

Remote Computer-Based Assessment (RCBA) Examinations

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GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS ON REMOTE COMPUTER-BASED ASSESSMENT (RCBA) EXAMINATIONS

1. Introduction and Support Requirements

Remote Computer-Based Assessments (RCBA) require students to work online, in a remote/home-based computing environment, without invigilation or supervision, however support will be provided for the duration of all assessments, as follows:

For the duration of the assessment period, students can access help and support in two key ways:

Via Online Assessment: Self-Help Guidance provided in [Campus Moodle](#)

Via a new ITS Helpdesk number for students - 01224 263737

Academic support: this will be provided by Schools.

In advance of remote computer-based assessments:

Schools will ensure that CampusMoodle or other exam platform contains any relevant announcements pertaining to accessing the exam (including the *Standard Set of Announcements for Remote Computer Based Assessments*). Students should be advised to download institutionally available software, such as Office 365.

Schools must explain the mechanism for students to submit a query to the relevant academic member of staff and how the students will receive the response. For example, will this be through a chat function, email etc? How long should they expect to wait for a response? This can be detailed in the *Announcements* if appropriate.

During each remote computer-based assessment:

There will be an academic member of staff available online for the first **30 minutes** who will respond to student queries in accordance with guidance provided in advance of the assessment.

For exams with an open window of 8 hours or more in which to complete an assessment, an academic member of staff will be available for the **first 30 minutes** of the scheduled exam period and will be available **again** for **30 minutes**, 4 hours after the scheduled exam period opened. During these periods students are permitted to seek clarification from the academic around any ambiguity or perceived error in the assessment brief. Guidance on how this support will be delivered in practice will be provided by your School.

For exams that are time limited but available for students to start at any time throughout a time window of 8 hours or more, an academic member of staff must be available throughout the entire period. During this period students are permitted to seek clarification from the academic around any ambiguity or

perceived error in the assessment brief. Guidance on how this support will be delivered in practice will be provided by your School.

Schools should note that whilst normal office hours support will be covered in the general University model for support costs, in a similar model to that used in the past for the charging of external invigilation, there will be charging of additional costs for out of hours working.

2. General Instructions for all students

There will be general guidance issued via e-mail for all students to read in preparation for online assessment. Please refer to the general guidance for students and the *Standard Set of Announcements for Remote Computer-Based Assessments* in this document.

It is important that advice is provided to students about whether or not they are permitted to refer to sources such as lecture notes, textbooks, and other course materials during their exam and the standard of referencing required to accompany this. It should also be made clear if they are **not** permitted to refer to additional sources of information, including the internet, whilst completing the assessment.

3. Login Instructions for students

Instructions for logging in and accessing assessments issued by Schools must include the following guidance to students:

For exams with a fixed start and finish time (all examinations other than those for a period of 8 hours or longer), students should be advised:

- To login at least **20 minutes** before the given start time.
- To note that start times have been staggered and they must check their timetable carefully.
- That an academic member of staff will be available for the first **30 minutes** of the examination and during this period students are permitted to seek clarification from the academic around any ambiguity or perceived error in the assessment brief. Guidance on how this support will be delivered in practice must be provided by the School in advance.
- To ensure that they regularly save work.
- Submissions should be uploaded by the deadline, following any instructions/information on uploading assessments provided by the relevant School. Consideration should be given to how to use any additional time added to the overall exam time for uploading materials, including large file sizes.

Examinations with a period of 8 hours or longer students should be advised:

- That they can determine when they login; they may login **20 minutes** before the given start time.
- To attempt their first login during normal office hours 0900-1700 GMT to ensure that full support is available in the event of any issues.

- That an academic member of staff will be available for the **first 30 minutes** of the examination window and will be available **again** for **30 minutes**, 4 hours after the scheduled start time (for exams with an open window for completion) or throughout the period (for exams that are time limited within the window). During these periods, students are permitted to seek clarification from the academic around any ambiguity or perceived error in the assessment brief. Guidance on how this support will be delivered in practice must be provided by the School in advance.
- To ensure that they regularly save work.
- That submissions should be uploaded by the deadline, following any instructions/information on uploading assessments provided by the relevant School. Consideration should be given to how to use any additional time added to the overall exam time for uploading materials, including large file sizes.

