Guide to

GETTING THROUGH EXAMS



STUDENT ADVICE SERVICE

2027 | EASTER TERM

THIS GUIDE PROVIDES INFORMATION ON:

- Before 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 the illness or grave cause has impacted your studies, then your college must apply for you to intermit before your first Easter Term exam. Students should not attempt the exams to 'see how they do'. Students return to study once they are no longer impacted by the illness or grave cause, or reasonable adjustments have been put in place. In exceptional circumstances or where it is not academically feasible to return to the same term, students may repeat terms already completed.

- If the illness or grave cause has impacted coursework or a dissertation then an extension to the submission deadline must be applied for prior to the submission deadline (and following any self-certified extension available via the department).

When something goes wrong before exams and deadlines

2026-2027 Guidance for intermission and disregarding terms for other purposes

2026-2027 Guidance for coursework or dissertation extensions to the submission deadline

- If you are a Postgraduate Research Student (PhD, EdD, MD, BusD, MLitt, MSc) and war/conflict, or natural disaster have significantly impacted on your research, when you submit your work, you can include a Research Impact Statement which will allow you to detail the restrictions or 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. Further details can be found in the Research Students Impact Statement guidance.

I HAVE A DISABILITY AND/OR ILLNESS, WHAT SUPPORT CAN I GET WITH MY EXAMS?

- For disabled students, or students with short-term conditions that are expected to impact the exams then examination access arrangements (also known as reasonable adjustments) must be applied for and put in place in advance of the exam. An exam allowance is not provided as an alternative to this process.

- If you have not already applied for an examination access arrangement, you should speak to your College Tutor or Tutorial Office as soon as possible to discuss what examination arrangements might be available for you. Your College must request examination arrangements on your behalf to the EAMC (Examination Access and Mitigation Committee). You should also contact the Accessibility Disability Resource Centre (ADRC).

- You will be required to provide evidence (i.e., a full assessment report from an Educational Psychologist, GP letter, screening report) which must attest to your disability, and include a diagnosis with specific recommendations to support the awarding of exam related adjustments.

- Please note that there are different deadlines for applying for examination access arrangements depending on which term you will sit your exams. If you have missed the deadline still speak to your college as the EAMC may consider requests after this deadline but there could be limitations on what arrangements can be applied to your exams at this late stage.

- Requests do not carry over from year-to-year and so must be applied for each year.

Reasonable Adjustments

ADRC - Exam Access Arrangements

- If you are a student undertaking a research programme there is a different way to apply for exam access arrangements which can be found here:

Postgraduate Exam Information - Examination Access Arrangements

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

In line with University recommendations:

- 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 (during office opening hours), the Porters' Lodge (outside of College Tutorial Office opening times), or the College Nurse as soon as possible to let them know that you are unwell. You will be marked as absent from the exam and your College will discuss what mitigations may be appropriate.

- If you attend your exam and then start to feel unwell during the exam alert the invigilator. Do not try to carry on with the exam. The Examination Allowance guidance states that '***Where a student attends an exam and remains in the exam room until its end time, they are considered as having 'completed' the exam, regardless of whether they answered the required number of questions or felt that their performance was impacted.***'

- If you do complete the exam, you will only meet the Examination Allowance criteria a) ii prevented from completing a substantive part of the exam; if there is contemporaneous evidence that you lacked the decision-making capacity to accurately assess your fitness to sit the exam or to remain in the exam.

- If you do not attend the exam or had to leave part-way through the exam, you will need to have contemporaneous evidence from an independent, appropriately qualified source to meet Examiation Allowance criteria e). We would recommend that you contact your GP or relevant medical specialist within 24 hours of feeling unwell or struggle with a disability/long term health condition to arrange an appointment. Even if you are unable to get an appointment staight away, you will have a evidence that you sought medical support immediately.

  The 2026-27 Examination Allowance Guidance notes for students and Colleges can be found here: 2026-27 Exam Allowances Guidance Notes (Undergraduate and Postgraduate students)

WHAT DO I DO IF I'M FEELING UNWELL ON THE DAY OF MY EXAM? (CONTINUED)

In person exams - If you feel unwell during an exam, alert an invigilator and they will be able to take the appropriate action. If you need to leave the venue before the end of the exam, your College Tutorial Office will be alerted and you should follow up with them immediately.

