Review of Reasonable Accommodations in Remote Examinations

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Contents

Reasonable Accommodations in Remote Examinations Summary

The sudden imposition of lockdown in response to the global outbreak of COVID-19 resulted in the requirement to find immediate solutions to online assessment in HEIs, specifically for end of year examination. Apart from the technical difficulties associated with online examination, Disability Services were required to clarify the provision of additional time for each assessment type: MCQs, timed tests, open book examination, and take-home assignments. This document reviews current, emerging practice in the provision of reasonable accommodations (RAs) for students with disabilities, specifically in relation to the granting of additional time, assessment of clinical skills, and application of marking guidelines, where remote examination and assessment was adopted in response to COVID-19.

This review includes a delineation of practice in a sample of HEIs from the UK, Australia and the USA. Of these, both Australia and the USA apply complex calculations for additional time taking into consideration the nature of disability and its potential impact. Most UK universities replaced live examinations of two or three hours, with take home exams to be completed within a 24-hour period, which included extra writing time and rest breaks. For assignments, a four-week extension to all deadlines was applied which incorporated all extensions and extra time. The rationale for this approach considered the need for and purpose of extra time and deemed a standard extended timeframe as sufficient to meet the needs of all students, whilst simultaneously acknowledging that extending examination times may impact on energy and concentration. Additionally, this approach recognises that managing time and organising workload may be a fundamental challenge for some students, thus allowing extensive periods of time may add to potential difficulties thereby increasing anxiety.

Across DAWN institutions, most planned in-person examinations were converted to alternate modes of assessment delivered online or as take-home examinations. Students were provided with access to AT in place of readers and scribes, and usual practice for marking guidelines for spelling and grammar were applied in examinations. A standard allowance as per DAWN Exam Guidelines of 10 minutes per hour was applied up to examination timeframes of 48 hours, by most institutions. Examples of differing practice are noted such as extra time not allocated to assignments where these replaced examinations; additional time not provided for exams of over 24 hours as this was deemed to be sufficient time to manage writing and editing; application of different rates of extra time. In a small number of cases scribing was provided by family members, PA or other member of staff via Teams or Zoom.

Consequently, the following recommendations for remote assessment are suggested:

Suggested recommendations for HEIs

1. Streamline exam options across Faculties and reduce ad hoc or idiosyncratic assessment practices.

2. Stipulate word limits for exam and assignment questions and suggest a recommended amount of time for completion of the test / examination / assignment.

3. Emphasise that whilst students should take as much time as they need to complete the exam, it may not be necessary to take the full 24 hours, 48 hours, 5 days and so forth.

4. Limit exam timeframes to one of two options, for example, 6 or 12 hours, or 12 or 24 hours.

Suggested recommendations for DAWN

1. An additional section be added to DAWN Guidelines specifically relating to Remote Examinations.

2. Agreement on baseline additional time allowances for each assessment type which can be easily applied, and which addresses the needs of all students.

3. Ensure that all HEIs adhere to the use of 'Marking Guidelines' or 'Disclosure of Disability' when referring to inclusive marking principles as opposed to 'Spelling and Grammar Waiver', which implies an exemption from academic standards.

4. Provide a standard set of FAQs for remote examination as this will be required for all future incoming student cohorts who have not previously completed online assessment.

5. Review and provide guidance on clinical, practical and viva voce examinations.

Reasonable accommodations for online examinations: what is reasonable in remote assessment?

There is no clear understanding of to what degree arrangements for remote assessment and examination will become permanent, but it is helpful to review practices in other jurisdictions which may provide a comprehensive overview of options. Apart from the technical difficulties associated with online examination where students access these remotely, Disability Services were required to clarify the provision of additional time for each assessment type: MCQs, timed tests, open book examination, and OSCEs. To facilitate a clear and unambiguous strategy for applying additional time in future assessment and examination scenarios, a review of what is reasonable in remote examinations is required.

The student experience of remote learning in Ireland

Prior to the onset of the examination period, AHEAD conducted a nationwide survey *Learning from Home During Covid-19: A Survey of Irish FET and HE Students with Disabilities.'* This survey was completed by 601 students between April 9th and 27th 2020, finding that:

- More than half of the respondents either disagreed (35%) or strongly disagreed (17%) with the statement 'I am coping well with learning from home'. Students who have the highest percentage of negative reaction (disagree or strongly disagree) to the statement 'I am coping well with learning from home' are those with a Mental Health Condition (67%), ADD/ADHD (62%) or a Specific Learning Difficulty (58%).

- 42% of responding students said they agreed (39%) or strongly agreed (7%) with the statement 'My lecturers/teachers have considered accessibility in the online learning materials they are providing me with'

- Just over one quarter of the respondents (26%) said that they used Assistive Technologies (AT). Of the students who said they did use AT, 72% said they had no difficulty accessing or using their AT in their learning from home, while 28% said they had experienced some issues in this regard.

- The five biggest challenges or concerns reported by the respondents about taking their upcoming assessments from home were 'worries concerning new type of assessment' (53%), 'distractions/other demands at home' (49%), a 'lack of clarity around whether/how accommodations for exams/assessments will be provided' (30%), the 'reliability of my internet/internet shared with other members of household' (29%) and a 'lack of clarity about how we will be assessed' (28%).

- Of those who said they had access to a laptop, 24% said it was a shared laptop used also by other family members or housemates while 76% said it was solely for their own use. The percentage of students who are learning with a laptop/pc that is shared with another family member/housemate was notably higher in FET programmes (31%) than in HE undergrad (21%) or postgrad (13%) programmes.

  These highlight the practical elements that are a challenge to online learning, and which arguably bleed into assessment.

  Specific issues and anomalies that emerged in connection to completion of remote examinations included:

- Two exams scheduled for the same date to be submitted within a 48-hour period, with 2,500 words allocated for each paper.
- Exam timeframes changed without warning, confusion over exam start and finish times, overlapping of exams.
- Reference to 'assignment' under assessment type but continually referred to as an offline exam, causing confusion as to deadline.
- Four take home off-line exams of 48-hour duration each with late clarification on start and end times.
- Queries about uploading diagrams.
- Repeat MCQ due to error, adding an additional 1.45 hours to 7 hours of exams on one day.
- Lengthy exam instructions of multiple pages causing stress and confusion.

The following sections review the international response to remote examinations and compare these to national practice amongst DAWN institutions in April and May 2020. The examination accommodation which proved to be most problematic at the point of delivery, was the provision of additional time, and the rationale for doing so over and above a blanket provision of extra time to all students.

