FAQs about reasonable adjustments in online coursework assessment and exams, and advice for studying at home

Coursework assessment:

You may have an assessment, test or exam that is in a different format to what you are used to. This might be a multiple-choice fixed time exam, a viva or oral exam, or a series of short essays. Individual lecturers will decide how to assess their students.

You will continue to receive adjustments, such as extra time in short, fixed-time assessments. It will not be possible, however, to provide you with some adjustments, such as a scribe/reader. You may not need this because you are able to type your answers at home and will have access to spell-checking software. If you would like to discuss assistive software alternatives, such as text to speech or speech to text, please contact disability@hw.ac.uk

Your School will ensure that you have appropriate adjustments. If you need to discuss the adjustments for an assessment, please contact your lecturer or the School office. You can also contact disability@hw.ac.uk for advice.

End of semester exams:

The following advice is for 24-hour (or other ‘adequate time included for all’) exams.

Q: I usually have extra time in exams. Do I get extra time for the online exams?

A: Most end of semester exams will be inclusive of extra time. Extra time-inclusive exams allow everyone enough time to complete the assessment. However, if, despite the additional time given, you feel it is not enough for you, or that you will be otherwise disadvantaged in any way, please alert your lecturer/School in advance.

There is information on completing a mitigating circumstances (MC) application: here: Examinations and assessment page.

Q. I usually have a disregard spelling and grammar errors adjustment. Can I still use a sticker?

A: A disregard spelling and grammar errors sticker is only applicable to timed, handwritten assignments. If you type your answers you will have access to a spell checker.

Q: I usually have access to a Scribe. Is there an alternative?
A: You will not be expected to hand write your assessment answers. You will have access to spell checking software, either your own, or see Home Study Support Technology Suggestions link* below. You will have 24 hours to complete the online assessment so you are not under the same time pressures that you would be in a 2- or 3-hour exam. However, if you feel that you will be disadvantaged in any way, please alert your lecturer/School in advance.

There is information on completing a mitigating circumstances (MC) application: here: Examinations and assessment page.

Q: I usually have access to a Reader. Is there an alternative?

A: You can use text to speech software to listen to the assessment questions as well as your answers.

You will have additional time to complete the online assessment so you are not under the same time pressures that you would be in a 2- or 3-hour exam.

However, if you feel that you will be disadvantaged in any way, please alert your lecturer/School.

There is information on completing a mitigating circumstances (MC) application: here: Examinations and assessment page.

Q: I usually have access to a Prompter. Is there an alternative?

A: You will have 24 hours to complete the online assessment so you are not under the same time pressures that you would be in a 2- or 3-hour exam.

It may be that having longer to complete the assessment means that you may become distracted or that you procrastinate. Ensure that you are well prepared and have a time plan prepared in advance for completing your revision, preparation and assessment on the day.

You could work with your study tutor/support worker in advance to prepare for the exams and design a time-managed plan for the day of your exam.

It may be that someone at home can help with prompting or time management.

If you feel that you have been disadvantaged in any way, please complete a mitigating circumstances application. Guidance on MC is here: Examinations and assessment page.

Q: I usually have access to a separate room or quiet room for my exams and this is not possible in my shared home

A: Let those you share a home with know in advance that you will need IT equipment and quiet surroundings on the day of an exam. Have a timetable for working and share this with
those you live with. Build in breaks and share these too. If you feel that you have been disadvantaged in any way, please complete a mitigating circumstances application. Guidance on MC is here: Examinations and assessment page.

Let us know if you have any questions or feel that you will need further support disability@hw.ac.uk

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Studying at home - Preparing for online assessment

Ensure that you understand how you will be assessed for each course and prepare as fully as possible.

Study smartly tips:

• Find a place to work where you are comfortable and productive.

• Be organised. Make sure that you know what you need to study, then prepare and follow a study plan. Ensure that you include time to sleep, eat and take breaks. You may find useful advice on getting a good night’s sleep at The Sleep Scotland Web Site.

• Make sure you have gathered all the resources you need, e.g. VLE resources, coursework information, notes, reading lists, past papers, etc., well in advance of your exam dates.

• Think about how you will organise your time. There are many effective methods available. Map your time to your study plan and include eating, sleeping, taking breaks and revising and preparing for assessments and exams.

• Make sure you divide your revision time appropriately and effectively across all of your exam subjects.

• Use a range of tools and strategies that suit your learning style.

• Summarise and sort your notes and other resources.

• Save your references.

• Try to be selective and learn what you really need to learn.

• The following study skills advice may be helpful on the Academic Study Skills Weblink
The following technology advice may be helpful: Download PDF: Home Study Support Technology Suggestions. Make sure you access this well in advance of your exams to allow you to trial any of the recommendations.

If anything does go wrong on the day of an online assessment, try to evidence this and complete a mitigating circumstances application. Guidance on MC is here: Examinations and assessment page.

Contact Disability@hw.ac.uk if you’d like to discuss assessment adjustments.