

19 March 2020

Principles for assessment (Semester 2 2020)

Applies to University of Liverpool students on taught programmes

In view of COVID-19 and the move of all teaching and learning off-campus, we have reviewed our examination arrangements for the **Semester 2 exam** and summer resit periods and, unless you have been advised otherwise by your Department, you should not expect to attend any formal examinations in Liverpool.

We appreciate that you will be anxious to get details of your assessments. Departments/schools will communicate to you finalised details of their assessments by no later than 27th March.

Below is a set of university-wide principles that we have agreed with all Departments and which are designed to ensure a degree of consistency across modules and programmes. In the majority of cases examinations will be replaced by seen (open-book) assessments. In some exceptional cases, there may be local variation in arrangements, but the rationale for these decisions will be clear, and will have been approved through internal quality assurance processes to ensure our rigorous standards are complied with.

Principles:

1. All face-to-face teaching will be cancelled from 16th March for the remainder of the academic year.
2. Teaching will now be provided online for all modules with appropriate learning materials being made available through a combination of VITAL and other IT platforms as appropriate.
3. Opportunities for asynchronous online interaction between lecturers and students will be provided in all modules. The inclusion of synchronous online interaction is at the discretion of individual lecturers.
4. Final year students completing projects/dissertations will have the opportunity for synchronous dialogue with their supervisor(s).
5. To ensure we maintain the quality and standards of your degree, all planned coursework will take place as expected. Some assessments may need to be modified to reflect the move to online teaching, learning and submission. Expected coursework will only be cancelled or changed in exceptional circumstances and after approval by the Faculty.
6. On-campus examinations will now be replaced by on-line alternative assessment (unless you have been advised otherwise by your Department).
7. The format for alternative assessments will be as close as possible to that of the anticipated examination. Departments will provide detail on the format for these alternative assessments by 27th March.
8. In most cases the alternative assessment will be in the form of a seen (open-book) exam available to students over an extended period. We will minimise the use of time-controlled tests except where these are required by, for example, professional bodies.
9. Scheduling of submission deadlines will be staggered as far as possible. Some deadlines may now be later than the timing of the original examination period in order to give you more time to complete work.
10. Alternative assessments will be viewed as exam replacements, and not as coursework. Where appropriate, word limits will be set in order to manage your workload; normal conventions of coursework (e.g. footnotes) will not be followed, and work will be marked as an examination would be (not with the level of feedback normally provided for coursework). We understand that many of you will be working on a range of devices and so markers will

not have the normal expectations about formatting, presentation quality, etc and will mark work accordingly.

11. All assessment will be submitted, marked and returned online.
12. If resits are required for failed Semester 2 modules the resit will be in the new alternative format and will be held in the resit period. Any resits for failed semester 1 modules would be expected to be carried out in their original format providing that it is possible to do so.
13. Exam Boards will use the well-established institutional Procedures for Protecting the Interests of Students in the Event of Major Disruption to guide fair decisions concerning progression and classification. Exam Boards routinely make decisions regarding classification and progression using a range of evidence and, this year, will give particular emphasis to those assessments known to be unaffected by industrial action, the consequences of COVID-19 on teaching and learning, and staff and student illness.
14. If you are a non-final year student who, due to the current situation, will not have the opportunity to demonstrate that you fully meet all learning objectives intended for your current year of study, then you will have an opportunity to acquire these outcomes at a future date during the remainder of your programme.
15. You will not need to submit extenuating circumstances relating to the impact of COVID-19 on your learning as these will be applied automatically by exam boards. Individual extenuating circumstances only need to be submitted for anything additional to this, for example, illness at key submission points (medical evidence will not be required and this will normally be dealt with by the offer of an extension), bereavement, etc.

Note:

- a) Separate arrangements have been approved for some programmes including Medicine, Dentistry, Health Sciences and Veterinary Sciences. You will be notified about the specific alternative arrangements where they sit outside of the above principles.
- b) Exam Boards have a great deal of experience in dealing with extenuating circumstances and ensuring that all students are treated fairly. In addition, for all students we already have a set of marks that we can use to make well-informed judgements on classification or progression.
- c) We know that it is likely that some students will fall ill over the coming period, and some students will be trying to study whilst dealing with difficult family circumstances; we will deal with these circumstances and others flexibly and sensitively.
- d) We will do everything we can to support you to complete this academic year successfully.