

# GUIDE TO GETTING THROUGH EXAMS



# THIS GUIDE PROVIDES INFORMATION ON:

- **Preparing for your exams**
- **Sitting your exams**
- **Options for when you have received your results**
- **De-stress before the test**



# WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM ILL THIS TERM OR SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENS WHICH AFFECTS MY PREPARATION?

In line with University recommendations:

- If your preparation might be affected by illness (including mental health) and/or other severe mitigating circumstances (for example a bereavement) the most important thing is to seek help and let someone know early (e.g. your College Tutor, Nurse, DoS). It is important to obtain evidence (medical or other) early.
- Your College may submit an 'exam warning' via CamSIS. This 'exam warning' will only be acted on when you receive your results and if you think that your exam results may have been affected by illness and/or mitigating circumstances. The 'exam warning' will be used as evidence if you are applying for an examination allowance.
- If you haven't been able to access all of your intended materials and/or facilities for your dissertation/coursework due to Covid-19, when you submit your work you can include an Impact Statement which will allow you to detail the difficulties you have encountered (do not include information of personal circumstances or health issues, there is another procedure for this). This will be passed to the Examiners who will consider this information when assessing the work submitted. The Impact Statement form can be found [here](#).



## WHAT DO I DO IF I'M FEELING UNWELL ON THE DAY OF MY EXAM?

In line with University recommendations:

### In person exams

- If you feel unwell on the day of your exam and do not think that you are able to sit your exam, then you should get in contact with your College Tutorial Office immediately to let them know that you are unwell. Appropriate advice will then be given on what you should do.

If you are well but are required to isolate **do not attend the exam venue**. Contact your College Tutorial Office as soon as possible and before the exam start time, as it may be possible for you to sit the exam remotely.

- If you feel unwell during an examination, let an invigilator know immediately. The invigilator will arrange for you to be escorted back to College where you will be given guidance by the College on what will happen next.

## Online exams

- If you are unwell and unable to start the exam, you should inform your College Tutorial Office as soon as possible. You will be marked as absent from the exam and your College will be informed of your absence.
- If you become unwell during the exam and are unable to continue, you must inform the invigilator via the chat function (if taking an invigilated exam), submit any work if you are able, and then leave the exam. You should inform your College Tutorial Office as soon as possible.

Further information can be found here:

- [www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/on-the-day](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/on-the-day)
- [www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/files/guide\\_to\\_ug\\_exams\\_2020-21\\_v2.pdf](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/files/guide_to_ug_exams_2020-21_v2.pdf)

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMETHING HAPPENS IN THE EXAM

**WHICH AFFECTS MY PERFORMANCE?** (LARGE AMOUNTS OF EXTERNAL NOISE, DISTURBANCE IN EXAM ROOM, MISTAKE ON THE PAPER ETC.)

**In line with University recommendations:**

- If you are concerned about the conduct of the exam or other external factor in the exam room that might affect your performance, it is important that you inform the University as soon as possible. You can do this by submitting a Representation to the Examiner form within 5 days of the examination. You can also inform your College Tutor and they may decide to report this to Student Registry.

Where a form is received by Student Registry or the Student Registry becomes aware of an irregularity, this will be communicated to the Chair of Examiners and considered by the Examiners at their final meeting.

Further information can be found here:

- [www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/examination-reviews](http://www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/examination-reviews)
- [www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/on-the-day](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/on-the-day)

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I EXPERIENCE INTERRUPTIONS TO MY WIFI DURING AN ONLINE EXAM OR HAVE TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES?

- If you are being **invigilated via Zoom** and have repeated interruptions to your internet connection that make it difficult to sustain a permanent connection, return to the exam as soon as you can, indicating to the invigilator via the chat function each time that your connection drops. Alert your College Tutorial Office as soon as possible after the exam who will log the event.
- If you have interruptions to your internet connection while loading files into Moodle that take you over the time window for upload, you should email the file to [onlineexams@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:onlineexams@admin.cam.ac.uk); continue to try to load the file into Moodle for the next 30 minutes, even if it goes beyond the upload period and inform your College Tutorial Office of the problem that occurred and the action taken.
- For other technical issues outside of an exam session, or if an issue prevents you from contacting the invigilator during an exam session, your department administrator should be your first point of contact. You should also alert your College Tutorial Office via email of any difficulties and actions taken so that they can take any appropriate action, such as submit an exam warning.
- If you are being **invigilated via ProctorExam**, a technical support chatbox provided by ProctorExam will be visible throughout your exam session, but you should follow the above guidance as your primary source of support.





## WHAT CAN I DO IF I FAIL OR UNDER-PERFORM IN MY EXAM/S?

In line with University recommendations:

- Ask your DoS or Supervisor if they can check that the scoring has been added up correctly.
- If no error can be found in the scoring and you have reasons to believe that your results have been affected by any of the following:
  - A procedural irregularity in the examination process that has adversely impacted your examination results;
  - Demonstrable bias or the perception of bias within the examination process;
  - The withdrawal of academic provision, which has had a demonstrable impact on the examination itself of which the Examining Board were not aware; (this ground is for students whose assessment results have been adversely affected by COVID-19)
  - Extenuating circumstances - serious illness or other grave cause;

Contact your College Tutor or speak to the Student Advice Service ([www.cambridgesu.co.uk/advice](http://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/advice)) to discuss your options. Do this as soon as possible after receiving your formal results as there are time constraints when submitting an application to the University.



## FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

In line with University recommendations:

- If you are in your final year and your results are not what you had hoped, you can book an appointment with an Advisor at the University Careers Service to discuss your career options [www.careers.cam.ac.uk](http://www.careers.cam.ac.uk).
- If these were not your final exams, you can talk to your DoS/ Supervisor to see where you went wrong and what you can improve on next year.

