

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on King's Assessment for Assessment Period Two

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INTRODUCTION

Assessment period two will take place between **27th April and 26th June**, extending from 5 weeks to 9 weeks.

The College has said it is imperative to reduce assessment load for students and consequent burden for staff by reducing the number of assessments that students have to complete (and use the extension provided by the new assessment period for any current coursework deadlines as appropriate). Exams already set by the Exams Office can be removed but not rescheduled.

This guide is intended to provide a best practice approach to designing assessment in a time of crisis in as rigorous yet pragmatic way as possible. With thanks to Prof Kay Sambell and Prof Sally Brown for some of the recommendations.

The College has recommended a combination of two main approaches:

1. Reducing assessment load by taking a programme level approach
2. Choose an alternative online format for the assessments you need to continue to run

REGULATIONS AND SUPPORT

Regulations

To support the evolving situation, a number of guidance documents have been produced:

- [Mitigating Circumstances relating to the Coronavirus](#) (PDF Guide) is available
- [Late Submissions relating to the Coronavirus](#) (PDF Guide) is available
- [Assessment Boards and Sub Boards](#) (PDF Guide) relating to Coronavirus is available.

Faculty Specific Support

Each faculty is approaching alternative assessments in appropriate ways to support the unique requirements of local assessments. For faculty specific guidance and support on the approaches and technologies being used please contact your [Local TEL/Digital Education Colleague](#).

Advice and Guidance

If you have an specific requests relating to appropriate approaches to alternative assessment, please contact kings-academy@kcl.ac.uk.

The [King's Online Educators](#) online community (via Microsoft Teams) has been set up academic colleagues to exchange knowledge and expertise on supporting teaching, learning and assessment online.

[Disability Support Team](#) can provide guidance on Personal Assessment Arrangement or disability related challenges to alternative assessments.

1. REDUCING ASSESSMENT LOAD BY TAKING A PROGRAMME LEVEL APPROACH

1.1.Key principles:

- What is core/compulsory and non-core? What is required for students to meet the programme outcomes? Core/compulsory modules at all levels should still be assessed. All level 6 and 7 (1 year PGT) modules should be assessed, although could be merged in some cases (see below).
- All assessment required by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) where 100% of learning outcomes must be met should be assessed. Your respective PSRBs should be providing information about how to meet requirements in this time of crisis.
- Non-core for non-final year students can be either deferred until academic year 20/21 or assessed through a merged synoptic assessment (see below).

For non-core/electives, this involves taking a view of the core programme learning outcomes rather than only the coverage of all modular content.

Although all modules and knowledge are important to the programme, at this time, it may be necessary to assess ONLY the core competencies, skills and knowledge your students need to demonstrate to successfully complete their year for progression. For example, could students have passed your programme with a condoned fail in a particular module? If so, could the assessment for that module be waived, given a reduced or alternative assessment, or merged with another module assessment?.

1.2.How to map modules against Programme Learning Outcomes

- a) Programme teams can map their PLOs against the module outcomes of non-core modules for the year(s).

Example:

ProG	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO 3	PLO4	PLO5	PLO 6
M1	x			x		x
M2	x	x	X	x	x	
M3	x					X
ETC						

- Which modules are assessing the majority of your learning outcomes? In the example above, Module 2 should be assessed
- Where are several modules assessing the same PLO? Could you choose one module to fully assess, or combine the assessments in a reduced format? Can you combine Modules 1 and 3?
- What PLOs will be covered in subsequent years (non-final years only)? Can these learning outcomes be deferred to be assessed then? **PSRBs should be sought for guidance on simulations/clinical assessments etc.**

- b) If a substantial amount of assessment has been completed already for a module which is weighted highly, you should consider the necessity of any outstanding assessment. Although it is unlikely that this is the case in exam period two, the necessity of conducting any assessment which is not heavily weighted towards the final module outcomes should be considered.

1.3. Is it possible to have my students achieve a mark by averaging grades for work already submitted?

It may be possible to do this in exceptional cases by using grades achieved for continuous summative assessment or mid-terms if they amount to a weighting of over 60% of the module. However, using mocks, seminar participation or indicative formative assessment is likely to be unfair on students who did not know their formative efforts would be counted as summative. Aggregating grades for previous formative assessment will cause administrative burden on you and PS staff.

1.4. What is a synoptic assessment?

“An assessment that encourages students to combine elements of their learning from different parts of a programme and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area. A synoptic assessment normally enables students to show their ability to integrate and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth in the subject. It can help to test a student’s capability of applying the knowledge and understanding gained in one part of a programme to increase their understanding in other parts of the programme, or across the programme as a whole.” (QAA Code of Practice, 2016).

Synoptic exams are already common in professional accreditation in such as law and accounting.