Online exam - If you become unwell during the assessment and are unable to continue, you should submit the work you have completed so far and inform your College Tutorial Office immediately. They will provide you with guidance on what to do next.

Absence from an examination

A student who misses an examination altogether without good cause, such as illness, or who arrives more than 30 minutes late will receive no credit for that examination. This will seriously affect the overall class and result achieved.

Further information can be found here:

Exam Information for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught courses

Student Guide to In-Person Exams

Student Guide to Exams Taken on Moodle

Student Guide to Exams Taken on Inspera



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMETHING HAPPENS IN THE EXAM WHICH AFFECTS MY PERFORMANCE?

Technical Support and Difficulties

- Technical issues during your exam - **If you have technical difficulties during the exam that are unrelated to Moodle or Inspera, you should do your best to resolve these and take screenshots or photos of the display on your screen as evidence of the incident. If you are able to resolve the issues and return to your work, you will still need to submit on time. After the exam, you should send any evidence you documented to your College Tutor and Tutorial Office, with an explanation of what occurred.**

- VLE Moodle - 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**. The helpdesk is monitored Monday to Saturday, 9am to 5pm BST. If the query is outside of these hours, email them at any time so the helpdesk will be aware when it opens.

- If you have difficulties submitting your work at the end of the exam, email your file to **onlineexams@admin.cam.ac.uk**. You will receive an automated response which you should consider as confirmation of receipt. You may continue trying to submit to Moodle for up to 30 minutes and the above email will demonstrate completion within the upload period.

- Further guidance can be found on How to use Moodle for exams

- Inspera -The Inspera Integrity Browser software must be downloaded onto the device you will be using for your exams before you arrive for your first exam. Inspera should be tested before you arrive at your exam to ensure the software works as intended before your exam day. You can do this in your own time. There will also be an opportunity to do this in-person at a Student Bootcamp where members of the central exams team will be available to help.

- If you encounter difficulties accessing the exam via the Inspera portal, or if you have interruptions to your internet connection whilst finishing your exam in the Inspera portal, there will be technical support available on site.

- Further guidance can be found on Using Inspera for your exams.



WHAT CAN I DO IF I FAIL OR UNDER-PERFORM IN MY EXAM(S)?

- Ask your Director of Studies or Supervisor if they can check that the scoring has been added up correctly.

- Examination Review - If you have reasons to believe that your results have been affected by an issue with the conduct of your exam such as a procedural irregularity in the examination process; demonstrable bias or the perception of bias within the examination process; the withdrawal of academic provision, you can submit an application for an **Examination Review** to the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA) **within 28 days of receiving your results**.

- Examination Allowance - If your exams were impacted by an unanticipated illness or grave cause you will need to submit a **Student Initiation Form** to your Tutor and Tutorial Office **within 7 days of the exam. The College then has 6 weeks** to submit an application for an Examination Allowance to the EAMC.

- Contact your College Tutor or speak to the **Student Advice Service** to discuss your options.

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

University of Cambridge: What is an Exam Allowance?

Cambridge SU Exam Hub

University of Cambridge: Examinations - Mitigation

University of Cambridge: About the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC)

University of Cambridge: Examination Reviews

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.

- 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.



DE-STRESS BEFORE THE TEST

Preparing for exams can be stressful and at times may feel all-consuming. Therefore it's important to remember to take breaks and practise self care alongside your studies to support your physical and mental wellbeing. This section uses the 'Five ways to Wellbeing' to consider different ways in which you could take breaks during the exam period.

CONNECT

Connection is all about feeling valued and close to others which means different things for everyone. This could be connection to family, friends, partners, animals, or nature. Here are some examples of ways to connect to others and take a study break:

- Take time away from revision to check in with a peer, either from your course or college, and have a chat about something other than upcoming exams and deadlines.
- Reach out to an SU Campaign or Society that peaks your interest.
- Have a go at growing some plants, or look after any houseplants you already own.

BE ACTIVE

Exercise is great for our physical and mental health. Being active is all about doing what you can. You can also combine slower paced activities, such as walking with others, to exercise whilst socialising.

- If you are already part of a sports club or regularly go to the gym or exercise classes try to keep these within your routine.
- Try to physically leave your workspace, stretch and move your body at regular intervals.
- Be kind with your expectations of yourself during the exam period, make sure to check in with yourself and listen to what your body needs.

