



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

Exam survival guide



Palmerston North - Manawatu
Centre for Learner Success
Student Centre Level 2,
Manawatu Campus
Phone: + 64 6 951 6540
Email:
learnersuccess@massey.ac.nz

Albany
Centre for Learner Success
Level 3, Library, Albany Campus
Phone: + 64 6 951 6540
Email:
learnersuccess@massey.ac.nz

Wellington
Centre for Learner Success
Block 5, Ground Floor (Level A
in the Library), Wellington
Campus
Phone: + 64 6 951 6540
Email:
learnersuccess@massey.ac.nz

Contents

Exam preparation	4
Exam plan.....	4
Exam timetable	4
Exam study	4
Collect information	3
Memorise and revise	3
Summarising and understanding	3
Storing and retrieval activities	5
Tips for surviving the exam	7
Before the exam	7
In the exam (physical exam)	8
Step 1: Check the exam paper	8
Step 2: Read the instructions	8
Step 3: Allocate your time	8
Step 4: Choose your question order	8
Step 5: Memory dump	8
Step 6: Start writing	9
In the exam (online exam).....	9
Step 1: Technical requirements	9
Step 2: Check the exam question	10
Step 3: Read and re-read the instructions	10
Step 4: Allocate your time	10
Step 5: Choose your order	11
Step 6: Memory dump	12
Step 7: Start writing	12
Strategies for answering questions.....	12
Essays	12
Multiple-choice	13
Short answer questions.....	13
Solving Problems	14
Exam case-study / scenario question.....	14
Exam oral question.....	14
Open Book.....	15

Open web exam or test	15
Take home tests	17
Centre for Learner Success	20
Student Counselling Services	21

Exam preparation

Step 1: Plan

Step 2: Collect information

Step 3: Find out what types of topics and questions will be covered

Step 4: Memorise

Step 5: Revise

Exam plan

Being systematic and organised with your time will benefit your exam preparation. Complete an exam timetable and create a good study environment.

Know when and where your exams are, and when and where you will study for them.

Exam timetable

- Write down exam dates
- Block out study times
- Decide on the amount of time needed to study for each exam
- Have regular breaks
- Break each session into topics that you will study and practise
- Review timetable every week

Exam study

- Create a dedicated study area
- Understand your working style (playing music, clear work space for example)
- Select and stick to regular study periods
- Use “to do” lists to focus on particular study activities

Work early or work late – find the best place and time for you. While studying, remember to eat, sleep and get regular exercise.

Example timetable

Weekly schedule

Week beginning:							
Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7am							
8am							
9am							
10am							
11am							
12pm							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm							
8pm							

Collect information

Go back to the information you have gathered throughout your course:

- Lecture notes
- Study notes
- Assignment preparation notes
- Notes from books and readings
- Stream information and discussions of the courses
- Past exams

Go and look at the exams for the last couple of years. They are all on the Massey website:

https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/exams/before-your-exams/past-exam-papers/past-exam-papers_home.cfm

Check the topics and types of questions

- What topics are repeated?
- Which themes are emphasised?
- What type of questions will you be asked (essay questions, short answer, multiple choice)
- What is the allocation of marks for each section/question?

Memorise and revise

Phase one: Summarising and understanding

Study summaries, lists, flash cards etc.

Phase two: Storing and retrieval activities

Acronyms, rhymes, talking out loud, verbal associations

Phase three: Practice and application

Practice answering questions (speaking out loud and/or practising writing down answers) Helpful

strategies for phase one and two are provided below. Phase three is up to you!

Summarising and understanding

Condense the information you have gathered using study summaries. Use your own words, or present the information visually. There are a number of different ways information can be presented.

Below are examples of linear notes, mind maps/diagrams and charts.

Linear notes

Linear notes present a summary outline, break the subject sequentially into topics, and use different techniques such as bullet points and abbreviations.

Global varieties of Eng. Lang.

Inner circle

USA, UK, Canada, NZ, Aus—last 3 controversial All public functions. > Eng.