Evidence base for extra time

Extra time is granted at the point of Needs Assessment when students register with DS and is determined principally by: i) the impact of disability, ii) the format of assessment, and iii) the circumstances in which testing takes place. Students who have physical, sensory (vision or hearing impairment) or learning difficulties such as Dyslexia may require additional time to physically write exam responses. This may be as a direct result of compromised working memory, processing speed, impaired concentration, chronic pain or fatigue, for example. The design and delivery of the assessment or examination may place additional demands on the student, for example, tests that require the student to read lengthy case studies or manipulate mathematical information. Anxiety associated with the exam environment may exacerbate students with mental health conditions, and additional time can relieve the stress of time pressure.

Reviewing the evidence in support of extra time in examinations, Lovett (2010) expresses concerns with provision of extended time accommodations. In a comprehensive review of research, extended time was not proven to have a significant effect on psychometric scores, but that assessment of reading speed may be important. Secondly, on timed tests, non-disabled students also benefit more from extended time suggesting that extended time should be provided to all students. Thirdly, diagnosis of high-incidence disabilities should not automatically confer RA such as extra time; for example, diagnostic models and reporting for specific learning difficulties and ADHD are variable. Finally, the reliability and validity of RA decision-making processes are not standardized. Lovett concludes that with UDL in mind, examiners must consider whether speed is integral to the purpose and outcome of the exam, and that extra time decisions should be specific to the type and setting of the examination to 'ensure that the time limit is appropriate for all examinees, or even in certain settings.' Furthermore, it is suggested that interventions to improve reading speed, writing or typing speed, and test anxiety, might be more productive as enablers as opposed to granting additional time.

Duncan (2017) examined effects of RAs on exam performance for students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) granted an additional 25% extra time, compared to typically developing (TD) peers. The study concluded that there were no differences in performance

between both groups, surmising that RAs did not confer an advantage, however arguably, neither does it demonstrate that without additional time, these students are likely to under-perform. In a later paper, Duncan & Purcell (2020) find no consensus as to the efficacy or justification for additional time. Using historical data from 825 tests/exams in one college during AY 2012 / 2013, Holmes & Silvestri (2019) find that most students with SLDs did not use extended time, and those who accessed it rarely used more than 25%.

International practice

UK universities

The standard allocation of additional time across UK universities is either 10 minutes an hour additional time, or 25% extra time (=15 minutes per hour). In some universities this is allocated by disability type (e.g. 25% additional time for autistic students). Some examples of management of additional time include Cambridge University, where most formal examinations that were due to take place as face to face examinations were replaced with a Take-Home Online Examination. Students were provided with 'take home' exams to replace 2 / 3-hour exam papers and given a 48-hour window within which to complete and submit; it is the student responsibility to manage their time. For students with disabilities requiring additional time, rest breaks, individual exam room, or the use of a computer: 'it is expected that the 48-hour period for completion of the Take-Home examination will allow you to manage these arrangements at home.' No additional extra time is indicated, as an additional 45 hours has been provided within this model.

The same allowance is stipulated by the University of Edinburgh for 48 hour exams, whereby: 'For take-home exams offered over a 48-hour time period, the amount of time being given is designed to take account of all students' personal circumstances, including those who would normally be offered extended time in exams. No extensions will therefore be offered to these exams.' Where 2 – 3 hour online exams have been maintained (e.g. for quantitative subjects), all students are provided with an additional hour to submit their work, and students who have extended time as a RA receive an additional one hour e.g. three hours to complete the exam, and an additional hour to submit work (i.e. a total of 4 hours).
Oxford Brookes have replaced face to face with take home exams with a 24-hour window which allows for any extra writing time or rest breaks that students normally have. No additional time is provided unless there is a shorter time limit for accreditation body exams, in which case arrangements to allow extra time and rest break entitlements will be made.
Leeds Beckett University have applied a four-week extension to all deadlines, this period incorporates all extensions and are not in addition to previous extra time, for example, a student granted a two-week extension to the original date of submission, is provided with an additional two weeks.

Australian universities

The Australian Disability Clearing House on Education and Training (ADCET) is funded through the Australian Government Department of Education under the Higher Education Disability Support Program. ADCET provides information and practical guidelines to support disability practitioners, teachers and students, and disseminates good practice. ADCET acknowledges that the provision of additional time in examinations is: 'a contentious and variable alternative assessment strategy' for which 'there does not appear to [be] either uniformity of decisions nor clarity about what are appropriate allowances for additional time across institutions, and that this particular strategy is perhaps the most difficult in which to set clear guidelines.'

Their suggested guidelines on provision of extra time are similar to those practiced in Ireland (i.e. additional minutes per hour) but are premised upon specific disability factors or cohorts as follows:

Disability / health condition	Time allowance
Physical / Repetitive Strain Injury	5 to 10 minutes per hour to accommodate slower writing speed
Learning disability	20 minutes per hour for perusal/formulating/checking answers
Chronic pain	15 minutes per hour for standing and/or moving around
Vision impairment	Double time for students who are blind, and time-and-a-half for students who have low vision
Hearing impairment	20 minutes per hour for perusal / formulating / writing / checking answers
Anxiety	10 minutes per hour for relaxation breaks

The range of time provision is premised upon impact of disability at three levels, with only the Extreme category matching additional time allowances observed in the USA:

Impact / Effect of disability / health condition	Suggested extra time
Slight	5 to 10 minutes per hour
Moderate	15 to 20 minutes per hour
Significant	30 minutes per hour
Extreme	One and a half to double time

Updated advice for online, remote examinations includes formats such as Set Standard time - students are allocated an exam at a set time and date, similar to the time allocation for the same on campus exam, or Flexible Standard time – students are given the standard time for the exam but are given a window of time within which to complete this, e.g. a 2-hour exam over 24 hours where the student can log in and out but may not spend more than 2 hours in total within the 24 hour period. Other options include additional time granted to all students e.g. if an exam would usually take 1 hour, all students are given 2 hours to complete, and extended time – whereby students may be given an untimed exam that needs to be completed in a certain time period, such as 8, 12 or 24 hours.

They raise the question of whether a student with a disability who is normally provided with extra time in exams, should still be granted an additional amount above that which has already been allocated to all students. For example, if all students are given 2 hours to complete a one-hour exam is there a necessity for students who usually have an additional 20 minutes per hour, to be given 2 hours and 40 minutes? Their conclusion is that if the additional time frame allocated to all is sufficient to meet the needs of the student, extra time is not required. The rationale underpinning this argument is the need to consider the need and purpose for extra time, but also to bear in mind the effect of extending an examination to eight or 24 hours on energy and concentration. Additionally, the potential for exam scheduling issues may in itself cause additional fatigue, stress and anxiety and result in a disadvantaging for some

students. For this reason, 'rather than automatically providing that as a blanket provision it's important to check in with the student about why they might need extra time and be guided by their needs'.