TAKE NOTICE

Taking notice is about trying to be present in the moment. It can take a lot of practice especially during stressful periods, but it can be a great way to check in with yourself and how you are feeling.

- Try Mindfulness apps such as Headspace could help you practice mindfulness. Please note that a fee might be required.
- Take some time to clear your workspace at the end of the day, or complete other daily tasks that help you to feel comfortable in your living space.
- Take notice of how you are feeling, check in regularly and take a break when needed.

LEARN

Learning doesn't have to only relate to your academic studies, it also involves being curious and trying new things. You could incorporate learning into destressing by:

- Study with a friend or peer, you can also remind each other to take a break!
- Trial studying in different spaces and at different times to learn more about what works best for you.

GIVE

Acts of giving and kindness can help to promote our wellbeing by increasing feelings of self worth and connection. There are many small ways we can give back which can also help us to take a break from our studies:

- Give yourself permission to take a break from your studies.
- Taking the time to ask friends, peers or family how they really are and actively listening to their responses.
- Cooking a meal or making a drink for a peer or housemate. This could help remind them to take a break too!

SLEEP AND FOOD

Whilst not part of the official five ways to wellbeing, sleep and nutrition are essential to our wellbeing. Here are some tips to support with these areas:

- Try to make your bed each morning and if possible don't revise from bed.
- Give yourself time to relax after revising before you try and get to sleep.
- Try not to drink too much caffeine or alcohol as this might impair your ability to sleep well.
- Try to eat breakfast on the day of the exam, even if you don't feel like it, to keep your body and brain well fueled.

STUDENT MINDS TIPS FOR EXAM STRESS

Here are some other tips from Student Minds on dealing with Exam Stress, you can read the whole resource here:
www.studentminds.org.uk/examstress.html

- Take frequent breaks. We can only concentrate properly for 30-45 minutes. When you do take a break make sure you don't stay at your desk.
- Drink lots of water!
- Think about where and when you work best. You can find designated study spaces across the University and the City via Space Finder, where you can filter by noise level, facilities and atmosphere to find the ideal spot to suit your needs: spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk/
- Don't cut out all the enjoyment from your life. It's impossible to focus without giving your brain rest by doing other activities. Make sure to add in time to relax into your timetable.

EXAM INFORMATION

You can visit the University's webpages on general exam information.

- Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Courses Exam Information
- Postgraduate Research Course Exam Information

PREPARING FOR THE EXAM - IN PERSON

- Pack any materials or equipment you will need for the exams the night before your exam takes place. For full lists of what you can and can't take with you check out the in-person guide to exams below.
- Make sure you have a bottle of water with you.
- Check your exam venues ahead of time to ensure you know where to go and how long it will take you to get there. You might be in a different place to your peers taking the same exam so be sure to check your timetable thoroughly. You must be at the exam venue 20-30 minutes before the exam starts so make sure to plan your journey accordingly.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAM - ONLINE

If you are due to have an online exam this year make sure you:

- Are familiar with the process and technology involved ahead of time.
- Plan your exam space ahead of time; you need a private quiet room, a desk, chair and adequate lighting.
- Make sure you know whether you are allowed to type your exam or if you are expected to handwrite, scan and upload your submission.

If you have any concerns relating to revising, exam stress, or the logistics of in person or online exams, speak to your Director of Studies or Tutor ahead of time.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

If stress or anxiety relating to exams is impacting upon your wellbeing or mental health, you can reach out for some additional support from the following areas:

- Cambridge SU out of hours helpline directory: www.cambridgesu.co.uk/support/outofhours/
- University Counselling Service: www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/
- University Counselling Service Exam Preparation Workshop www.studentsupport.cam.ac.uk/workshops
- Accessibility Disability Resource Centre: www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/
- Postgraduate Wellbeing Service: www.studentsupport.cam.ac.uk/postgraduate-wellbeing-service
- Careers Service www.careers.cam.ac.uk
- Nightline (Term time only): 7pm to 7am during term time. 01223 74444 cambridge.nightline.ac.uk/
- Contact your college's Welfare Advisor and/or college Nurse
- Check your college's website for wellbeing events being held during term time.



STUDENT ADVICE SERVICE

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:

Please submit an appointment request or enquiry via our booking form which can be found here:

www.cambridgesu.co.uk/advice/student-advice-service/contact

Our office hours are Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm, all year round (excluding Bank Holidays).

The Student Advice Service is brought to you by:

