September – Friday 11th September 2020**.

The online results system at www.essex.ac.uk/results will indicate whether you have been offered a resit exam in any modules you have failed. It will also state whether your resits are voluntary or compulsory, and may give you a choice of outcomes or a choice of modules to resit. **You must confirm your reassessments** via the results system, otherwise you will only be entered for any compulsory resits, not any voluntary ones. **There is a deadline for confirming your reassessments**, which is displayed on the results system and on the automated email reminders. You will not be able to make any choices after that date.

Your exam timetable and Exam Entry Form for the resit period will be published by **5pm on Friday 31st July 2020** at www.essex.ac.uk/examtimes. It is your responsibility to check this.

If you had individual arrangements in place during the main exam period, these will automatically be carried forward to the resit exam period, unless they were for a temporary injury or medical condition.

Resit fees

A module reassessment fee (often called a resit fee) of £50 will be charged for each module you are required to resit. If the Board of Examiners offers you an uncapped resit (known as a “first sit”) as a result of a successful claim for extenuating circumstances relating to your first attempt, then the fee will not be charged.

You do not have to pay the fee straight away, but you will not be able to graduate or register for the next stage of your course until you have cleared the debt. You can pay the fee by logging into the results system at www.essex.ac.uk/results and clicking “Pay for your reassessments”. If you no longer have access to the results system, you can pay at www.essex.ac.uk/webpay, and selecting ‘unspecified payment’, or by calling the Finance Office on +44 (0)1206 872372 / StudentCom 224 2372 between 10am and 4pm UK time, quoting your PRID (on your registration card).

Resitting exams abroad

Students who have resit exams in September can be permitted to sit them at an approved overseas institution in their country of residence. This option is not available in all countries and not all students and modules are eligible.

Overseas resit fee

A charge of £450 will be made if arrangements are made for you to resit one or more exams overseas. The £450 is **not** per exam – it covers all the exams you need to resit in September 2020.

The module reassessment fee of £50 per module is **included** in the £450 overseas resit fee – if you have already paid the module reassessment fee and you are subsequently accepted for an overseas resit, the amount you have paid will be deducted from the balance outstanding.

The £450 overseas resit fee **does not include** the charge made by the British Council (or other overseas venue) for their invigilation and courier costs. The fee varies by country and city. The venue will let you know what they charge and you should pay them directly.

Application process

If you wish to apply to resit exams overseas, please fill in the form at <http://bit.ly/resitabroad> by Wednesday 22nd July 2020. Applications cannot be considered after that date. The Exams Office will confirm if your application has been successful by 5pm on Wednesday 29th July 2020. If successful, you will be sent a link to pay the £450 overseas resit fee online.

Even if your application is successful, you still need to click the “confirm your reassessments” button on the online exam results system at www.essex.ac.uk/results. You can click “Pay Later” as the £50 module reassessment fee is included in the £450 overseas resit fee.

Restrictions and limitations

You cannot resit abroad if:

- you are an International Diploma student. This is because taking exams overseas makes it more difficult to obtain a visa before the start of the Essex Business School courses in October. Please contact Essex Pathways for more details: <http://bit.ly/contact-ep>.
- you are taking an exam that requires the use of a computer, regardless of whether the facilities exist at the overseas venue. This is because there is no technical support and the Exams Office cannot verify the integrity of the machine being used.
- you have individual exam arrangements, such as extra time, rest breaks, adapted furniture, or use of a computer, reader or scribe. This is because we cannot guarantee that the overseas venues can provide the same level of support offered on campus.
- you reside in India. This is due to delays we have experienced with the British Council in India. You may choose to travel to another country where overseas exams are available, if that is preferable to returning to the UK.
- the country in which you wish to take an exam does not have an exams service for UK universities operated by the British Council or other authorised providers. In these cases, you may choose to travel to a country where the service is available, instead of returning to the UK.
- the country in which you wish to take the exam has a British Council exams venue, but does not have the facilities to return a scanned copy of the completed exam scripts to the University.
- you wish to take an exam in a country where the time difference is more than five hours behind or more than eight hours ahead of the UK. This is because it is physically impossible for candidates in these countries to take an exam during British Council opening hours at the same time as candidates in the UK. It may be possible to make special arrangements if you are the only candidate sitting an exam – please contact the Exams Office to confirm (details at the back of this booklet, on the 'useful contacts' page).
- you are travelling or taking a holiday abroad. This is not a valid reason for taking exams overseas.
- you need to take the exam outside of the September resit period (overseas exams are not available during the other exam periods).