Synoptic assessments are not ideal under the current circumstances as they require careful planning and cooperation across modules. However, a reduced synoptic can be designed in a way that allows students to demonstrate core learning outcomes in the following ways:

- A piece of coursework that requires integration of skills from a number of modules, for example data sets, problems or case studies for analysis.
- A merged exam format on modules where the content is similar enough to cohere. If this will take place under timed conditions, this would mean reducing the content of both if in order NOT to increase the amount of time students need to complete.
- A portfolio including pieces of work that have already been completed and any other assignment you might set now. Students could be asked to produce an overall introduction to the work which reflects on their learning across a programme or a number of modules. This allows students time to revise and improve any formative work they have completed.
- A reflective essay (or to camera video recording of a specified number of words. Students could be asked to produce a detailed written reflection on their learning, identifying core learning with key examples from the course and beyond. This can be done on a pass/fail basis or graded (although if graded, criteria will need to be decided).

1.5. How can I merge module outcomes and still assess according to the credit framework?

In these exceptional circumstances, credit structures will have to be flexible. For example, where assessments are merged, for example across two notional 15 credit modules, the assessment would be worth 30 credits. This is necessary to ensure that students' degree algorithm is not unduly affected. External examiners will also be aware of contingency plans made during this unprecedented time, and the P&C team can provide further guidance.

See **what is synoptic assessment?** for examples of how to merge module assessment

1.6. How should I communicate to and reassure students? What about students who still want to be assessed?

In most cases, detailed messaging should be communicated by faculties by 2 April ideally, or shortly thereafter, containing specific details regarding the assessments and their timing. We cannot rule out needing further changes as circumstances evolve, or as any unanticipated issues come to light, and it is important to accept that information might not be definitive at this stage. Nevertheless, faculties are asked to try to avoid sending out tentative information too quickly, which can cause greater confusion when retracted.

You might want to offer a forum on KEATS along with a video recorded briefing to answer questions from students and ensure they understand the new arrangements. Any information to students should be available in ONE place as students can easily become overwhelmed by email traffic and crucial information can get lost.

Students should be reassured that faculties are doing all they can but that many of us and our student body have been affected, and therefore we have to adopt the most pragmatic and fair policy for all.

There will be study and assessment guides coming online very soon, coordinated by King's Academy, King's Online and Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning on managing types of assessment, well-being and online learning.

2. CHOOSE AN ALTERNATIVE ONLINE FORMAT FOR THE ASSESSMENTS YOU NEED TO CONTINUE TO RUN

2.1 Key principles:

- Avoid choosing a replacement that requires a lot of extra support for students to be able to complete. It is important to weigh up the support students will need in using the *technology* of a replacement online (e.g. a narrated PPT to replace an in-class presentation) vs the *academic support* they will need to understand and complete an entirely new assessment type (e.g. a written report to replace a debate).
- Avoid choosing a replacement that requires additional skills and knowledge to be demonstrated on the part of the students. Where this is necessary (e.g. a presentation to be assessed via a written report), you must take this into consideration at the marking stage and only assess the original criteria. Where writing replaces oral assessment, students' ability to structure or grammatical errors should be ignored.

- Consider the logistics of group work/projects. Where students have already put time into a group project, there may be scope to discuss with students on the module whether they are able to continue remotely with this, or whether they would rather take their existing work and produce an individual assignment. In the former case, group collaboration may be able to go ahead via Zoom or Teams. Students need to be aware of when their team members are working in different countries with time zones and lack of access to certain apps. In the latter case, you should take into account when marking that there may be similarity between the work of those students. We would advise that group presentations should now be assessed individually on the aspect of the work they had been assigned as it would be disadvantageous for some students to require them to perform live or synchronously as a group. Elements of group work can still be assessed by asking student to write a short reflection or complete a form on their contribution and working as a team.

2.2 Online alternative formats:

Coursework such as an essay, e-portfolio, blog, reflection etc, and exams which would already have been ‘seen’ or open book should not usually need alternative formats. However, you may need to be reconsider the time given for students to complete as per the extension of assessment period two. They may need to be submitted electronically if they were previously submitted on paper. Contact your faculty TEL office for how to set this up.