USA universities

Whilst there are slight differences institutionally, in principle RAs in examinations stipulate the following strategies:

Timed exams: sets of problems that a student must complete in a limited amount of time. Once a student starts the exam a timer counts down the amount of time remaining to complete the exam, the student cannot pause or reset the timer. When there is no time remaining, the exam automatically ends. Problems associated with this exam type include adjusting the timing within the VLE, so that students who needed extra time are not locked out; in practice this has been problematic (depending on platform used) necessitating extension of the available time range to all students.

Self-paced or 'take home' exams are not timed in a finite way but are designed for students to self-manage the time allocated to reading, taking notes and writing up material to meet a deadline, similar to an assignment.

Breaks not counted in Testing Time: usually 5-10 minutes in length and typically allocated at 5 minutes per 30 minutes, unless otherwise specified by Disability Services. These breaks need to be counted into the overall test allocation time to ensure they are provided. In a 60-minute exam, if 1.5 hours extra time is required this would be calculated as 1.5 hours for extra time plus additional 15 minutes for breaks not counted = 1 hr 45 minutes. Additional time in US universities is generally allocated as 1.5 times the length of the examination, or 2 times (double) the length of the examination:

Standard Class Time	Extended 1.5X	Extended 2X
45 minutes	1 hour 8 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes
50 minutes	1 hour 15 minutes	1 hour 40 minutes
55 minutes	1 hour 23 minutes	1 hour 50 minutes
1 hour	1 hour 30 minutes	2 hours
65 minutes	1 hour 38 minutes	2 hours 10 minutes
70 minutes	1 hour 45 minutes	2 hours 20 minutes
75 minutes	1 hour 53 minutes	2 hours 30 minutes
80 minutes	2 hours	2 hours 40 minutes
85 minutes	2 hours 8 minutes	2 hours 50 minutes
1 hour 30 minutes	2 hours 15 minutes	3 hours
1 hour 45 minutes	2 hours 38 minutes	3 hours 30 minutes
2 hours	3 hours	4 hours
2 hours 30 minutes	3 hours 45 minutes	5 hours
3 hours	4 hours 30 minutes	6 hours

A comparison of these allowances with DAWN guidelines in Ireland indicates significant cumulative differences:

Exam period	USA Extended 1.5X	Ireland 15 minutes / hour	USA Extended 2X	Ireland 20 minutes / hour
1 hour	90 minutes	75 minutes	2 hours	80 minutes
2 hours	3 hours	90 minutes	4 hours	3 hours
3 hours	4 hours 30 minutes	3 hours 45 minutes	6 hours	4 hours
48 hours	3 days	2.5 days	4 days	3 days
7 days	10.5 days	8.5 days	14 days	9.5 days

Longer completion times potentially cause issues where multiple exams take place on the same day or which have competing deadlines – and may also present a difficulty to those students who are challenged in managing their time effectively. This in effect might mean that an accommodation of additional time is negating its advantages.

There is also a necessity to acknowledge that in addition to those students who have been granted extra time on an exam as a function of their registration with DS, there are also students who would benefit from additional time who may not be registered with DS. Not all students have access to evidence of a disability to support RAs, and this is likely to increasingly be the case in the light of changes to requirements in primary and post-primary education; the new allocation of resources model in schools does not require formal diagnosis, and therefore these students are not in possession of the documents required by DS. Thus, those students with fewer resources at their disposal are not accounted for.

In conclusion, this review of practice in a sample of HEIs draws attention to the complexity of calculating and applying additional time that considers the nature of disability and its potential impact in timed examinations. The model utilised in many UK universities where all 'take home' exams must be completed within a 24-hour period, which includes extra writing time and rest breaks, is more straightforward for students to manage and should be complemented with defined word limits and recommended completion times. Similarly, giving a four-week extension to all assignment deadlines which incorporates all extensions and extra time, means that students are aware of the submission date well in advance, and can plan their time accordingly.

The following section examines the response to remote examinations amongst DAWN colleges.

Review of response to remote examinations amongst DAWN institutions

The need to provide alternative assessment choices at such short notice meant that, often, methods of assessment between modules, courses, Departments and Schools, was disparate and (anecdotally) dependent upon preferences of academic staff. The range of alternatives and appropriate Standard RAs are summarized in Appendix 1.

On the 15th May 2020 DAWN members were invited to submit a summary of RAs provided within their own institution in the April / May exam period. Eighteen (18) HEIs responded with information on application of additional time, response to the requirements for readers and scribes, and application of marking guidelines (Appendix 2).

Additional time

Across DAWN institutions, most planned in-person examinations were converted to alternative modes of assessment delivered online (Appendix 1). To address the sudden change to remote examination via VLEs (e.g. Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas) all students in Ireland sitting timed examinations were provided with extra time to allow for difficulties in uploading submissions and managing unfamiliar software. For students with disabilities, an additional standard time allowance as per DAWN Exam Guidelines of 10 minutes per hour was applied as below. Exceptionally, additional time of 15, 20 or 30 minutes per hour may be granted.

Exam period	Suggested extra time
48 hours	8 hours
24 hours	4 hours
3 hours	30 minutes
2.5 hours	20 minutes
1.5 hours	15 minutes

There were examples of differing practice, for example, extra time not allocated to assignments where these replaced examinations, and only applied to assessments that contribute to final grades. In one or two HEIs additional time was not provided for exams of over 24 hours as this was deemed to be sufficient time to manage writing, reviewing and submitting. Other HEIs applied a baseline of additional time of 15 minutes per hour in addition to. Extra time becomes problematic where, for example, two examinations require submission of assignments within a 48-hour period. Furthermore, where students are provided with a timeframe of five days to two weeks for the completion and submission of open book essays / examinations, the usefulness of this extended time period becomes questionable, especially for students who are challenged by organisation, procrastination, and managing time.

Access to readers and scribes

Students were provided with print / media guidelines in the use of AT to access exam papers and to submit exam responses. In a small number of cases where human support was requested this was provided by family members, PA or other member of staff via Teams or Zoom. In some HEIs this practice was taken on trust, in others the reader / scribe was required to be identified and vetted.

Inclusive marking guidelines

Notes for examiners in relation to marking guidelines are reasonably similar across HEIs internationally, drawing attention to the type of errors that may be noted and appropriate advice on providing feedback. However, there is a move towards providing additional notes which relate specifically to academic expectations, and inclusive marking for coursework and timed assessments, for example, from Leeds University:

- The University has an overall expectation that all students should be able to communicate their ideas and demonstrate their knowledge effectively in writing. This includes appropriate levels of English language literacy as demonstrated in the correct use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. The expected level of proficiency will differ depending on the nature of the programme.
- Technical accuracy in written expression should be stated as a learning outcome and linked to marking criteria only if it is deemed to be a competence standard for the discipline.
- Where accuracy in written expression is a competence standard, and therefore forms an explicit element of the marking criteria, students should expect to receive marks which reflect this element and clear advice on how to develop any areas of weakness. This advice may include referral to other sources of support within the University.