- Gov; media, creative pursuits; edu_

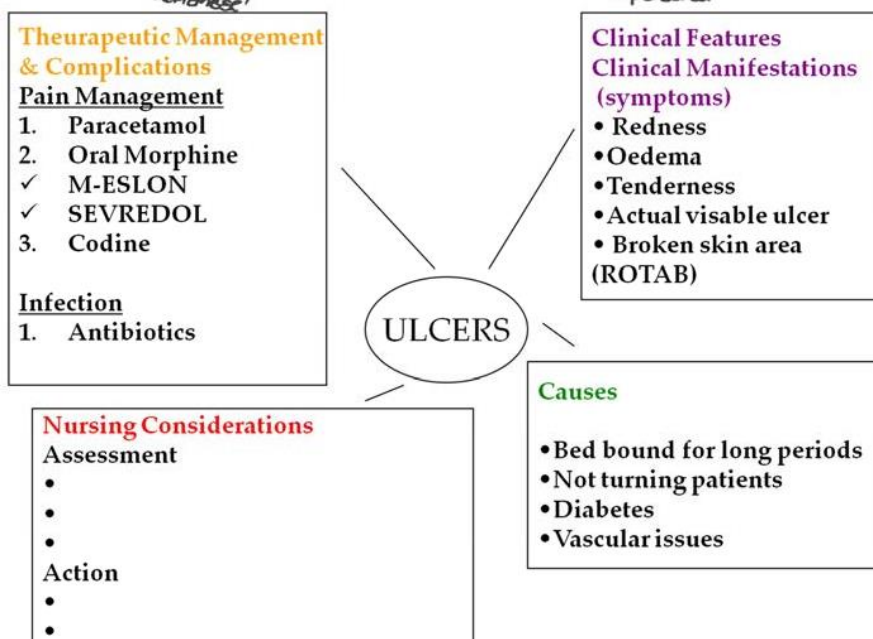
Outer circle

India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, Zambia Long history as institutionalised lang. & has cultural role

- Literary creativity / pop cul.

Mind maps/diagrams

A mind map is a diagram in which ideas, concepts, and images are linked together around a central concept, keyword, or idea. The sub-concepts may be organised into sub-groups or branches with more important concepts closer to the central core. Two examples are below.



Chart

Charts are especially good for comparing and contrasting theorists and/or issues.

3 Basic issues	Piaget	Vygotsky
Continuous or discontinuous development?	Discontinuous – stages of development	Continuous – gradually acquire skills
One course of development of many?	One – stages are universal	Many possible courses
Nature nurture most important?	Both nature and nurture	Both nature and nurture

Storing and retrieval activities

There are a range of memory strategies and tactics designed to help you study as efficiently and effectively as possible. However, that there is no single memory method that suits all situations. Four strategies are presented below: 3Q3R, acronyms and acrostics, Roman room, and talking out loud.

Overall, the key to good memory in exams is to present your information in a way that works for you, and revise, revise, revise.

SQ3R

This study strategy encourages you to carry out the following sequence of activities:

Survey: Look over the set of notes you are about to revise. Read headings, diagrams, graphs. This step acts as an advance organiser as it activates relevant vocabulary.

Question: Generate some questions about the content which will help you focus your study, e.g. What are some the differences between the two main theories? What are some of the examples of...?

Read: Read the notes using a slower in-depth reading style. Pause frequently to think about what you have just read. Then read on. Read with a pencil and make margin notes or underline words or phrases which are important (like definitions).

Recite: Make notes on the sections you have just read from memory. If you are going over study notes you have already made – make lists of main points or ‘talk aloud’

Review: Check your recalled notes against the section that you read. Add in anything that you omitted. Put an * by it so that you can attend to this point when you go through these notes the next time

Acronyms and acrostics

Use these to remember a set or sequence. Acronyms use the initials of a word, term, or for studying purposes a series of words. Acrostics are poems or sayings, where the first letter of each word (or line) is a cue to help you remember particular terms.

