

**From:** [Coronavirus Guidance](#)  
**Subject:** Update for Taught Postgraduate students on assessments - 3rd April 2020  
**Date:** 03 April 2020 15:46:10

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Dear Student,

This is an update for Taught Postgraduate students about the steps that the University is taking to change the way in which we will operate assessments for the rest of the 2019-20 academic year. Specific assessment details will be released by your programme from 9<sup>th</sup> April and your School will be in contact with you regarding specific timescales.

### **Cass Business School MBA and Masters programmes**

Cass Business School MBA and Masters programmes operate on a different assessment schedule to other postgraduate programmes at City, and students on the Cass programmes have received information on their assessments from Cass Business School. The approach to assessment that follows therefore does not apply to those programmes.

### **Professional Programmes in the City Law School and the School of Health Sciences**

For Professional Programmes in the City Law School and the School of Health Sciences there are specific requirements set down by respective professional bodies that may mean variation to the principles that we set out in this update. The School will therefore be in direct separate contact with you to confirm specific details.

### **Aims of assessment arrangements**

We would like to thank you for your patience. Staff across the University are working incredibly hard to change the way in which we will assess students for the remainder of the 2019-20 academic year. Within the context of the unprecedented circumstances in which we are all operating, this is a complicated task and our focus is to:

- Ensure that no student is disadvantaged in any changes that we make to assessment
- Oversee a fair approach
- Continue to ensure that you are supported with your learning
- Maintain the value and standards of our programmes and degrees

In making changes to assessment arrangements, the University also has to comply with external requirements beyond our control. These are:

- The Office for Students, the national body that regulates UK Higher Education and tells us what we can and cannot do in relation to student matters.
- Professional Bodies (e.g. Bar Standards Board) that regulate what we can and cannot do on the delivery and assessment of certain programmes.

All decisions have been taken in consultation with Deans of Schools and the Students' Union.

### **Industrial Action**

Alongside managing arrangements for assessments in relation to Coronavirus, we are also making sure that appropriate arrangements have been completed for students affected by recent Industrial Action. This means ensuring that in setting up assessment arrangements, no student is disadvantaged in progressing to the next year of study, or their final year marks/award as a result of experiencing the effects of Industrial Action. Where there are any outstanding matters in relation to this position, details will be included by your programme when assessment information is released.

### **Approach to assessment for Postgraduate taught students for the remainder of the 2019-20 academic year**

We want to ensure that we are able to support our overall postgraduate student body to continue their learning experience, and have made the following changes:

1. For the vast majority of programmes, we will not be running face-to-face examinations for the remainder of this academic year. The exception to this is those programmes where there are Professional Body requirements that dictate otherwise.
2. Assessment will take place during the 2019-20 academic year but deadlines may be extended and the form of the assessment may change.
3. Staff are working to design ways of assessing students other than face-to-face exams. We completely understand that you will want to have details as soon as possible and we appreciate your patience as we work things through.
4. Face to face examinations may be replaced with either a 24-hour minimum period open book examination or coursework.
5. The revised assessment design is taking into account that you are now in different circumstances, including: some students are now living in a different time zone to the UK, students will have different levels of access to learning resources and some may be working in a different learning environment at home. These are just some examples of things we are thinking about and there will be other examples to be included in final plans.

Assessments will be scheduled for postgraduate taught students on the following basis:

- Your programme team is currently designing alternative assessments where face-to-face exams were due to take place.
- For programmes where there are external Professional Body requirements beyond the control of the University, redesigned assessments will be subject to what is allowed by the Professional Body. This includes resolution on face-to-face examinations.

#### Dissertations

- Where a dissertation forms part of your Programme, dissertation supervision will be able to take place online and your supervisor will contact you with how to arrange online supervision.

- We understand that depending on the nature of the subject of your dissertation that you may experience challenges in relation to data collection and may need to change the scope of your research. If you think this may be the case, please discuss with your supervisor as to how to continue to progress with your dissertation under the current circumstances.

### **Suspension of Extenuating Circumstances process**

In the current circumstances, the University will be suspending its extenuating circumstances process for the remainder of this academic year. This means that you will not have to request approval for your circumstances being taken into account or provide us with supporting medical evidence.

### **Introduction of new process: Supporting your Academic Success**

The University is implementing a Supporting Your Academic Success process so that we can support you during this unsettling time. This will enable you to let us know about the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on you, or any other circumstances you have which may impact your assessments.

Full details about how to use this process will be published in the week of 9<sup>th</sup> April and will we confirm with you when these are available. For programmes that are regulated by Professional Bodies, please note that specific arrangements may apply. Your School will be in contact with you about this.

### **Extensions**

The University will be asking Schools to use extensions to deadlines where this is appropriate and to set these at programme level. Further information about this process will be covered next week, in communications from the University and your programme. For programmes that are regulated by Professional Bodies, please note that specific arrangements may apply. Your School will be in contact with you about this.

### **Any questions**

If you have any questions at this stage about the information we have provided or if you have particular concerns, please contact your Programme Director.

Best wishes,

Susannah Marsden  
Director of Student & Academic Services and Registrar