Additionally, many DAWN HEIs refer to marking guidelines as a Spelling and Grammar waiver. Marking guidelines highlight why errors in writing occur and how this might be acknowledged when assessing student work, rather than waiving the necessity to demonstrate academic skills. A suggested re-working of current DAWN marking guidelines is presented in Appendix 3 including marking advice specific to a range of assessment types, as suggested by Liverpool University, such as portfolios, blogs etc which may be relevant.

Remote examination of clinical skills

Although not necessarily relevant to this review per se, it would be prudent to consider a review of remote assessment of clinical skills (OSCEs), and how these might equally apply to laboratory practical assessments and other competency demonstrations. Students reported significant challenges in adapting to this type of examination in an online environment and establishing expert advice and emerging practice in this area would be advisable. Notes on international responses to remote OSCEs are provided in Appendix 4. Similar consideration is required for remote supervision and viva voce as suggested by Cambridge University (Appendix 4).

Specific issues arising from a review of remote exam practice

The following examples are provided by DAWN HEIs to illustrate issues requiring discussion with academic departments:

1. Allocating extra time to individual students on the VLE was time consuming for some departments, and resulted in a range of solutions:

   - adding the extra time for individual students,
   - permitting late submission of work,
   - extending time for all students by allowing an extended timeframe (e.g. replacing a 2-hour exam with a 24-hour timeframe),
   - allowing additional 'set up' time.

2. Lack of understanding / agreement of the meaning of 'timed exams' as a rationale for providing extra time.

3. Application of marking guidelines to all assessment types, rather than 'timed' only exams.

4. Lack of uniformity in applying baseline allowances per hour e.g. where some HEIs apply 10 minutes per hour, and others apply 15 minutes per hour, but also differentiate that by type of assessment.

5. Requirement for an honesty policy and / or confirmation of identity when using readers / scribes.

6. Lack of practice opportunities and guidance on completing digital examinations, specifically in terms of completing templates, copying and pasting calculations, uploading diagrams and voice files.

Idiosyncratic challenges highlighted by one institution and which are relevant to OSCEs which indicated:

- Issues with toilet breaks in proctored exams as students were not allowed away from desks, even to take toilet breaks as it was felt that this would affect the integrity of the exam.
- Some exams were separated into two parts with a toilet break in between for students with medical conditions requiring frequent toilet breaks.
- Separate arrangements had to be agreed on a case by case basis for students with physical disabilities who need to stretch or move around and therefore step away from the camera.
- Online exam software such as Exemplify which does not work with Claro Read software, for example, and where a human reader was denied.
- Ad hoc practices from Disciplines in Health Sciences such as short note questions to be downloaded, completed and re-uploaded for which no additional time was given as RAs.

The following recommendations are suggested for consideration by DAWN members:

Suggested recommendations for HEIs

1. Streamline exam options across Faculties and reduce ad hoc or idiosyncratic assessment practices.

2. Stipulate word limits for exam and assignment questions and suggest a recommended amount of time for completion of the test / examination / assignment.

3. Emphasise that whilst students should take as much time as they need to complete the exam, it may not be necessary to take the full 24 hours, 48 hours, 5 days and so forth.

Suggested recommendations for DAWN

1. An additional section be added to DAWN Guidelines specifically relating to Remote Examinations (see guidance in Appendix 6).

2. Agree on baseline additional time allowances for each type of online assessment.

3. Ensure that all HEIs adhere to the use of 'Inclusive Marking Guidelines' or 'Disclosure of Disability' when referring to inclusive marking principles as opposed to 'Spelling and Grammar Waiver', which implies an exemption from academic standards.

4. Provide a standard set of remote examination FAQs for students as this will be required for all future incoming cohorts who have not previously completed online assessment.

5. Review and provide guidance on clinical, practical and viva voce examinations.

Appendix 4 sets out suggested content for a new section within the DAWN Principles, Guidelines and Procedures for the Granting of Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations to Students with Disabilities, for remote examinations. The positioning of this section within the existing guidelines requires discussion amongst the DAWN group.

References

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Appendix 1
Exam type and Standard RAs based on DAWN guidelines

Exam Options	What this is	Disability reasonable accommodations and considerations
Pro Rate Continuous Assessment (CA)	Pro-rate the CA component and convert it into a grade for the module.	If the student on disability grounds has not met the pro-rata requirements (e.g. not completed the percentage required to pro-rate), can an alternative assessment be considered?
Assignment	Convert final examinations to written assignments. This is where the assignment is of a different type to the exam, such as a single essay – i.e., it is not just a take-home exam paper	For Assignments the amount of time being given is designed to take account of all students' personal circumstances, including those who would normally be offered extended time in exams. No additional time will therefore be offered to these assessments. *Disclosure of disability in exams – see below
Take Home Offline Exams	Take-home exams are open-book exams that are given a longer deadline to submit the answers. These could have a deadline set in the same day or over a number of days.	For take-home offline exams offered over a longer period, e.g. 24 or 48 hours etc, an additional time allowance should be provided. If a student has been granted extra time for exams on their LENS report, your online exam must be extended to allow for these exam accommodations. Additional time of 10 (15, 20 or 30) minutes per hour will apply to all timed exams and assessments; from 1 hour up to 48 hrs. For exams and assessments of different durations, 10 minutes per hour is applied as follows: • 48hrs + 8hrs • 24hrs + 4 hrs • 3 hours + 30 mins • 2.5 hours + 25 mins • 2 hours + 20 mins • 1.5 hours + 15 mins *Disclosure of disability in exams – see below
Real Time Online Exams	Real-time online exams refer to a timed exam offered remotely, where students interact continuously with the online platform. These are not invigilated and so are effectively open book. This exam type will be open for a number of hours and the recommended duration is similar to that of the normal exam, with	For Real Time Online Exams please ensure to add extra time stated on the student LENS. If a student has been granted extra time for exams your online exam must be extended to allow for these exam accommodations. Additional time of 10 (15, 20 or 30) minutes per hour will apply to all timed exams and assessments; from 1 hour up to 48 hrs. For exams and assessments of different durations, 10 minutes per hour is applied as follows: • 48hrs + 8hrs • 24hrs + 4 hrs • 3 hours + 30 mins • 2.5 hours + 25 mins • 2 hours + 20 mins • 1.5 hours + 15 mins