Example acronym:

BEDMAS -

Brackets
Exponentials
Division
Multiplication
Addition
Subtraction

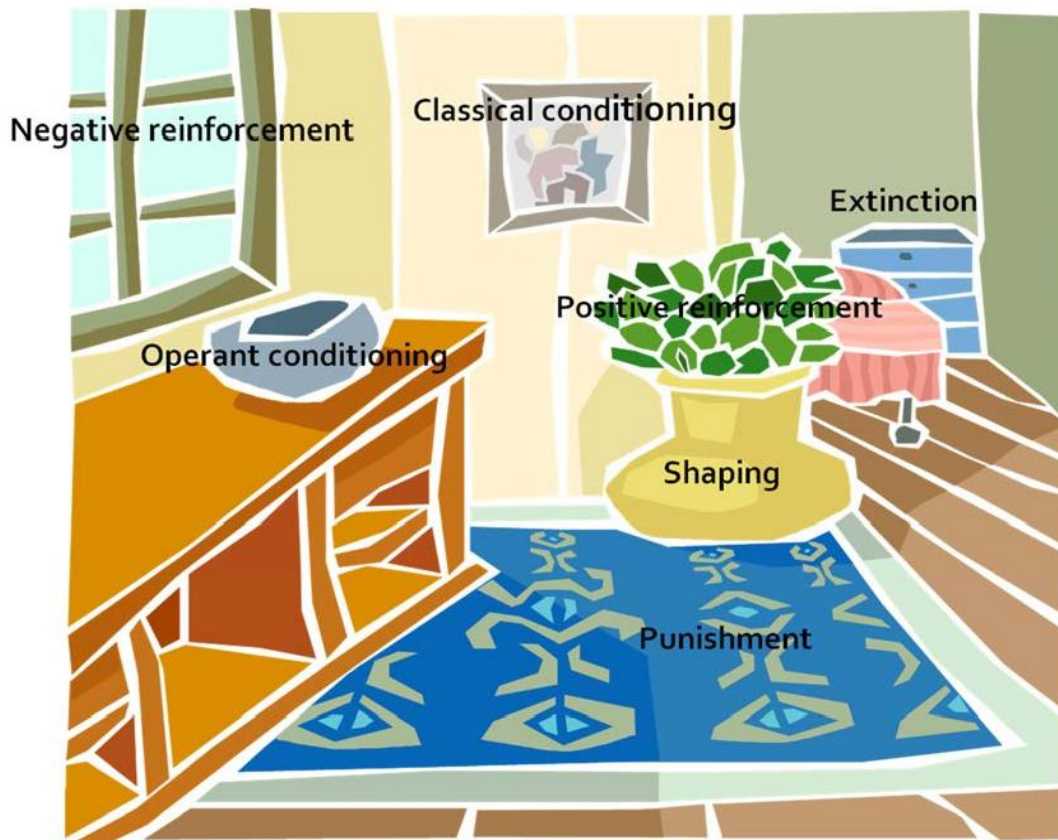
Example acrostics:

Every good boy deserves fruit always
(The notes on the lines of the treble clef)

Happy Henry likes beans, butter, carrots, nuts or fruit now
(First 10 elements of the periodic table)

Roman room

You need to be able to conjure up the room and all its parts and furniture in your mind easily. Links are then made by associating sets of information with each part of the room, the furniture and furnishings. Other images can work just as well, try imaging the toppings on your favourite pizza, for example.



Talking out loud

Go through a topic and speak it out loud, as if you were giving a speech or lecture to someone.

- How fluent is your explanation? Did you have to stop and start?
- Are you using the right terms or having to use less clear, less precise words?
- Did you cover all the parts of a topic or did you miss bits out?

Retrieval strategies

- ✓ Be active!
- ✓ Own words!
- ✓ Set time! Set place! Set task!
- ✓ Choose a study method that works (e.g., type of summaries, memory strategies)

Tips for surviving the exam

Before the exam

- ✓ Think positive
- ✓ Remind yourself of what you do know
- ✓ Avoid panic
- ✓ Find exam room ahead of time, check exam time
- ✓ Get a good night's sleep
- ✓ Get an "exam pack" ready (for physical exams)

Possible exam pack for physical exam

In a clear plastic ziplock bag:

- Student ID Card
- Highlighter
- Calculator and other permitted equipment
- If open book, text and permitted notes
- Clear plastic waterbottle

In the exam (physical exam)

During the ten minute reading time	
Step 1:	Check the exam paper
Step 2:	Read and re-read the instructions
Step 3:	Allocate your time
Step 4:	Choose your question order

At the start of the exam	
Step 5:	Memory dump
Step 6:	Start writing

Step 1: Check the exam paper

- Are you in the right room? (Check the paper number at the top of the page to confirm you have the right exam).
- Does your exam have all the pages it should have.