4. Action to be Taken in the Event of a Significant Computing Issue

The delivery of RCBA has the potential to be affected by an unforeseen technical issue which could arise in relation to a student's own hardware/software, or via the University's digital estate. To help mitigate against some potential problems, students should be advised against using web-based packages, such as Google Docs, and instead be advised to download institutionally available software, such as Office 365. Information on how to download Office 365 is available on [the ITS intranet site](#).

Whilst there are limitations to the assistance which can be offered in the event of an individual hardware/software issue, in the event that an individual student has a minor computing issue, such as a login difficulty, this may be resolved speedily by following self-help guidance available centrally within CampusMoodle or, if this is unsuccessful, with support from the technical team. These sorts of issues have been allowed for in the time allocated for the assessment.

In the event of a technical issue affecting several members of the cohort, the member of staff responding to the issue shall have the responsibility to escalate this to the nominated Senior Member of School Staff/Dean of School, and only if they are unavailable, to either the Assistant Chief Academic Officer or Vice Principal of Academic Development and Student Experience, who will:

- a) determine the length of any additional time to be added (in the event that the difficulty is resolved speedily); or
- b) suspend the assessment for either an agreed period of time to allow the issue to be resolved or alternatively to suspend to a later date, normally within 5-10 working days, and normally with 5 working days' notice. In some instances, re-scheduling may need to wait until the first week of the following semester.
- c) In addition, consideration should be given to the format of the re-assessment and whether it could be delivered differently. For example, consideration could be given to emailing the exam paper to students for submission via an alternative means, for example, a designated inbox.

In the case of a significant, unexpected issue requiring an institutional level response and the potential postponement of all scheduled exams, the issue should

be referred to either the Assistant Chief Academic Officer or Vice Principal of Academic Development and Student Experience (and if both unavailable, the Principal) who will undertake to:

- a) consider whether there are any alternatives to postponement;
- b) confirm a timeline for a review of the situation, including consultation with relevant Schools and departments; and
- c) confirm a timeline for communication with students and staff through normal centrally co-ordinated communication channels.

In all cases where exams are postponed, the details around re-scheduled exams will be arranged and communicated via the School, taking into account the potential impact on overall assessment loading on individual students where possible. The re-scheduling of exams must be arranged in consultation with Central Timetabling.

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS ON REMOTE COMPUTER-BASED ASSESSMENT (RCBA) EXAMINATIONS

This guidance relates to exams which are being taken in home/remote environments and are not subject to invigilated exam conditions on the University campus.

**Please note the timetable may be subject to change. Where changes apply, these will be communicated to you by your School*

1. As exams have been moved online, in many cases, you have been provided with additional time to recognise some of the practical issues including, for example, variations in: quality of internet speed; time for uploading/downloading documents; the challenges of being in a home environment where interruptions are more likely; and the fact that, for some, typing may be more time-consuming than handwriting. To help prevent some potential problems, you are advised to avoid web-based packages, such as Google Docs, which the University cannot provide support for, and download institutionally available software, such as Office 365. Guidance on how to install Office 365 can be found on the [ITS Intranet site](#).
2. The extension of the time provided for exams should not be interpreted as an immediate requirement that you are expected to undertake more work or be actively engaged, or online, for the whole of the assessment period. You should pay careful attention to the guidance provided by your School on the requirements of each assessment, and how you are expected to use your time when undertaking these. For many assessments it will be possible to download, work off-line and then go back online to submit.
3. Students who have Alternative Examination Arrangements will have the same entitlements to additional support/time applied to the online assessments and this is reflected in your exam timetable. Any separate instructions for candidates with alternative exam arrangements approved by the Inclusion Centre will be issued by your school.
4. If you are unable to take an exam due to the impact of COVID-19 and/or other extenuating circumstances, there is guidance [here](#) under 'Student Forms' [*Deferral Request Form – Self Certification*].
5. In line with the University's [Fit to Sit Policy](#) all students who undertake and submit an assessment, including an online examination, are declaring themselves well enough to do so.
6. Anonymous marking should normally be used.
7. Online exams will be released at the exam start time stated on the timetable on the relevant CampusMoodle page for that module. **Read and follow the module-specific instructions on the exam paper, these will vary across modules, including confirmation of any specific materials**

you are permitted to refer to during your exam (see sections 15-17 below).