	some additional buffer to allow for students to navigate the system. This mechanism should only be used where take-home exams or assignments are not feasible. Issues of connectivity and access are highly likely to arise, given the variable circumstances of students. The best way to mitigate these is to avoid this type of assessment. Exam answers will be checked by Turnitin software to control for plagiarism and collusion. Students will need to be in a position to contact instructors should there be exam queries. Immediate response from instructors needs to be provided where queries are raised. Where this method is chosen: School needs to be on standby for exam duration Live systems support must also be available	Guidance on adding extra-time is linked here. Where students have use of additional supports such as technology, alternative venues or other arrangements, the Disability Service will be in touch with these students to assist them in setting up these supports for themselves in their own venues. Please see table below: https://www.tcd.ie/disability/services/exam-accommodations.php *Disclosure of disability in exams – see below
Real Time Online Invigilated Exams	Real-time online invigilated exams refer to a timed exam offered remotely for which students may not use any materials. These exams are conducted through online examinations in Blackboard and they are timed, live sessions.	For Real Time Online Invigilated Exams an additional time allowance should be added - please ensure to add extra time stated on the student LENS. If a student has been granted extra time for exams your online exam must be extended to allow for these exam accommodations. Additional time of 10 (15, 20 or 30) minutes per hour will apply to all timed exams and assessments; from 1 hour up to 48 hrs. For exams and assessments of different durations, 10 minutes per hour is applied as follows: • 48hrs + 8hrs • 24hrs + 4 hrs

	This exam type will be open for a number of hours and the recommended duration is similar to that of the normal exam, with some additional buffer to allow for students to navigate the system. This mechanism is proving extremely challenging to implement and is highly labour-intensive. Schools should be prepared to supply invigilators, who will need to be trained. Schools requesting this mechanism must justify why invigilation is required. This will normally only be approved where there are requirements of professional accreditation.	• 3 hours + 30 mins • 2.5 hours + 25 mins • 2 hours + 20 mins • 1.5 hours + 15 mins Guidance on adding extra-time is linked here. Where students have use of additional supports such as technology, alternative venues or other arrangements, the Disability Service will be in touch with these students to assist them in setting up these supports for themselves in their own venues. Please see table below: https://www.tcd.ie/disability/services/exam-accommodations.php *Disclosure of disability in exams – see below

*Students with dyslexia and students who are deaf or have a hearing impairment may opt to disclose their disability on their examination scripts in any of the examination modalities listed above. It is the students responsibility to copy the link to the disclosure of disability linked here https://www.tcd.ie/disability/services/exam-accommodations.php#id The Disability Service will provide this link to all students with this accommodation and will guide on its use. The Disability Service can be contacted with any queries in relation to the provision of exam accommodations for timed, online or take-home exams: askds@tcd.ie

Appendix 2
Provision of RAs in remote examinations by DAWN HEI April / May 2020

(see separate attachment).

Appendix 3
Inclusive Marking in Examinations

Introduction

Inclusive Marking Guidelines inform academic staff that the student, due to the nature of his/her disability, may have a particular difficulty with reading, spelling, grammar and written expression. They provide a framework for marking coursework and examination scripts for such students. If a core component of assessment is that of competence in spelling, grammar and written expression, it is not possible to disregard these elements (for example, languages, journalism).

Inclusive Marking Guidelines are intended to raise awareness of reading, spelling and / or writing difficulties, and that, even with additional supports put in place in examinations, disabilities which affect production of written work may prevent them from demonstrating knowledge and understanding relevant to their course. Such students are at a disadvantage when assessment takes the form of written examinations under timed conditions, or where they do not have access to their usual technological aids, nor are able to adopt the extensive drafting and redrafting strategies they would use for assignments.

1. Principles

   i.   Colleges and universities have an overall expectation that all students should be able to communicate their ideas and demonstrate their knowledge effectively in writing. This includes appropriate levels of English language literacy as demonstrated in the correct use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. The expected level of proficiency depends on the nature and focus of the programme.
   ii.   DAWN colleges are committed to inclusion in all aspects of academic life and it is important that this is reflected in assessment and examination practices. Inclusive assessment should acknowledge the needs of a diverse student population, and that these practices are fair, transparent and consistently applied. Students for whom English is not their native language, students with Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia, and students who are deaf, may be disadvantaged if they are assessed on competency in English language, rather than the ability to communicate their ideas successfully.
   iii. Technical accuracy in written expression should be stated as a learning outcome and linked to marking criteria where it is considered to be a competence standard for the discipline or course.
   iv.   Students who experience difficulty with written expression benefit from feedback that acknowledges these challenges and which provides guidance and support in developing writing skills. For this reason, disclosure of disability notifications are used to communicate writing difficulties in timed examinations, as a reasonable accommodation under the Disability Act 2005.

v. Students should have access to supports for producing written work that allow them to demonstrate their ability, such as writing technologies and resources that teach and develop academic skills. There is equally an expectation that students engage with and utilise such supports.

2. Marking Practices for Coursework

i. Coursework for all students should be marked primarily on content and demonstration of knowledge, analysis and critical thinking. Where spelling, grammar and punctuation do not form part of the assessment criteria, and the intended meaning of the coursework is clear and presented coherently, marks should not be deducted for inaccuracies in the use of English language.

ii. Where the assessor / examiner is unable to decipher the meaning of the text, or the meaning is ambiguous, marks cannot be allocated.

iii. Feedback on coursework should highlight issues relating to written expression and indicate where work would benefit from improvements in language and writing skills. This advice may include referral to other sources of support within college.

iv. Where technical accuracy in written expression is deemed to be a competence standard this must be specified in the marking criteria, which should be shared with all students.

3. Marking Guidelines for Students with Disabilities

i. Approximately 40% of disabled college students have a diagnosis of Specific Learning Difficulty or another disability which affects written expression.

ii. Coursework and examination scripts submitted by students for whom there is an evidenced need for consulting marking guidelines, should be identified to enable the marker to take a different approach to reading and evaluating academic work.

iii. Where accuracy in written expression is a stipulated competence, and is an explicit element of the marking criteria, students should expect to receive marks which reflect this requirement, together with guidance on developing skills in this area. This advice may include referral to other sources of support within college.

4. Student awareness of marking criteria and practices

i. Students who have an evidenced difficulty with written expression are aware of the errors they are likely to make in terms of spelling, grammar, fluency, and meaning. They are also conscious that written work takes much longer to produce, to draft, and to review for such errors. This can be a source of anxiety and therefore students benefit from reassurance that in timed examinations, examiners are aware that it may not have been possible to engage with their usual technology.

ii. Students need to know whether accuracy in written expression is part of the marking criteria. Specific modules or learning outcomes may require students to demonstrate high levels of accuracy and attention to detail in written communication. Where this is the case, this should be an explicit part of the assessment and marking criteria, and

clearly communicated to all students as a competence standard. This information should be made available prior to students applying for courses or choosing modules.

    iii.   Where assessor or examiner feedback identifies errors, students need to know whether these have affected marks.

    iv.   Where accuracy in written expression is not central to the assessment, a marker may still feel it is appropriate to provide feedback on some aspects of written expression, for the purposes of helping the student to develop. It is important to state that marks have not been lost in such cases.

