

Online open-book assessments

As ECU has transitioned to online learning due to the current restrictions on physical distancing, your final assessments may have changed from traditional exams to timed online assessments. The information below will outline what you need to know about these assessments in order to help you prepare.

Accessing your final assessment

Most of your final assessments will be hosted through Blackboard or Cadmus and will require you to complete them in a certain amount of time, at any stage within a longer window. It is important to familiarise yourself with the platform before your final assessment. You can find more information and Tip Sheets for completing assessments on [Blackboard](#) and [Cadmus](#) under “[Study Assistance](#)” on your Student Intranet, or under “[Student Support](#)” on Blackboard. If you are still feeling a bit overwhelmed with the technology, contact [VEEPS](#) (Virtual Peer Support for Online Learning) to talk through it in real time.

What to expect

Since you will be accessing your assessment from home, it will be open-book – this means you will have access to all your course materials and textbooks to complete the assessment. You are thus more likely to get questions testing your understanding of the concepts in the course and how they work together, rather than questions requiring recall.

Open-book assessments require you to:

- find information quickly, which means you need to make good notes and organise your materials beforehand;
- apply the information in your sources to the questions, which means you need to learn for understanding rather than just remembering; and
- think critically to understand and apply concepts.

Preparation

You won't have time to look everything up in the assessment or learn anything new, so you need to study for an open-book assessment just like you would for an exam. Preparation should focus on the following:

1. Making useful notes and summaries

- Review the subject and organise notes by topic using clear headings.
- Summarise important information, making lists of key formulae and/or definitions.
- Work out the main themes and topics.

2. Form a virtual study group

- Use technology such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, FaceTime or Google Hangouts
- Discuss key concepts and understanding of the material - this is a good way to check your own understanding and see others' points of view

3. Link concepts

- Identify how main concepts interact – mind maps can help link different themes.

4. Practise!

- Practise answering different types of questions.
- Work with classmates to develop practice questions for each other.

During the assessment

Things to keep in mind during the assessment:

- Time is likely to be scarce, so answer the questions you know first.
- You should know the basic answers, and then use your materials to find supporting evidence.
- Don't copy out long phrases – this is a waste of time, and not likely to gain you marks.
- Aim for concise, well-supported answers.
- Try to leave time to review at the end and check your materials more extensively.
- If there is a question you don't know the answer to, don't waste time trying to find the answer. Leave it blank and come back to it later.

Want more help?

For further support, attend our Blackboard Collaborate workshop on Exam Preparation. You can find the schedule on the Academic Skills Centre [website](#). There is also an Exam Preparation [Tip Sheet](#) available from "Study Essentials" on the Library website, which gives plenty of helpful information, including how to manage your time and stress levels. You can also make an appointment with a [Learning Adviser](#) to discuss your study skills.