Step 2: Read the instructions

- How many questions do you have to answer?
 - Are all sections compulsory or do you get to choose from different options?
 - Check for words that indicate options within the exam, e.g. “Either”, “And”, “Choose Two (2)”.
- Check for any other specific instructions, e.g. “All working for calculations must be shown”.

Step 3: Allocate your time

- Allocate your time for each question based on how much it is worth, the type of questions, and whether the section is compulsory.
 - For example, if you have to write four essays in three hours, allocate 45 minutes to each.

Step 4: Choose your question order

This is a strategy for essays and short answers. If you can, consider deciding what order you are going to complete your questions.

- It is a good idea to attempt the questions you feel most confident with first.
- Make sure you complete the compulsory questions.

Step 5: Memory dump

Not for multiple choice, but useful for essay and short answer exams.

- Writedown all the information you can remember for all the questions that you have chosen to complete.
- Rather than worrying about remembering all the information, you can then focus on writing it well.

Step 6: Start writing

Write as much as possible in the time you have available.

During the reading time, ask the exam supervisor for a spare piece of paper. Use this for the “memory dump” when you are allowed to start writing.

In the exam (online exam)

Before the exam

Step 1:	Technical requirements
----------------	------------------------

In the exam

Step 2:	Check the exam question
----------------	-------------------------

Step 3:	Read and re-read the instructions
----------------	-----------------------------------

Step 4:	Allocate your time
----------------	--------------------

Step 5:	Choose your order
----------------	-------------------

Step 6:	Memory dump
----------------	-------------

Step 7:	Start writing
----------------	---------------

Step 1: Technical requirements

- Before the exam starts, make sure that your computer or the device to be used for the exam is functioning well, fully charged and plugged in. If possible, prepare a backup device for use just in case.
- If you live with others tell people in your household about the exam time and the need for a dedicated quiet period for the exam. If you have a poor internet connection, then ask others to refrain from using the internet during this time.
- Read the exam information sent beforehand carefully to find out the exam time, how to submit the assessment online, how to begin, how to finish the exam, etc.
- Find out what resources (e.g. course materials, books, software, etc.) you are allowed to use during the exam and prepare the resources well in advance.
- If you will be using any special software for the exam, make sure it is correctly installed and practice using the software to be familiar with its functions. If you are unsure check with your course coordinator.
- It’s very important that you ask your lecturer any exam-related questions before the exam.

- Find out who you can contact and what to do if you encounter any technical issues during your exam.

Step 2: Check the exam question

- Check the course number to confirm you have the right exam.
- Check the number of questions you should have to confirm that it is complete.
- Make sure that you have any additional materials if specified i.e.
 - Formula sheets
 - Maths tables

[Example exam papers](#) can be found in the library (although the format may be different, they may give you an idea of what to expect).

- If you have any problems, make contact with the relevant person as soon as possible.

Step 3: Read and re-read the instructions

- Check which questions or sections are compulsory.
- Check for words that indicate options within the exam (e.g. “Either”, “And”, “Choose Two (2)”). Missing these words can cost you dearly: if you complete both essays where you had the choice of two, you have wasted time and marks.
- Check for any specific instructions, e.g. “All working for calculations must be shown”.

Step 4: Allocate your time

Allocate your time for each question based on how much it is worth, the type of questions, and whether the section is compulsory.

- If a section is worth 60 marks out of 100, then it should be allocated 60% of your time.
- If that 60 mark section is divided into 3 questions then each question should be allocated 20% of your time.
- Remember too that sometimes [multi-choice questions](#) can be done quicker than [essay questions](#).
- Calculate a timeline of when you want to complete questions and stick to it. Remember that if you spend too much time on a difficult question you may not have enough time for easier questions after it.

Download an [exam time worksheet](#)  (90KB) and follow the steps below for each exam.

- Convert the number of hours into minutes (1 hour = 60 minutes).
- Take off 10 to 20 minutes for planning at the beginning of the exam. Take off 10 minutes for reviewing at the end of the exam.