5. Marking guidelines by assessment type

Exam essay

The assessment provides students with the opportunity to write an essay in response to a question under exam conditions.

When grading work, markers should mark primarily for content, ideas, critical thinking, and providing focused responses to the question, without penalising the student for specific weaknesses of expression, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and spelling. Marking should not penalise poor handwriting, which is common weakness for many students with SpLDs.

Omitted words or punctuation should not be penalised too much for essay exams but issues with sequencing the essay into a logical structure should, as this is fundamental to an essay.

Exam short answer question

The assessment provides students with the opportunity to provide short answers to a number of questions under exam conditions.

When grading work, markers should mark primarily for content, ideas, critical thinking, and providing focused responses to the question, without penalising the student for specific weaknesses of expression, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and spelling. Marking should not penalise poor handwriting, which is a common weakness for many students with SpLDs.

Simplified vocabulary should not be penalised too much for short answer exams as long as the responses presented are thoroughly described and focused on the question. Any statistical terminology should be accurate and reporting of statistics should be thorough.

Qualitative report

The assessment provides students with the opportunity to write a method, results, and discussion section of a qualitative grounded theory report.

When grading work, markers should mark primarily for content, ideas, critical thinking, and ability to present theory and literature in a style that is suitable for an academic audience without penalising the student for specific weaknesses of expression, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and spelling.

Omitted words or punctuation should not be penalised too much for qualitative reports but issues with sequencing the report into a logical structure should (particularly given the

guidance provided on structure – sections, subheadings within sections). Omitted words should be penalised when referencing quotes as they have had clear guidance as to how to do this.

Simplified vocabulary when writing should not be penalised too much for qualitative reports as long as the themes presented are thoroughly described and the theory presented is coherent and grounded in the data.

Blog
The assessment provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in disseminating research findings in a style and format that can be accessed and understood by members of the public.

When grading work, markers should mark primarily for content, ideas, critical thinking, and ability to present information and arguments in a style that is suitable for a non-academic audience (e.g. avoiding use of specialist technical language) without penalising the student for specific weaknesses of expression, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and spelling.

Omitted words or punctuation should not be penalised too much for public engagement blogs but issues with sequencing ideas into a logical structure and use of overly technical language should.

Position paper
The assessment provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in presenting a persuasive argument.

When grading the work of students with SpLDs, markers should mark primarily for content, ideas, critical thinking, and ability to present a persuasive argument (e.g. one that convinces the audience that the opinion presented is valid and worth listening to) without penalising the student for specific weaknesses of expression, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and spelling.

Omitted words or punctuation should not be penalised too much for position papers but issues with sequencing ideas into a logical structure and issues with developing a convincing argument that is
supported by evidence should.

6.   Common errors associated with reading, spelling and / or writing difficulties

A student with a disability who has a reading, writing or spelling difficulty can be disadvantaged when assessment takes the form of a written, timed examination. Student's written work may contain:

1. **Surface errors** in spelling and grammar such as inaccuracies in the use of tense, grammatical agreement, plurals, spelling and punctuation.

2. **Structural flaws** including weak sequencing of ideas, paragraphs, and sentences; unclear expression of cause and effect; lack of competence in using abstract language or lack of awareness of writing genre.

The following guidelines should be taken into consideration when marking the examination script of a student with a reading, writing or spelling difficulty:

1. First, read the script quickly to judge the student's underlying understanding of the topic; then, assess their performance against the learning outcomes. If the script contains all the required elements but does not introduce them in a clear logical order, avoid penalising the student for a lack of structure in their writing unless this is a stipulated competency being assessed.

2. Errors in **spelling** do not necessarily mean that the student is confused about the meaning of the word or its function in their writing. Generally, such errors do not lead to ambiguity and should not be penalised when subject knowledge is being assessed.

3. **Lexical** errors, such as "coarse" for "course," do not mean that the student is confused about the meaning of the words. This kind of error should not be penalised unless it leads to ambiguity.

4. **Grammatical** errors, like incorrect tense endings, lack of subject-verb agreement and incorrect word order may not affect the meaning of the sentence.

For example: "Some of the features of Socratic dialogues were they seek definitions of abstract ideas, cross examining beliefs to expose contradictions and he used to use questioning to bring the pupil to recognise the truth." Here the student's meaning is clear, the errors do not lead to ambiguity and the student should not be penalised.

5. **Students with difficulties in reading, writing and spelling might not always use punctuation as a tool to clarify meaning.** Scripts may contain long sentences that are difficult to follow with indiscriminate punctuation or no punctuation at all. Very short sentences or fragments of sentences might also be produced. For example: "The study considered three main areas of research. The effects of frequent drug use the role of the family in the offenders behaviour and the impact of custodial sentences on reoffending." In this case the student's meaning is clear, but errors in punctuation can lead to ambiguity which will be reflected in the mark awarded.

6. Some students may have **restricted vocabulary** and use a far more limited range of words than one would expect. Avoid penalising students who may have an immature style of writing, unless written communication is a specified learning outcome.

7. Where grammar and spelling are core competencies of a course, a student's work must be marked on the basis of accuracy in the language and therefore these marking guidelines will not apply.

8. In all subjects, if a student's errors make a material difference to the meaning of their work, it will not be possible to classify them as surface errors that do not incur penalty. For instance, if a nursing student writes hypertension instead of hypotension, this will affect the mark awarded.

9. In all subjects, if the surface errors or structural flaws make the student's work so ambiguous that it is impossible to decipher the meaning, then this diminishes their ability to demonstrate the module's learning outcomes and this would be reflected in the marks awarded.

Appendix 4
Notes on remote examination of clinical skills

Research from Duke-NUS Medical School, Curtin Medical School, Curtin University, and Singapore General Hospital (2020), present a solution for final year clinical performance examinations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This paper outlines design and implementation of OSCEs. These were facilitated using: Strict infection control and personal hygiene; segregation of all participant groups including by patient, student, faculty and healthcare institution; social distancing; Zoom-facilitated briefings; wifi-enabled data gathering from iPad-based OSCE scoring system; no large group gatherings. No changes were made to the content of the OSCEs which consisted of: 1) clinical examination 15 x 12 minute stations, including history taking, clinical examination and explanation/advice skills being tested, together with clinical decision making, diagnostic acumen and management planning; 2) practical skills 10 x 8 minute stations, in professional interactions with patients, including explanations, consent, and patient safety. Students were briefed during the month before the examinations were scheduled. Those who fail will have a supplementary exam after two months. Take home message: think imaginatively, be flexible.