This list is not exhaustive. Permission to resit abroad is at the discretion of your Department and the Exams Office – there is no right of the student to resit overseas. If arrangements cannot be made for you to resit in your country of residence, you will need to return to the University for your exams.

Resubmitting coursework

If the Board of Examiners has required you to resubmit essays or assignments over the vacation, your Department will send details to you by email. Please check your Essex email account regularly once your results have been published, and if you have not received the details within two weeks of your results being published, please contact your Department or the Information Desk in the Student Services Hub (details at the back of this booklet).

If you have failed the year and are not allowed to take resits

Results will be considered by the Board of Examiners, which meets shortly after the exam period ends. The Board has the power to make the final decision on a student's progress, which can include requiring the student to withdraw or to repeat the year. If you are not allowed to proceed, information will be provided to you on your web results page at www.essex.ac.uk/results, including details of the appeals procedures. The Assessment Team will also send you a letter by email, so you must check your Essex email account regularly once your results have been published.

Debts to the University

If you owe the University money, you will not be able to register for the next academic year. Final year students will not be able to graduate. If you have a debt problem, please contact the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub for advice (details at the back of this booklet).

Student access to exam scripts after examinations

Following the meeting of the Board of Examiners, if you would like access to your examination script, or would like to know the marks received for individual questions, you may apply to the Department or School that is responsible for that module. The Department or School will either permit you to see the examination script in the presence of a relevant member of the academic staff (normally one of the staff responsible for teaching the module), or supply you with a copy (or summary) of the examiners' comments on your performance in the examination, including marks for individual questions.

You should normally make this request within four weeks of the publication of the examination marks.

When the assessment for a module comprises, or includes, a piece of work other than an examination, that is not returned until after the mark has been confirmed by the Board of Examiners (e.g. a project or dissertation), you may also request feedback on the work.

Managing exam anxiety

This information is reproduced from a page on the Health and Wellbeing website – <http://bit.ly/exam-anxiety>.

It is natural to feel nervous before an exam. A moderate amount of anxiety probably aids performance as it produces a rush of adrenaline which can help with focus and concentration. However, too much anxiety can have the opposite effect and lead to panic, inability to concentrate and potentially poor exam performance.

Exam nerves may seem much worse if you are doing exams for the first time or after a long gap. Equally, if English is not your first language or you have a specific learning difficulty or mental health problem, exams can seem particularly daunting. There may also be other things in your life that are causing you stress. We are all individuals with different stress levels, personalities and past experiences which can all contribute to our ability to cope with stress and pressure.

Top tips to beat exam anxiety

- Be mindful. Allow your exams/revision in to your mind **only** when planning your revision, or when actually revising. The rest of the time, absorb yourself 100% in whatever else you are doing – and don't forget relaxation time!
- Anxiety is contagious! Keep tactfully away from others who may increase your exam anxiety.
- Keep a record of how much time you spend planning for exams and how much time you spend just worrying about them. Revision is good, but don't let exams invade your headspace. The only result here is anxiety.

Student Support (accessed via the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub) runs mindfulness for exams workshops (<http://bit.ly/stuworkshops>) which can teach you practical strategies to manage your anxiety.

Guidance and advice

Before the exam

Be prepared – minimise stress

- Start revision **early**. Trying to grasp a whole year's work in the final days or hours before an exam is likely to lead to more anxiety.
- Plan a structured revision timetable. Set yourself achievable goals and include breaks and pleasurable activities.
- Think about the kind of questions that will be asked and practice with past exam papers.
- Seek help and advice from your Department if there is anything you are not sure about – they may run pre-exam workshops.
- Make sure you look after your general wellbeing:
 - Eat regularly and well.
 - Take regular breaks and get some exercise.
 - Keep to a regular sleep routine, don't study late and nap in the day.
- Attend exam preparation workshops where offered.