- Divide the remaining minutes by the total number of marks. This is the total time you have for each mark.
- Work out how much time you have for each question, and when you need to move on to the next one

Example exam time worksheet

In this example, the exam is 3 hours long and is worth 100 marks. There are three sections, worth 20, 30, and 50 marks respectively (100 marks total).

- Convert hours to minutes: 3 hours = 3 x 60 = 180 minutes
- Take off planning time: 180 - 20 = 160 minutes

Take off review time: 160 - 10 = 150 minutes

- Divide minutes by total marks: 150 / 100 = 1.5 minutes per mark
- Work out time for each question:

Question	Marks	Time required (=marks x 1.5 min)
(Planning time)	-	20 min
Section A	20	30 min
Section B	30	45 min
Section C	50	75 min
(Review time)	-	10 min
Total	100	180 min

Things to remember:

- Planning your time will help you not to panic.
- Write down your time plan before you start planning.
- Cross each time off as it passes.
- Move onto the next question, even if you haven't finished a section - you can always come back to it.
- If you finish a section early, move on to the next one.

Step 5: Choose your order

Decide what order you are going to complete your questions in and write it down.

- It is good idea to attempt the questions you feel most confident with first.
- Make sure you complete the compulsory questions.

Step 6: Memory dump

Write down all the information you can remember for all the questions that you have chosen to complete. Rather than worrying about remembering all the information, you can then focus on writing it well.

- Write down the memory dump on scrap paper; you can use this as a reference within the exam.
- Use mind maps as they are a quick way of getting information down.
- This technique does not work well with multi-choice questions.

Step 7: Start writing

You have limited time to complete the exam and impress your marker, so write as much as possible in the time you have available.

Strategies for answering questions

Essays

- Choose the questions you will answer during reading time.
- During the first 5-20 minutes write down the relevant points you can remember on the essay questions you will answer.
- Understand the question. Examine key words and command words – understand what aspect of the topic you have been asked to write about.
- For the structure of the essay follow the structure of the question.
 - Develop a thesis statement from the question and include it in your introduction.
 - Structure the points in the body paragraphs so that one point follows the other logically and clearly.
- As a general rule, one paragraph = one point, supported by an example, explanation, and evidence.
- No need to provide references and citations, but do acknowledge theory and research using relevant names.

Common command words

Analyse: to break the subject up into its main ideas and evaluate them.

Compare: to show the similarities and differences of two or more subjects.

Define: to give the meaning of a word or term distinguishing it from closely related subjects, sometimes by examples and illustrations.

Describe: to give a detailed account of the characteristics of a subject.

Discuss: to investigate and present the different aspects of a problem or subject and come to some conclusion.

Examine: to inquire into, and consider a problem carefully.

Multiple-choice

- Do not read through the test during the reading time.
- If the correct answer looks obvious, still check to make sure that it is correct.
- Read the questions carefully and highlight key words.
- Go through and answer the easier questions first - come back to the tougher ones later.

Answering multi-choice questions can be very difficult, as often more than one answer seems to be correct. The underlying skill in answering these types of questions is to be able to choose the most correct answer. Try the following:

- Cover the answers and try and answer the question yourself.
 - Once you have an answer, look at the options and choose the one which most closely matches your answer.
- Try eliminating any answers which you know are definitely wrong.

Short answer questions

- Keep your answers short—usually a paragraph, but sometimes only 2 or 3 sentences are required.
- Answer the questions given.
 - Think of what points, key words, phrases and ideas the examiner will be looking for.
 - Don't fall into the trap of trying to write down everything you know.
- Leave 1 or 2 lines after each answer in case you remember something else important later on.
- Stick closely to time you have allocated for each question - you will gain more marks if all the questions are attempted.

Short answer questions often focus on key terms and concepts emphasised during the semester, so definitions and examples are an important aspect. Sometimes you might be asked to compare or contrast terms. Identify important key terms and build up links and relationships between them.

Solving Problems

- Write down relevant formulas, equations, rules, etc.
- Clearly show the steps you have taken in working out the answer(s).
- If necessary (and appropriate) write some notes to explain your answer(s).
- For numerical problems involving computation, make sure you include the appropriate units (e.g. ml, cm, N, m/sec, etc) in your final answer(s). Underline your final answer(s) if this is appropriate and will help clarity.
- Go through and solve the easier problems first - come back to the tougher ones afterwards.