Further information and guidance can be found here as there are different procedures depending on your degree:

- [www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/examination-reviews](http://www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/examination-reviews)
- [www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/about-us/EAMC](http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/about-us/EAMC)
- [www.cambridgesu.co.uk/advice](http://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/advice)



# DE-STRESS BEFORE THE TEST



## EAT WELL

Try to keep your body and brain well fuelled by choosing nutritious foods that have been proven to aid concentration and memory, such as fish, nuts, seeds, yogurt and blueberries. You may feel like you deserve a treat but what you eat can really have an impact on energy levels and focus. Reducing the amount of caffeine, alcohol and sugar you have too, could help improve your sleep. Even if you don't feel like it, on the morning of the exam try to eat some breakfast, ideally something with slow releasing energy so it will help keep you going during a long exam.



## SLEEP WELL

Try to wind down before bed and don't revise under the duvet - your bed is a sanctuary, not a desk.



## EXERCISE

Try to not spend every waking minute revising or you'll burn out. So why not exercise your body for a while - go for a bike ride or a jog. If you don't feel comfortable taking that much time away from studying, you could stand in the middle of your room and do star jumps for 5 minutes or dance to a couple of your favourite songs. Nothing de-stresses the mind faster than physical activity, so try to build it into your revision timetable.



## RELAX

As well as exercising it can be helpful to find some time to switch off and relax. Watch TV, read a book (one which isn't a text book) or listen to some music.

## MEDITATE

Like exercise, meditation can be a great way to clear your mind. Simply take a break for about 10 minutes and sit somewhere comfortable. Close your eyes and let your mind wander; a quick meditation will leave you refreshed and ready to continue. Alternatively you could go to your College chapel (if you are in Cambridge) - you don't have to be religious to visit. Chapels are quiet and a good place to go to reflect and have timeout from everything.

## PACE YOURSELF

Try to avoid waiting until the last minute to study. Cramming before an exam rarely yields good results because you can't fully absorb the information into your brain. At the same time, you don't necessarily want to study too early and then forget everything. Instead, find a happy medium and set a timetable for reviewing material. As the exam day approaches, try to spend more time on the parts that confuse you and most importantly, ask your DoS ahead of time if something isn't completely clear to you.

## PRE-PACK EVERYTHING (IN PERSON EXAMS)

Don't go into an exam unprepared. The night before, pack any material or equipment required - University ID card, pens and pencils, calculator (if exam permits one) and a face covering in a small transparent bag (bags or rucksacks are not allowed) and don't forget a bottle of water. Check the exam venue, you may be in a different venue to your friends taking the same exam, so make sure you know where you are going and how long it will take you to get to the examination venue, remember you must be there 20 minutes before the exam starts. If your exam is in the morning set your alarm 10-15 minutes earlier to allow yourself a few extra minutes.





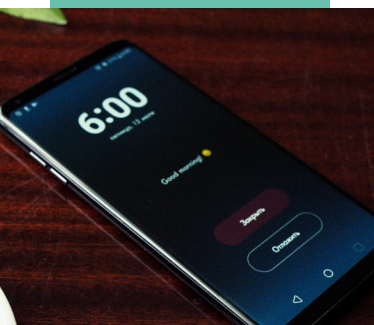
## BE PREPARED (ONLINE EXAMS)

Make sure that you are familiar with the process and the technology involved in taking online exams by visiting the Online Assessments support hub [here](#).

Create your exam venue prior to your exam, make sure you are in a private room that is quiet and free from interruptions, has a desk and chair and adequate lighting. If you live with others inform them of the dates and times of your exams. If you encounter difficulties in creating a suitable exam space, contact your College Tutor as soon as possible to discuss what support and assistance is available to you.



Make sure you know whether you are allowed to type your exam, or if you are expected to handwrite, scan and upload.



Don't wake up unprepared. Set yourself alerts or reminders on your phone at least 30 minutes before your exam (especially if it has a fixed start time), even earlier if they are first thing in the morning or if you are in a different time zone (exam times are shown in GMT+1) and maybe taking the exam during the night. Give yourself plenty of time to get your exam space ready and set up - laptop on, stationary for notes and hand-written responses (if required), details of your exam (log on instructions and your blind grading number), eat and drink something, and check that there are no technical difficulties with wifi or issues logging on to Moodle or ProctorExam. If you are unable to download the question paper or experience other forms of technical difficulty accessing the course, contact the Moodle helpdesk at [moodlehelp@uis.cam.ac.uk](mailto:moodlehelp@uis.cam.ac.uk).



## DON'T LOSE SIGHT

Ultimately, try to not lose sight of the fact that there is life after exams. Things might seem intense right now, but it won't last forever.



## WE OFFER FREE, CONFIDENTIAL & INDEPENDENT SUPPORT TO ALL CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

You can come to the Student Advice Service with any concerns you may have, whether it's the first time you have a question or as a last resort. Students often come for advice on:

- Exam worries
- Welfare Concerns
- Academic issues
- Supervisor Relations
- Mental Health Issues
- Personal Issues
- University & College Regulations
- Disciplinary Issues
- Financial Concerns
- And much more...

Our friendly Advice team includes professional advisors. We can provide support by email, phone, or video call. If we can't help you directly, we will find someone who can.

### Contact Us:

We're located in the SU Building at 17 Mill Lane on the upper ground floor. The SU Building is closed until further notice, but you can still access the service via phone and email.

Our office hours are Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm, all year round.

01223 746999 | [advice@cambridgesu.co.uk](mailto:advice@cambridgesu.co.uk)



**The Student Advice Service is brought to you by:**