The Talent Development Centre provide a Moodle course called Getting Started with Exams and Revision at <http://bit.ly/tdc-revision>. They also have a handy guide to preparing and revising for your exams at <http://bit.ly/exam-prep>.

Change how you think about exams

Although exams are important they are not usually life or death situations! There are usually opportunities to re-sit exams and you will hopefully have had other opportunities to share your knowledge and skills through coursework, lab reports, projects etc.

If you can get away from thinking that exams are of the utmost importance and everything is doomed if you fail, this can take some of the pressure off and enable more effective performance.

It is also important to be realistic. A distinction is nice, but if you set your targets too high you may never achieve it and feel very anxious and demoralised in the process.

Learn some relaxation techniques

Relaxation and stress management techniques can be learned and acquired with practice (see <http://bit.ly/relax-techniques>). Alternatively, most large bookshops and libraries sell books and tapes which can help teach relaxation techniques. Knowing how to relax can be invaluable in the lead-up to exams and during the exam itself.

The exam

Be organised

Make sure you know your exam timetable and where to go. Set off in good time! Have everything you need ready in advance, with any spares. Remember you need your registration card and Exam Entry Form. Do have something to eat before the exam, however queasy you are feeling. It doesn't need to be a huge amount, but you will feel better with fuel inside.

Keeping calm

Once in the exam, if you feel panic is rising and your mind going blank, take a minute to use a breathing technique and give yourself time to calm down and regain focus. Panicking will stop you reading carefully so it is important to keep yourself focused and positive. Read the whole paper once, then read it again and mark the questions you think you can answer. Then read those questions carefully – make sure you understand what is required – and select the ones you are going to answer.

Answering the question

The biggest mistake people make in exams is not to read the question carefully; so they don't answer it in full. The second biggest is making sweeping statements without backing them up with evidence. Plan out your answer for each question as you go. If you find that thoughts or ideas about other questions come into your head, jot them down on a separate piece of paper – don't spend time thinking about them now. If your concentration wanders or you begin to feel panic, try one of the focusing or other techniques below.

Self-help techniques to help focus

Thought-stopping

When we are anxious we can begin to have negative thoughts ("I can't answer anything", "I'm going to fail", "I'm going to panic"). If this is happening, halt the spiralling thoughts by mentally shouting "STOP" or picture a road 'STOP' sign or traffic lights on red. Once you have literally stopped the thoughts, you can continue planning, or practice a relaxation technique.

Use a mantra

Derived from meditation, a mantra is a word or phrase which you repeat to yourself. Saying something like "calm" or "relax" under your breath or in your head, over and over again, can help reduce anxiety.

Focusing

Looking out of the window; noticing the number of people with red hair; counting the number of desks in a row... all help to distract your attention from anxious thought and keep your mind busy. Mental 'games' such as making words out of another word or title, using alphabetical lists etc. are all good forms of distraction.

Bridging objects

It can help to carry or wear something with positive associations with another person or place. Touching this 'bridging object' can be comforting in its own right, then allow yourself a few minutes to think about the person or situation which makes you feel good. This can have a really calming effect.

Self-talk

In exam anxiety or panic we often give ourselves negative messages – “I can't do this”, “I'm useless”. Try to consciously replace these negative thoughts with positive ones: “This is just anxiety, it can't hurt me”, “Relax, concentrate, it's going to be OK”, “I'm getting there, nearly over”.

Whichever of the distraction techniques has worked for you, finish by going through the refocusing exercise (it only takes 30 seconds or so but may have a profound effect on your ability to believe in yourself and the task in hand). Different techniques work for different people, so it's worth experimenting to find the ones that are right for you. Developing techniques for managing panic can take time so it pays to keep practicing.

After the exam

After the exam is over, it's tempting to over-analyse all the answers you gave and if they were good enough. This will only stress you further. Try to forget about the last exam and focus on the next one instead.

Dealing with panic attacks

Read these steps carefully, and try to learn how to control feelings of panic.

Normal and safe

Panic or anxiety attacks are a normal bodily reaction intended to prepare the body for quick action. If they happen when no action is needed, they are uncomfortable and unpleasant, but never dangerous. This will last only a short while, at the end of which the body returns to its usual state.