Cantone et al (2019) implemented the Insomnia–Rural TeleOSCE for students in second, third, or fourth year using a case study of a patient with depression in a medically underserved area. N=287 students participated as a formative experience and received immediate feedback. TeleOSCE assesses competencies in a safe environment whilst improving student understanding of barriers to care and the utility of telemedicine. Faculty can directly assess distance students on their clinical reasoning and patient communication skills. Students read a prompt outside of the virtual room and then complete the case in 11-13 minutes (depending on timing and number of students, then enter the room to find a participant connected via live video streaming on a monitor in the room. The same software and patients were used whether the student was on campus or remote. Students in remote locations, were instructed to review a checklist to understand performance clinically and with the software. The OSCE was completed early in their clinical rotation (by the second of 4 weeks) so that they could implement the feedback in the latter half of their rotation. Student feedback indicated that they needed more practice, more specific instructions, more time to complete the scenario, and fewer technical difficulties, although in real life contexts patient care is undertaken under tight time pressures. Take home message: perhaps extend time to allow students to completely grasp the technology.

Bree (2018) reviews the use of digital technology for assessment in sciences and health, observing that there are efficiencies to this method including faster evaluation and a reduction in missing, or erroneous, data. eOSCE (http://eosce.ch/) provide this method using three components: an easy to use iPad app which enables examiners to assess the candidates performance, a macOS desktop app which is used to schedule and prepare the examination data, and a mobile iPhone app that can be used to monitor the examination state and alerts the administrator in case of any technical problems. All examination data is digitally encrypted and stored securely and reliably on a server. An exam preparation manual sets out very specific tasks at three month, one month, two week, one week, and day before intervals to prepare the examination https://eosce.ch/support/exam-preparation/ Take home message: Significant efficiencies, however, whilst there is training for examiners there does not appear to be any similar facility for students.

UCL Medical School (2019) using Speedwell software piloted digital remote OSCEs in February 2018 with first-year formative assessment of an 8 station OSCE, prior to use for the first summative OSCE exam in May 2018. Take home message: Benefits in efficiency and timeliness experienced by all participants.

Farahmand et al (2016) completed a study in Tehran University or Medical Sciences with N=120 senior medical students divided into a distance learning and traditional learning group. The control group attended a workshop with a 50-minute lecture on a case simulation scenario followed by a hands-on session. The distance group received a DVD with a similar 50-minute lecture and a case simulation scenario and attended a hands-on session to practice the skills. Both groups were evaluated by a trauma station OSCE after a month. The distance learning students performed better in the trauma station compared to the control group. Take home message: a telemedicine course can be as successful as on-site learning and does not require internet access where repeat watching of the DVD is available.

Palmer et al (2015) conducted a pilot program in Oregon Health and Science University, USA, to study implementation of remote OSCE examination (teleOSCE) in 2013 and 2014, via Adobe Connect video-conferencing software, cell phones and a primary care focused diabetes management case. The telemedicine scenario reflected a real-world remote consultation situation whereby a GP interacts with a rural patient. This approach addressed the difficulty of remote examination whilst also giving students experience of rural patient care. Three competency domains were assessed:(1) clinical knowledge of diabetes, management issues, and follow-up, (2) ensuring a patient focus whilst using technology, and (3) understanding the context for rural patients. Each student was given a specific appointment time in a virtual exam room. One non-clinical faculty member served as the meeting operator to provide technical support for the session, and a clinical faculty member served as the observer. Each encounter lasted 20 minutes, with 15 minutes for the clinical encounter and 5 minutes for feedback. All participants utilised their own computers and cell phones. Take home message: teleOSCE to remote learners is both financially feasible and acceptable to students.

Finally, Imperial College London recently became the first university to deliver fully online OSCEs. N=280 students in their sixth year of medical studies logged in at 1pm on their exam day to demonstrate their ability to diagnose a patient's condition. They were presented with a patient and given their history, findings from clinical examination and data from investigations such as blood tests. They then had to answer 150 questions in three hours, meaning they had 72 seconds to answer each one. Clinical / academic staff refer to the fact that: "It wasn't possible to answer questions that require putting all this information together by simply looking things up online, this is exactly like having a patient in front of you." The papers were marked automatically online and will be analysed and compared to previous closed-book exams. Take home message: if results are comparable this may lead the way for remote OSCEs for health sciences students.

Appendix 5
Guidelines for on-line VIVA VOCE when working with disabled students

Please note that you may also be conducting vivas with students who have chosen not to disclose their disability or are as yet undiagnosed. Follow the maxim that whatever is accessible for disabled students increases accessibility for all.

It is recommended that Microsoft Teams is used for vivas, wherever possible, due to its enhanced accessibility features compared to other video conferencing systems and the ability to produce accurate live captions.

1. On-line Viva for students with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC), specific learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

- Be aware that students with autism spectrum conditions, specific learning difficulties and mental health difficulties can be affected in a range of ways by their disabilities and with differing degrees of impact. If you are unsure what the student needs, ask them.
- Offer the student a choice of on-line viva via text only, by audio only, or by audio with video. Please be aware that audio with video may be highly anxiety provoking for some students with ASC in particular and so audio only or text only may be preferred. Alternatively, the examiner could speak while the student responds using text, or the examiner could use audio with video while the student responds using audio only or text only. Provide these as options and make it clear that the student's choice of on-line viva format will not affect the results of the viva.
- Some students with ASC may find it easier to communicate if they cannot see the examiner's face and knowing that the examiner cannot see theirs. However, other students with ASC prefer to see the person they are talking to as that helps them to understand the conversation better. Provide these as options and allow the student to make their own choice.
- Check that the student is familiar with using on-line viva methods such as Teams and ensure that the student understands how to use any facilities that are needed in the viva (such as screen sharing) well in advance of the viva. Suggest that the student practices with their study skills tutor, where appropriate, beforehand. This will help to reduce anxiety.
- Provide a way for the student to pause the call if they are feeling uncomfortable with the communication.
- Provide students with introductory information about the examiner(s) if they are not familiar with those who will conducting the viva. Ask examiner(s) to introduce themselves at the start of the viva to allow a period of settling in.
- Conduct the on-line viva in a quiet environment, otherwise the student can be distracted by trying to work out if background noises are someone speaking (especially if it is audio only). Be aware that for some students in the current circumstances may struggle to find a suitable location.
- Provide full details, in writing, of the purpose of the viva and whether or not it will affect the exam marks.
- Provide a detailed explanation of the format the viva will take (is it a 'Q and A' session; is it probing an aspect of an essay for more details and in-depth discussion; or does it require 'on the spot' calculations to be performed, etc.) and also how long will it last. If appropriate,

provide an outline of the areas that the examiner would like to probe in more detail in advance