8. All candidates are advised to log in to the CampusMoodle page at least 20 minutes before the exam is due to start. This will give you time to sort out login or connection issues, and to read any final instructions from your school.

Please note: As users now login to CampusMoodle with their Microsoft login details, please ensure you have access to your authentication device in the event you are prompted for additional login credentials. Further information on the login process can be found [here](#) and information on the Multi Factor Authentication process [here](#). Once you have logged in you are deemed to be 'under exam conditions.

9. It is recommended that you download the exam paper on to your device (i.e. computer, laptop or iPad), so that you are not reliant on having an internet connection throughout the duration of the exam.
10. Open a new document (Word or equivalent) on your device and type all your exam answers in a single document. Do not put your name on the document if the exam is anonymous. Give the file an appropriate name or follow guidance from your School. Remember to number each answer with the relevant question number. Save it to your desktop/drive regularly as you proceed.
11. Read the exam paper very carefully. If you believe there is an error, or if the exam paper is unclear, submit your query using the mechanism specified by your school for the assessment (e.g. on the student discussion forum for that module on CampusMoodle), during the first **30 minutes** after the start of the exam. A member of academic staff will be available to respond during that time. You should use this time to ensure that there are no ambiguities in the questions that require clarification since **you will not be able to ask questions after this time**.
12. When you have finished answering the questions, save the document and then submit it through the dropbox on the module's CampusMoodle page. You can do this at any time during the exam period. Other exam types such as Moodle Quiz will require you to complete questions in that interface and will save your answers in the system. You will then be required to submit by clicking on the relevant button.
13. It will not be possible to remind candidates when there are only 15 minutes of the examination time left. Your School will have included additional time to your deadline, allowing for the fact that you may encounter issues while uploading, for example, a technical problem, or larger files taking longer than expected to upload. You should pay careful attention to the guidance provided by your School on the requirements of each assessment, and how you are expected to manage your time when undertaking these.
14. If you have any difficulty in submitting your assessment you should see the [Online Assessment: Self-Help Guidance](#) and follow the steps detailed there;

where this is unsuccessful the IT Helpdesk Team can be reached by telephone on 01224 263737. If, after following these steps, you have been unable to resolve the issue, you may email your typed exam script to examsubmission@rgu.ac.uk. Please check your School guidance to find out whether non-typed submissions will be accepted in advance of emailing any photographed submissions.

15. When submitting to a Moodle Assignment or Turnitin dropbox, it is important that you ensure that you receive a receipt confirming that your submission has been successful. This might take several minutes at busy times so please be patient. If you have not received a receipt within 30 minutes of submitting your work, please contact the ITS Helpdesk . The University will be able to identify whether or not you have made a submission. Please note that you will not receive a receipt for work submitted through Moodle Quiz.
16. In the event of any significant issue resulting in the postponement of an exam, you will normally get at least 5 working days' notice of any rescheduled assessment deadline.
17. As the University will not invigilate exams conducted online, your School will make it clear for each assessment whether or not the exam is being treated as "open book" with permission to refer to lecture notes, textbooks and other course materials to assist you in answering the questions and how these should be referenced within your answers. Unless otherwise stated you will be expected to undertake your exam without reference to internet sources, books, notes or any other material that would not normally be permitted in the exam.
18. The normal requirements for academic honesty and student conduct apply. The work you submit must be your own. You must not discuss the exam or the questions within it with others (including friends, family, fellow students), whether in person or electronically, nor collaborate with them in producing the answers, or share materials, this would be considered to be cheating and/or collusion. Examination answers can be submitted to Turnitin for checking, and identification of the improper use of the writing of others will constitute plagiarism.
19. Any student suspected of academic misconduct will be reported to their Dean of School and considered in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations relating to Student Misconduct.
20. It is a student's own responsibility to equip him or herself with the approved type or model of calculator required for an exam, where appropriate.
21. Candidates must not speak to or communicate with any other candidate during the examination, nor should they seek or take guidance from anyone else.
22. If you unexpectedly become unwell during an exam to the extent that it impacts on your wellbeing and you are unable to continue with the exam, you must notify your School as soon as possible.

23. Candidates whose time for prayer coincides with the time of an examination should request the necessary dispensation from their religious leader in advance of the examination.