What is happening here and now

If you tell yourself you are starting to panic, it is more likely that you will. Concentrate on what is happening inside you right now, not what might happen later on – e.g. “My heart is beating fast”, not “I'm starting to feel awful”.

How to stop it

Either exercise or relaxation cuts anxiety, so:

- Hold your breath and tense up even more for five seconds
- Breathe out, let your muscles go loose
- Breathe regularly. Slow your heart down with each breath

Think positive

It will help you to cope if, as you relax, you think logically about the situation. Say to yourself, “This situation may not be easy or pleasant but I can keep calm, deal with it and see what happens.”

Assess your progress

Afterwards, look back on what happened. Coping with your feelings, even if only for a few seconds, represents great progress. You should be pleased with your efforts.

Further help

If you have tried the suggested techniques and still feel very anxious or stressed it is worth talking to someone about how you feel and seeking some extra help. Please talk to an adviser on the Support Desk in the Student Services Hub – details are on the following page ('useful contacts').

Useful contacts

Exams Office

Help with accessing your exam timetable, general exam enquiries, exam absence notifications and overseas resits.

Tel: +44 (0)1206 87 3926
StudentCom: 224 3926
Fax: +44 (0)1206 460848
Email: examsacs@essex.ac.uk
Twitter: @examsessex
WebChat: <http://bit.ly/examschat>
QQ: 3065169981
In person: LTB 4 during the early, summer and resit exam periods;
Room 6.106 at all other times
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 8.45am*-5pm (4.45pm on Fridays)
*On days when exams are running, the Exams Office opens at 8am.

Student Services Hub – Information Desk

Attendance and progress queries, exam results, extenuating circumstances, appeals, academic offences, and entry to resit exams.

Tel: +44 (0)1206 87 4000
StudentCom: 224 4000
Online form: <http://bit.ly/askthehub>
Email: askthehub@essex.ac.uk
In person: Information Desk in the Student Services Hub, first floor of the Silberrad Student Centre
Opening hours: Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm in term-time – vacation opening times may vary

Exam Boards Team

Queries regarding exam results, outcomes following exam results, extenuating circumstances claims already submitted

Email: examboards@essex.ac.uk

If you need to speak to someone over the phone or person, contact the Student Services Hub using the details provided above.

Student Services Hub – Support Desk

Individual exam arrangements (for religious or disability/medical reasons), support and advice for managing exam stress.

Tel: +44 (0)1206 87 4000
StudentCom: 224 4000
Online form: <http://bit.ly/askthehub>
Email: askthehub@essex.ac.uk
In person: Support Desk in the Student Services Hub, first floor of the Silberrad Student Centre
Opening hours: Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm in term-time – vacation opening times may vary

Students' Union Advice Centre

Impartial advice on appeals, extenuating circumstances, missed and failed exams.

Tel: +44 (0)1206 87 4034
StudentCom: 224 4034
Email: suadvice@essex.ac.uk
In person: Square 3
Opening hours: Drop-in
Term-time: Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm
Vacations: Mon-Fri, 1pm -4pm

Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre

Assistance with the procedure of applying for individual exam arrangements for religious reasons.

Tel: +44 (0)1206 87 6166 (10.00am-12.30pm) or +44 (0)1206 87 6408 (12.30pm-3.00pm)
StudentCom: 224 6166 / 224 6408
Email: mfccsec@essex.ac.uk
In person: Room 3.305 – Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Library
Opening hours: 12.30pm-3pm

Nightline

Anonymous and confidential listening service, run by students. Someone to talk to during the exam period when other services are closed.

Tel: +44 (0)1206 87 2020 / +44 (0)1206 87 2022

StudentCom: 224 2020 / 224 2022

Freephone: 0800 326 5454

Email: nlhelp@essex.ac.uk

In person: The Nightline flat is located in Flat 1 at the back of Keynes Tower, North Campus, if you wish to speak to someone in person or use other drop-in services.

Opening hours: Every night during term-time, 10pm-8am

Peer Mentor

Directing you to advice on how to prepare for your exams and showing how to find past papers for your subjects.

Contact details will be provided to first-year undergraduate students when starting University.

To request a Peer Mentor or find out who yours is, email peermentor@essex.ac.uk.

Personal Tutor

Advice on module choices and your academic progress.