Problem and computational questions require you to perform some calculations to provide the answer. Sometimes you may be required to use multiple calculations to arrive at an answer. Practice is the key to success in these exams. Know the theories and when and how to use them.

In maths, be prepared to show your workings. If the answer is wrong or incomplete you can still get credit for your workings by demonstrating your mastery of the process.

Exam case-study / scenario question

Scenario questions are used in exams and tests as ways for students to show that they can understand and integrate key concepts of the course, apply course theories to a practical context, and demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate.

Scenario questions often require a longer answer, so they will be allocated more time and more marks.

Remember: There is no one right answer, but there are concepts that the lecturer will be expecting you to use. Realistic answers are better than 'way out' answers especially if cost is a factor.

Exam oral question

Oral questions are normally found in language courses and allow you to respond directly to the examiner's questions or present a prepared statement or answers.

- The preparation for oral questions is practically the same as for any other test: see [phases of revision](#).
- Practise speaking full answers under the conditions you will face in the exam (try and match the physical conditions, equipment, and timing as closely as possible).

- Make and maintain eye contact with the different examiners (in most cases there will be more than one).
- Count to 10 before answering a question; the pause will give you time to think.
- Make sure you hear the question clearly; if you don't, ask for it to be repeated.
- If you don't understand the question, ask the examiners to rephrase it.
- Make sure you speak clearly and calmly; don't rush your answer, as the examiners must be able to understand what you are saying.

Open Book

Open book exams are not an easy option and can be as demanding as a closed book exam.

- Know what type of information and how much will be allowed into the examination room.
 - You may be limited to your own notes or just to the textbook
- You will need to be able to retrieve information quickly and effectively in this sort of exam
 - Be familiar with the layout of the text.
 - Have relevant sections marked and practise locating material quickly
- Don't just copy directly from the textbook
- Ensure that you correctly reference any material
- Ensure you use the correct information/theory

Open web exam or test

Open web exams are exams that will usually be accessed through Stream, starting at a set time and completing within a time limit. They may or may not be supervised.

Open web exams/tests require just as much preparation as other types of exams. In an open web exam/test, you are allowed to access notes, books, or other specified resources during the exam/test. It is important to know what type of information and how much you will be allowed to use in the exam. You may be limited to a particular set of resources. You will need to be able to retrieve information quickly and effectively in this sort of exam so preparation, clear note-taking, and organisation are very important. As exams/tests vary according to course, your course coordinator or lecturer should provide details of format, and what can and cannot be used.

Open web exams/tests generally don't test memory because you are able to access information. Instead, they tend to test your understanding and ability to apply what you have learned. For this reason, open web exams/tests require as much preparation as traditional or closed book exams/tests. Be careful however, not to bring too much material to an exam/test as you can waste valuable time looking for information. It is very important to make sure what you have

ready to use is well-organised so information is easily locatable and relevant. Also take care to reference when appropriate - the rules of plagiarism still apply in an open web exam/test.

- Revise the material as for a normal examination. You will need to understand and be familiar with the material before starting the exam. The exam is not the place to try to read and understand material. Understanding the material well will also help when locating information.
- Ensure that your notes are brief and well organised to ensure you are able to quickly locate information. Highlight important sections for quick referencing and highlight important text with different coloured markers. You might find using mind maps or other methods for summaries of information can help you retrieve information quickly.
- Contact your course coordinator or lecturer for details about technology that can and cannot be used in the exam/test, any required software, and to get an idea of exam/test format as this varies across courses. Do this well before your test or exam. Before the assessment, find out who you can contact and what to do if you encounter any technical issues during your exam.
- It is important to check all your equipment (e.g. computer, specialised software, calculator etc.) works and you know how to use it, well before you begin your online exam or test.
- You might need to tell any people you live with that you have an online exam/test and ask for quiet during this time. If you have a poor internet connection, then ask others to refrain from using the internet while you are taking the exam or test.
- Check on Stream or with your course coordinator or lecturer to see if there is a practice exam/test available. Practise interpreting questions using previous exam papers; although the format may be different, they may give you an idea of what to expect.
- It is likely that expectations of understanding are higher than regular exam tests as you are allowed to access notes and other resources; as such, it is likely you are expected to demonstrate evidence of a deeper, more nuanced, understanding of the course material. This means you must study and be prepared. Practise writing full answers under the conditions you will face in the exam (try and match the physical conditions, equipment, and timing as closely as possible).