- Encourage the student to email a list of any questions or concerns they may have about the viva to their Department/Faculty/DoS in advance of the viva. The student may benefit from discussing any concerns about the process with their DRC mentor, who can help them to construct an email to their Department/Faculty/DoS conveying their concerns and framing their questions.
- Please be aware that answering on the spot can be challenging as a Viva can place a burden on the working memory, sequencing, speed of processing and concentration of a student with SpLD, ASC or mental health conditions. Provide adequate time for the student to assimilate/process the question and make notes/ sequence ideas before being required to respond to the question.
- Students with SpLD may also experience some difficulties with word retrieval and so examiners should be mindful that the student may need time to mentally search for the word and allowances should be made it if cannot be instantly recollected.
- To help relieve the burden on working memory and the requirement to understanding non-verbal communication (including inference), please use straightforward and unambiguous phrasing in the questions during the Viva and avoid multiple parts to questions, insofar as possible. These additional parts could be asked as separate questions. Repetition may be necessary.
- Provide 25% extra time and/or rest breaks of 10 minutes per hour where recommended
- Provide questions in written as well as verbal form (for example by pasting questions into the chat function on Teams).
- Please recognise that the answers to questions given by students with ASC, SpLD or mental health conditions may not appear to be as well organised as the answers of non-disabled students.
- Examiners should indicate to the student when they have answered the question to the required extent.
- Be aware that students with ASC may not have identified the gist of a question and may instead focus on an aspect of detail in their response.
- Anxiety may be heightened due to the high stakes nature of the viva as anxiety (including social anxiety) can be aggravated by stress. Please look out for signs of heightened anxiety and offer a break if the student shows increasing levels of anxiety during the viva. If necessary, stop/pause the viva to avoid further deterioration in wellbeing.
- Allow the student to read the question back to the examiner, if necessary, to ensure that all the points that were being raised have been noted. The student then, as needed, should be allowed to make some notes on the answers, as opposed to having to think instantly 'on the spot'.
- Examiners should signpost questions to assist with processing. An example of signposting would be, for example, saying, 'moving now to look at [mention a topic], what do you think about [ask the question]' or the examiner could summarise a point and then ask the related question. This is less difficult for the student to process than asking the question without the introductory phrase.

- Examiners should be made aware that the student has a diagnosis of SpLD, ASC and /or a mental health condition and the negative impact on this can have on processing incoming information at speed.
- A non-confrontational approach to questioning is recommended as students may experience negative thoughts or responses. Check that the student understands the question and be prepared to repeat questions to ensure the student understands what is being asked.
- Allow student to make notes of questions asked so that they can refer to this during the examination. If the student does not provide a full response to a question, please assist through the use of prompting sub-questions.

2. Students with physical and sensory impairments and long-term health conditions

- Be aware that disabled students with hearing, visual, physical impairments and with long term health conditions can be affected in a range of ways and with differing degrees of impact. If you are unsure what the student needs, ask them.
- Be explicit about what is required during the viva.
- Ensure the lighting is good and highlights the face of the examiner/s.
- Ensure the picture quality is as high as possible so that the image is clear and does not fragment.
- Ensure that the audio quality is of a standard that the student is able to hear all examiners clearly. Test this before the exam starts.
- Make sure there are no shadows falling onto the examiner's face as this will make it difficult for the student to lip read or pick up information from facial expressions.
- Keep the background lighting even and not too bright as this will throw the examiner's face into silhouette, making it difficult for the student to lip read or pick up information from facial expressions.
- Ensure there is good contrast between the examiner and the background for e.g. plain light background and wear plain dark colour clothes where possible to help students concentrate on hearing and lip reading, or focussing on the face and audio.
- Keep hands and fingers away from the face and look directly into the camera so that the face can be seen clearly.
- Speak clearly, check that the student can hear at intervals, and be prepared to repeat words or sentences if asked and let the student know that this is acceptable.
- Use a plain background behind the examiner so there are no visual distractions. Blur the background, if possible (for example in Teams).
- Check if live captioning is available (this is available in Teams) and use this if the student would find this helpful.
- Keep background noise to an absolute minimum. Background noise is distracting and can be picked up by hearing aids/ radio aids at the same volume as speech. It is difficult to 'cancel out' background noise, when using such devices.
- Make sure the doors and windows of the room where the examiner is located are shut so that no outside noises can be heard
- Be aware that there is likely to be 'echo' sounds if the Viva takes place in a room with no carpet/curtains/soft furnishings.

- Explain to the student who is in the room and where they are located if there is more than one examiner.
- If there is more than one examiner, ensure that only one person is speaking at any one time and explain/verbally indicate when another person is due to speak. For example, 'I will now hand over to X'.
- If an examiner wishes to speak when others are talking, indicate this by raising a hand, or use the chat function. This will help the student to 'place' the examiner who is speaking.
- Be aware that if students with visual impairments are required to refer to any textual information they may need to access screen reading software such as Jaws or NVDA.
- Be aware that the student may not be able to follow non-verbal clues/facial expressions.
- Rest breaks of 10 minutes per hour, and/or 25% extra time if recommended.
- Be aware that some disabled students will have conditions which lead to fatigue and they may require rest periods.
- Be aware that some disabled students may be using ergonomic equipment and assistive technology to access their learning and be mindful that this may lead to delays in responses.

  If you have any questions or queries, please contact the DRC at disability@admin.cam.ac.uk

Disability Resource Centre, April 2020

Appendix 6
DAWN Principles, Guidelines and Procedures for the Granting of Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations to Students with Disabilities: Remote Examinations

1. Guidelines and Procedures for Reasonable Accommodations in Remote Examinations

2. Using Remote Examination Venues:

   - Advice on using VLEs
   - Completing online templates
   - Uploading diagrams, coding, voice files etc.

3. HEI Responsibilities When Providing Assistive Technology for Use in Examinations

   - Reading support
   - Writing support
   - Access to VLE

4. Student's Responsibilities in the use of Assistive Technology during Examinations

   - Computer equipment
   - Internet connection
   - Typing skills
   - Camera
   - Microphone

5. Student's Responsibilities in Setting Up Examination Venues Examinations

   - Temperature
   - Lighting
   - Furniture
   - Ergonomics
   - Human supports

6. Additional Time in Examinations:

   - Pro Rate Continuous Assessment (CA)
   - Assignment
   - Take Home Offline Exams
   - Real Time Online Exams
   - Real Time Online Invigilated Exams
   - Guidelines for the Provision of Rest Breaks in Examinations
   - Rest breaks
   - Toilet breaks

7. Marking Guidelines (is this still required given access to AT?)

8. Examination Papers in Alternative Formats