All undergraduate and taught postgraduate students will be allocated a Personal Tutor – a member of staff within your Department or School who can provide personalised advice.

You will have the opportunity to meet your Personal Tutor at the beginning of the year and they will explain how you can contact them.

Appendices

Appendix A: Application for individual exam arrangements

APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL EXAM ARRANGEMENTS

Family Name:		First name:	
Reg No:		Year of Study: Foundation /1 /2 /3 /4	
Degree Scheme:			
Location of Study:	Colchester Campus: <input type="checkbox"/>	Loughton Campus: <input type="checkbox"/>	Southend Campus: <input type="checkbox"/>

What is your condition?

Is this condition: **persistent / likely to change (delete appropriately)**

Have you had arrangements for examinations in the past? What were these?

Extra Time How much per hour _____

Alternative Location Please give details _____

Paper in Alternative Format Please give details _____

Use of computer Scribe Please give details _____

Other (give details) _____

What examinations were these? _____ Were arrangements appropriate? Yes / No

If you have not had arrangements before a member of the disability team will be able to advise you and make recommendations.

DECLARATION

- I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge, and I understand that giving false information will disqualify my application.
- The University has a notification under the 1998 Data Protection Act and the personal data supplied on this form will be held in accordance with the requirements of the Act. The data will be held solely for the purposes of assessing your need for individual exam arrangements. Details will be passed to the Examinations Office in order for them to put the arrangements in place, and to departments where they organise internal exams.
- I give my consent to the University holding the personal data on this form for the purposes of assessing my need for individual exam arrangements, and to sharing information with the exams office, department and invigilator where it might be useful in an emergency.

Signed _____ Date _____

Please return this form to: Student Support at your campus or Student Services Hub, First Floor, Silberrad Student Centre, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ, **as soon as possible.** If you have any queries please contact: E: askthehub@essex.ac.uk

For **December/January examinations:** no later than **31 OCTOBER**

For **May/June examinations:** no later than **31 JANUARY**

Once arrangements have been approved these will be in place for the full academic year. You must also supply evidence of eligibility if you have not already done so.

Students' Guide to Examinations (Colchester Campus)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY – tick or circle relevant information

Reason for arrangements: _____ Condition type: PERM / TEMP

Viable each year: Yes / No Evidence: Ed Psych /consultant / doctor / A of N / Sp teacher

Student seen: Yes / No Recommended by: _____

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS SCREEN:

Extra Writing time (mins per hour) Extra non writing time (mins per exam)

Amanuensis: Needs computer: Software needed
Hardware needed
Student's own laptop

Special Paper: Electronic or Braille or Large Font (size) Script Note: Dyslexia/SpLD or Scribe
Other notes for exams office or invigilator: _____

(standard SpLD) Supplementary booklet required for planning

Tick appropriately

Scheduling:	None consec days	Location:	Sit near door	Furniture:	Cushion
	One exam per day		Not main exam hall		Footstool
	Religious grds		PC Lab		Large Desk
	<input type="text"/>		Single Room		Typist chair
					Wheelchair access

CMIS Category (circle one category):

Code	Location	Time	Main Options
SO	Single Office	Any	All single office requests – time options and additional info flagged on MIS Includes PC in a single office. Includes wheelchair user in SO.
SC	Single Office	Any	Scribe or Reader - time options and additional info flagged on MIS Please specify if Reader only
PCX	PC Lab	PC + EWT PC + EWT + ENWT	PC with extra writing time (+ 15m ph) PC with extra writing and extra non writing time (+ 15m ph and 30m per exam)
PC	PC Lab	PC + Normal time PC + ENWT	PC Normal Time PC + extra non writing time (up to 30m per exam)
XT	Not Main Exam Hall	EWT EWT + ENWT	Extra writing time (+15 m ph) Extra writing time and extra non writing time (+15m ph and 30m per exam)
XNW	Not Main Exam Hall	ENWT only	Extra non writing time (+30m per exam)
EX	Not Main Exam Hall	normal time + 50% EWT or/and 50% ENWT	Extra writing time (+50% ph) (usually only visually impaired) Extra non writing time (+50%) Extra writing time and extra non writing time (+50%)
OTH	Not Main Exam Hall Or Main Exam Hall	Any	Mobility/ access difficulties, not in any of the above categories, just furniture or scheduling required Or just notes to the invigilator