As with a regular exam or test, time is constrained, so it is recommended you take a few minutes to plan your approach to the exam or test before you start answering questions. As in a regular exam or test, a little planning at the beginning can have a significant impact on your grade (and stress levels!):

- Before you begin answering questions, check you have the right exam questions and check the number of questions you should have to confirm that it is complete.
- Make sure that you have any additional materials if specified (e.g., formula sheets, math tables).

- Don't just copy directly from course materials and ensure that you correctly reference any material, if needed; it is a good idea to ask your lecturer/course coordinator beforehand if references are required as this will vary across courses.
- Most importantly, be smart with time allocation based on how much a question is worth, the type of questions, and whether the section is compulsory. For example, if a section is worth 60 marks out of 100, then it should be allocated 60% of your time and if that 60 mark section is divided into 3 questions then each question should be allocated 20% of your time. It is a good idea to jot down a timeline of when you will answer questions. Remember, if you spend too much time on a difficult question, then you might not have time for easier questions after it. Planning your time, and sticking to the plan, can also help with not panicking. More advice about help with time allocation can be found here.

Take home tests

As the name suggests, take home tests are tests that you do at home, usually within a specified time frame (such as 48 or 72 hours). They will usually be submitted through your course Stream site. The format may be similar to regular assignments, although they can often be broader in scope (testing all of the course material over the entire semester, rather than specific parts or topics).

As with open book and open web exams and tests, take home tests are focused on depth of understanding and ability to apply information, rather than testing memory:

- It is likely that expectations of understanding are higher than regular tests because you are given time to prepare and are expected to demonstrate evidence of research and a deeper, more nuanced, understanding of the course material.
- Because this is a test of deeper understanding, it is very important you thoroughly prepare and make sure you understand your course material as well as possible.
- You may also be required to submit a full reference list as you would with a regular assignment. Check your assignment guidelines regarding whether this is required.
- As with all kinds of tests, exams, and assignments, you should always refer to your course guide, lecturer, or course coordinator for the details of a take home test as this will vary across courses.

Time constrained assessments and assignments

Time constrained assessments and assignments are exam-like, but unsupervised and will usually be completed through Stream, with a time limit to when you finish once you start. As with any assessment or assignment, preparation is critical to success:

- The rules about what resources you can and cannot use during your time constrained assessment or assignment will vary across courses so you should always refer to your course guide, lecturer, or course coordinator for the details about time and resources before the assessment begins. Ask your lecturer any questions well before the assessment/assignment begins. Before the assessment, find out who you can contact and what to do if you encounter any technical issues during your exam.
- It is important to check all your equipment (e.g. computer, specialised software, calculator etc.) works and you know how to use it, well before you begin your time constrained assessment/assignment.
- You might need to tell any people you live with that you have a time constrained assessment/assignment and ask for quiet during this time. If you have a poor internet connection, then ask others to refrain from using the internet during this time.
- It is likely that expectations of understanding are higher than regular tests if you are allowed to access notes and other resources; as such, it is likely you are expected to demonstrate evidence of a deeper, more nuanced, understanding of the course material. This is particularly true if you have been given the topic in advance. This means you must study and be prepared. Practise writing full answers under the conditions you will face in the exam (try and match the physical conditions, equipment, and timing as closely as possible).
- Check on Stream or with your course coordinator or lecturer to see if there is a practice exam/test available. Example exam papers can be found in the library; although the format may be different, they may give you an idea of what to expect.