In respect of 8 hour plus exams

For exams with an open window of 8 hours or more in which to complete the exam, an academic member of staff will be available for the **first 30 minutes** of the exam window and will be available **again** for **30 minutes**, 4 hours after the exam window opened. During these periods students are permitted to seek clarification from the academic around any ambiguity or perceived error in the assessment brief. Guidance on how this support will be delivered in practice will be provided by your School.

For exams that are time limited but available for students to start at any time throughout a time window of 8 hours or more, an academic member of staff will be contactable throughout the entire period. During this period students are permitted to seek clarification from the academic around any ambiguity or perceived error in the assessment brief. Guidance on how this support will be delivered in practice will be provided by your School.

Useful Links

Advice for students on temporary arrangements, including arrangements for assessment, can be found here:

<https://www.rgu.ac.uk/coronavirus>

Forms to appeal academic decisions, extenuating circumstances and suspension of studies can be found here:

<https://www.rgu.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/applicant-and-student-forms>

You can visit the CampusMoodle Support page to access a wide variety of resources, enabling you to make the most of your time online. This includes guidance on getting to know your online learning environment and accessing your module resources:

<http://campusmoodle.rgu.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=96734>

Information about student conduct, appeals and academic misconduct can be found in Academic Regulations, Sections A3-1 and A3-2 here:

<https://www.rgu.ac.uk/academicregulations>

Hints and Tips

1. Find - if you can - a quiet and comfortable location for sitting the exam.
2. Ask others in the household to make sure they do not disturb you during the exam. Ask other internet users in your household to log off at the key

times that you will need a strong connection (e.g. when uploading your script at the end of the exam).

3. Ensure that your laptop / iPad is fully charged, that you have downloaded any relevant software, and that the place where you are sitting the exam is within cable length of an electric socket.
4. Equip yourself with pens, pencils, rulers and, where permitted, any other materials prescribed for the examination e.g. calculator.
5. You may have food and drink with you.
6. It is important that you take the time to read the guidance issued about your assessments, both general (see above) and assessment-specific (issued by your School).
7. As there is no invigilator or supervisor present, you will need to monitor your own use of time. Divide up the time between the questions in advance, referring to word counts where given, to help you judge the depth of answer required. If you haven't finished a question, you may have time at the end to go back and complete it.
8. You should pay careful attention to the guidance provided by your School on the requirements of each assessment, and how you are expected to manage your time when undertaking these, including any information on uploading your assessment.

STANDARD SET OF ANNOUNCEMENTS for REMOTE COMPUTER-BASED ASSESSMENT (RCBA) EXAMINATIONS

These announcements must be made available in the module page, within the alternative assessment tab, for students to read prior to the start of every RCBA examination.

AT THE START OF THE EXAMINATION

1. Whilst this examination is taking place in a remote environment, you are now under exam conditions and remain so whilst you are working on the assessment.
2. If you have any minor computing issue, such as a login difficulty, this may be resolved speedily by following self-help guidance available centrally within [CampusMoodle](#) or, if this is unsuccessful, with support from the technical team. In the event that this does not resolve the issue, the IT Helpdesk team can be reached by telephone on 01224 263737.
3. If you are unable to complete and submit the exam in time for reasons such as illness, or other valid circumstances outwith your control, you must notify the School of these extenuating circumstances at the earliest opportunity and complete a [Deferral Request form](#).
4. *For all exams online*

There will be a member of academic staff available for the first **30 minutes** of this assessment. During this period students are permitted to seek clarification around any ambiguity or perceived error in the assessment brief.

Schools to add guidance on submitting queries here where appropriate

In addition, where examinations have a period of 8 hours or longer

For exams with an open window of 8 hours or more in which to complete an assessment the academic staff member will also be available **four hours** after the exam window opens for a further period of **30 minutes**. During this period students are permitted to seek clarification around any ambiguity or perceived error in the assessment brief. For exams that are time limited but available for students to start at any time throughout a time window of 8 hours or more, academic staff member will be available throughout the entire period.

AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION

You must ensure that your assessment is submitted/uploaded in accordance with the instructions given. If you have any difficulty in submitting your assessment you should see the [Online Assessment: Self-Help Guidance](#) and follow the steps detailed there; where this is unsuccessful the IT Helpdesk Team can be reached by telephone on 01224 263737.