Advice to invigilator:

Student has a hearing impairment and may not know when to stop writing or hear any instructions given verbally about the paper. Invigilators should be aware that they need to check that the student has heard and not accuse him/her of cheating if he/she does not stop writing.	
Student may need to stand, stretch and move around during rest breaks.	
Urgent access to the toilet may also be required (inc. during the beginning and end period of examination - the normal bar should not apply).	
Student has permission to bring food and drink into the examination.	
Other:	

Appendix B: Notification of religious commitments

APPLICATION FOR EXAM ARRANGEMENTS – RELIGIOUS REASONS

First Name:		Family name:	
Date of Birth:		Year of Study: Foundation /1 /2 /3 /4	
Degree Scheme:			
Location of Study:	Colchester Campus: <input type="checkbox"/>	E15 (Loughton): <input type="checkbox"/>	Southend Campus: <input type="checkbox"/>
Religion:			

Please state how your religious activities will prevent you from carrying out your examinations. Please provide dates:

EVIDENCE

Evidence provided by: _____

DECLARATION

- I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge, and I understand that giving false information will disqualify my application.
- The University has a notification under the 1998 Data Protection Act and the personal data supplied on this form will be held in accordance with the requirements of the Act. The data will be held solely for the purposes of assessing your need for individual exam arrangements. Details will be passed to the Examinations Office in order for them to put the arrangements in place.
- I give my consent to the University holding the personal data on this form for the purposes of assessing my need for individual exam arrangements, and to sharing information with the exams office, department and invigilator where it might be useful in an emergency.

Signed _____ Date _____

Please return this form to: Student Services Hub, First Floor, Silberrad Student Centre, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ, as soon as possible. If you have any queries please contact: E: askthehub@essex.ac.uk

For December/January examinations: no later than 31 OCTOBER

For May/June examinations: no later than 31 JANUARY

You may be charged a £100 administrative fee if you miss the deadline.

The University will make every effort to avoid arranging exams on a Sabbath or holy day for those students who have informed the Examination Office as required. The University, however, reserves the right to hold exams on such days if no alternative time is convenient.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Assessors Initials _____

Seen Student

Received Current Evidence from: _____

Consulted _____

Action taken _____

Date _____

Appendix C: Sample exam entry form

EXAMINATION ENTRY FORM

EINSTEIN, ALBERT

Registration Number 123456

EXAMPLE

1234

Your Candidate Number is:

Exam Code	Title	Date	Start	Finish	Duration	Room	Seat
AC111-1-FY	INTRODUCTION TO ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE	16-05-2006	14:00	17:00	03:00	Sports Hall	70
EB003-0-AS	COMPUTER SYSTEMS	22-05-2006	14:00	16:00	02:00	Sports Hall	30
LW202-2-FY	EQUITY AND TRUSTS	27-05-2006	09:00	12:00	03:00	Sports Hall	50
GV225-2-FY	POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF THE MODERN STATE	31-05-2006	14:00	17:00	03:00	5.300	90
HR245-3-FY	FILM PROPAGANDA	01-06-2006	09:00	12:00	03:00	Sports Hall	15

PLEASE NOTE: You will not be allowed into the Examination Room without your registration card and this form.

PLEASE CHECK THE DETAILS ON THIS FORM AND ADVISE THE EXAMINATIONS OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU THINK THERE ARE ERRORS.

Appendix D: Announcements

This is an example of the announcements you can expect to hear in the exam room. **Announcements vary according to the requirements of the exam**, particularly for multiple-choice exams and online exams, and may be updated from time to time – so please ensure you listen carefully, even if you are familiar with the text below.

Preparatory announcement

As candidates enter the room, the Senior Invigilator announces:

“Before the start of the examination, candidates should remain silent and not write **anything** until told to do so. Please place bags and all outdoor clothing in the designated area [at the front/side/back of the room, as applicable]. All electronic items, including mobile phones, smartwatches, tablets and personal audio players, must be switched off, and any alarms must be deactivated. If you have a mobile phone with you, please put it in the clear plastic bag provided and place it on the floor under your desk. If your mobile phone rings or vibrates, either under your desk or amongst your belongings, it will be confiscated until such time that the Exams Office can confirm that it does not hold any unauthorised material. This may cause a delay in returning it to you of at least 24 hours.