As time is constrained, it is recommended you take a few minutes to plan your approach to the assessment/assignment before you start answering questions. As in a regular assessment or assignment, a little planning at the beginning of your time constrained assessment or assignment can have a significant impact on your grade (and stress levels!):

- Before you begin, check the course number to confirm you have the right assessment/assignment and check the number of questions you should have to confirm that it is complete.
- Make sure that you have any additional materials if specified (e.g., formula sheets, math tables).
- Don't just copy directly from course materials and ensure that you correctly reference any material, if needed; it is a good idea to ask your lecturer/course coordinator beforehand if references are required as this will vary across courses.
- Most importantly, be smart with time allocation based on how much a question is worth, the type of questions, and whether the section is compulsory. You will likely have less time than a regular assignment, although possibly more than a regular assessment so, if possible, plan your approach and time before the assessment/assignment starts. For example, if a section

is worth 60 marks out of 100, then it should be allocated 60% of your time and if that 60 mark section is divided into 3 questions then each question should be allocated 20% of your time. It is a good idea to jot down a timeline of what and when you will answer questions. Remember, if you spend too much time on a difficult question, then you might not have time for easier questions after it. Planning your time, and sticking to the plan, can also help with not panicking. More advice about help with time allocation can be found [here](#).

Preparation

- It is important to [manage your time](#) carefully. Make sure you know when your exam will take place and make time for it (by shifting other commitments if necessary).
- [Collect information](#) and ensure that your notes are brief and well organised.
- Use previous test or [exam papers](#) to help predict possible topics.

For take home tests:

- Use the [Assignment Planning calculator](#) to plan the different steps you will follow during the time allowed.

For time constrained assessments and assignments:

- [Revise](#) the material as for a normal examination. You will need to understand and be familiar with the material before starting the exam.
- Practise writing full answers under the conditions you will face in the assessment (try and match the physical conditions, equipment, and timing as closely as possible).

Strategies for answering questions

- The best strategies for answering questions for time constrained assessments and assignments will depend on the [type of questions](#). Exams may contain more than one type of question, so use the best strategy for each question type (see the relevant strategies for [Essay questions](#), [Short answer questions](#), [Multi-choice questions](#), [Problem / computational questions](#), [Case-study / scenario questions](#), or [Oral questions](#)).

Centre for Learner Success

The Centre for Learner Success provides a range of support services for all students.

Online academic Q & A

[Ask our consultants](#) a question online about planning and writing assignments, referencing, or study skills.

Pre-reading service

[The Pre-reading Service](#) is available to all distance students (and internal students in their first year of study, enrolled in non-research papers).

We can:

- Provide feedback and advice (within 3 working days) about any difficulties we identify within your draft.
- Respond to your questions with relevant information as to how these matters can be overcome.
- Comment on one or more of the following features: focus, style, presentation and referencing.

Please note, it is not a proofreading service and we cannot identify every mistake or error in your draft. To submit an assignment, complete the pre-reading submission form in the Academic Writing and Learning Support Stream course.

One-on-one sessions

Any student (distance or internal) near a Massey campus can make an appointment with a writing or learning consultant to talk about an assignment or their study. For more information, see <https://www.massey-nz.libcal.com/>

Services offered through one-on one consultations:

- Academic writing (planning and structure, writing style, paragraphing, grammar, punctuation and referencing).
- Types of assessment (reports, essays, tests, exams, presentations).
- Study and learning skills (memory strategies, time management, strategic reading, note-taking).

Study resources

The Centre for Learner Success publishes learning resources on a number of different topics (academic writing, assignment types, referencing, study skills, and tests and exams). Extensive information is also available online on the OWLL website (Online Writing and Learning Link): <http://owll.massey.ac.nz/>

Student Counselling Services

Being a successful student isn't just about academic work, you need to look after yourself as well.

Emotional and psychological issues can impact on our ability to perform in exams by interfering with sleep, concentration and memory. Juggling work, family, life and studies is seldom easy. The Student Counselling Service is here to assist you maximise your potential under sometimes difficult situations.

Individual Appointments

Each campus has a dedicated team of professionals, including highly skilled counsellors, nurses, doctors and a physiotherapist who are able to assist you. We have skilled practice nurses available full time for appointments and telephone advice. Appointments can be arranged by accessing an online questionnaire from: https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/student-life/services-and-resources/health-counselling-services/counselling/counselling_home.cfm

Online Resources

[Piki](#) is an online service to help overcome adversity and strengthen your wellbeing. Piki offers free access to:

- Easy and personalised access to therapy at a convenient place and time
- An emotional wellness app that helps you access support and track your progress
- Links to 24/7 support through phone and web services
- Peer support groups

Piki is available to young adults living in the Greater Wellington Region, between 18 and 25 years of age.