My current assessment is	Options for alternatives and points to consider	Where to find guidance
Timed closed book examination	<p>A ‘take home’ exam within a 24 hour window.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the format and nature of questions to make them more open ended, and avoid questions which require only knowledge recall or one correct answer. E.g. multiple longer questions are based around a case study. • Don’t be tempted to increase the amount of content. Students should be able to complete the assignment in the same amount of time they would have had in an exam • Consider how students will show workings for some questions (e.g. screenshots) and the corresponding file size for submission. • Set a word count and where necessary provide a template for students as to how you want them to structure their answers. <p>Where no alternative to a timed exam is possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2-3 hour timed assessment can be taken within a 24-hour window, where the clock starts at the moment the student opens the assessment. <p>PROVISIONS FOR PAA:</p>	<p>Creating a Turnitin Assignment in KEATS</p> <p>Submitting a Turnitin Assignment submission as a Student</p> <p>Creating a Moodle Assignment in KEATS</p> <p>Submitting a Moodle Assignment submission as a Student</p> <p>Compressing Images in Microsoft Word</p> <p>Designing questions to mitigate against plagiarism and ensuring reliability (LSE Guidance)</p> <p>For a timed assessment KEATS Quizzes could be used with essay questions added. The clock starting when the student starts the quiz. (Guide in development).</p>

	<p>Allow additional time to PAA students for timed assessments in line with their individual circumstances, including timed assessments within a 24-hour window where the clock starts at the point the student commences the assessment (option a above). Do not normally allow extra time to PAA students for students taking place over a 24-hour window or longer.</p>	
<p>Presentation live in-class (with Poster)</p>	<p>We strongly advise against synchronous presentations due to students being in different time zones and potential issues with student equipment and connectivity.</p> <p>Students can submit a narrative recorded presentation using PPT or another software tool. Criteria that requires elements of delivery such as eye contact etc should be discarded.</p> <p>Posters can be submitted via Turnitin or other software</p>	<p>Recording a narrated presentation in PowerPoint.</p> <p>Using Kaltura Capture to record a video</p> <p>Creating a Kaltura Media Assignment Submission Inbox</p> <p>Submitting a multimedia assignment to Kaltura Media Assignment</p>
<p>Lab work</p>	<p>Students can describe in writing or short video how they would set up the experiment design, data collection, and analysis procedures.</p> <p>Students can be given past data sets and asked how they would analyse them. Aspects of lab safety can be deferred to academic year 20/21, assumed to have been covered in previous labs throughout the year if that data is available, OR an MCQ about lab safety can be set up on KEATS.</p> <p>There are online lab simulations for a range of disciplines. Students could be asked to watch and reflect on these activities. However, this is unlikely to meet all learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Editing Software for your Computer or Smart Phone</p>
<p>Viva Voce</p>	<p>These could be undertaken via Teams (as indeed they already are on occasions when Doctoral examinations are undertaken transnationally). Consideration must</p>	<p>Setting up a Microsoft Teams Meeting (for groups)</p>

	be taken into account for the availability of assessors and deferred where considered appropriate.	Using Microsoft Video/Audio Calls (for 1-2-1)
Performance assessment	<p>Students can record their performance for music, etc. The audience element can be simulated if enough students can be organised to attend a synchronous remote performance time. These can be accompanied by written commentary from students.</p> <p>Issues of comfortable space, lighting and sound may of course be barriers to this.</p>	Editing Software for your Computer or Smart Phone
Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE) and clinical simulations	<p>Students may be able to video themselves performing specific tasks, although this is unlikely to be viewed as valid.</p> <p>Logbooks might be used from previous observations BUT seek guidance from PSRBs on these issues.</p>	Editing Software for your Computer or Smart Phone
Dissertations for PGT PGR – please see the link for information from the Centre for Doctoral Studies	<p>For non-empirical research, students would be able to continue as normal with an appropriate extension. Ensure that students have access to articles etc through Shibboleth accounts to avoid paywalls.</p> <p>For empirical research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where students have already obtained data, this can be used as normal. • Where students have not yet collected data, qualitative research such as interview/focus groups, surveys etc could be arranged remotely with appropriate extensions. • Open data sets can be provided from previous work online, or from the supervisor's own work for students to interpret. It will be necessary to advise your students on a case by case basis and to manage disappointment 	

	for students who may have to alter the scope of their work to be able to proceed with their dissertation.	
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2.3 How can I give students an opportunity to do formative practice of any new assessment format?

To avoid significant burden to you or your students, you should consider asking students to submit only a outline/draft/plan or a small portion of the task (a few paragraphs in answer to a sample exam question, a few paragraphs of a reflection or a 5-minute recording).

Feedback can be provided though [cohort feedback](#) (providing generic feedback based on a small sample of the tasks) or providing a model answer with comments. If students can have an opportunity to apply the criteria to a range of exemplars, that would be optimal, but the need to source examples of new format may make this impractical.

Peer feedback tools could be used. For example, a [KEATS Forum](#) (PDF Guide) could be used for discussion or [Turnitin PeerMark](#) (PDF Guide) set up for students to provide feedback on each others work.

2.4 How can I provide feedback on students' work?

You can find help with using Turnitin for marking and inline comments [here](#). If you usually used face to face feedback, you might be able to replace that with a brief online meeting after the assessment period.

This might also be an opportunity to try [audio feedback](#) or [screencast feedback](#). If marking or working with students' formative work, this might reduce workload when compare to written comments.