It is forbidden to have on your person **any** device that interacts wirelessly with a mobile phone, tablet or computer. This includes smart watches and Bluetooth earphones. If you are wearing these items, or you have them in your pocket or on your desk, you **must** hand them to an invigilator **before the exam starts**. Glasses cases and wallets are not permitted **on** your desk, but you may place them on the floor **under** your desk.

If you have brought a dictionary or a pencil case to your desk, please leave it at the front of the room now. All items are left there at the candidate's own risk.”

Starting announcement

Five minutes before the exam is due to start, the Senior Invigilator announces:

“If you have any handwritten material or other materials that should not be with you, whether relevant to this examination or not, please bring it to the attention of one of the invigilators. If you have anything with you that you think *may* be unauthorised, please check with an invigilator.

- Do not open the question paper or start work until I tell you to do so.
- Put your Exam Entry Form and registration card on the right-hand side of the desk, face upwards. Do not write anything on your Exam Entry Form as it will be confiscated and you will be reported for a suspected academic offence.
- Read the instructions on the front cover of the answer book and, when the examination begins, carry them out.
- *When the exam starts*, write your four-digit Examination Candidate Number in the space indicated on your answer book. Your candidate number is the number in large print in the centre of your Exam Entry Form. Also ensure you write the module code of the paper you are taking in the space provided. *You will not be permitted to enter these details once the exam has finished*. Do not write your name anywhere.
- Make sure you fill in the grid on the front of the answer book, showing which questions you have answered, before the end of the examination. You will not be allowed to continue writing once the end of the examination has been announced.
- Scrap paper will not be provided and you should not have brought your own. Please use your answer book for any notes. Do not remove any pages, but cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.
- If you have a query, need extra paper, or you wish to leave the room, raise your hand and an invigilator will come to you.

Students' Guide to Examinations (Colchester Campus)

- [For exams of 90 minutes or less] This exam is less than 90 minutes long, which means you may not leave the room permanently until the exam has ended.

[For exams of more than 90 minutes] You may not leave the room permanently during the first 55 minutes or the last 30 minutes of the exam, and you can only leave with the permission of an invigilator.
- The time remaining for each paper will be announced 30 minutes before the exam ends, and again ten minutes before the end of the exam.
- An announcement will be made when the exam ends. Please remain seated until all answer books have been collected and you have been told you may leave.
- You are reminded that it is an academic offence to introduce any written, printed or electronically-stored information into an examination, or to attempt to access any unauthorised material during an examination. If you have unauthorised materials with you now, this is your final opportunity to inform an invigilator. If any unauthorised materials are found during the exam, they will be confiscated and you will be reported of a suspected academic offence.
- [Unless calculators are not permitted or required] If you have brought a calculator into the room, please write the name and model number on the front of your answer book when the exam starts.
- If the building needs to be evacuated for any reason, please leave your script on your desk, do not attempt to collect your belongings, leave immediately following the green "running man and arrow" signs, and assemble away from the building in the area indicated by the invigilation team. Exam conditions still apply during an evacuation, so you must remain silent unless you are told otherwise.
- Thank you for your attention. The time now is _____ and you may now begin."

Ending announcement

- "The exam has now ended – please stop writing immediately and close your answer books. If you continue to write, this will be reported, and you may be penalised.
- If you have used a supplementary answer book as a continuation sheet or for rough work, please secure this to the main answer book with the treasury tag provided. It is your responsibility to ensure this is carried out. Please raise your hand and ask an invigilator if you require a treasury tag.
- You should not have removed any pages from your answer book – but if you have, please re-attach them now, using a treasury tag.
- If you have been completing a multiple-choice paper, or you have been asked to write your answers directly on the question paper, please ensure that it is collected.
- Please remain seated until all answer books have been collected and you are told you may leave. When you leave, please remain silent until you are well away from the examination area.

[At this point, invigilators will begin to collect the papers.]

- Thank you for your co-operation – you are now free to leave. Please remember to collect all your belongings on your way out."