

Information on Courses in Department of Mathematics

Following the recent communication from Professor Dilly Fung <http://londonchoolofeconomicscommunications.newsweaver.com/flyer/i17ttqs6xxd> on 24 March, I understand that you would like to know more about the approach we are taking in the Department of Mathematics for the upcoming Summer Term assessments. We are keeping in mind the words of the Director that "whilst a shift to online and alternative forms of assessment may mean the method of assessment you sit changes, course content and learning outcomes will be the same."

With a few exceptions, all our exams will be open book take-home exams. Within a specified 24-hour period you will have to download your exam from Moodle and upload your answers (typically a pdf scan of your written answers). The 24-hour period will most likely be the day of the published exam timetable (though conflicts for certain students may require some changes). The 24-hour window is designed to accommodate different time zones and those who may face disruption of various kinds. The effort expected to complete each exam will only be a few hours, typically in line with the originally scheduled exam. The detail of what "open book" means will be given in the examination instructions for each course. A minority of exams will be timed, in the sense that you will have to upload your exams within a specified time after downloading it from Moodle. In some courses exams will be replaced by coursework. The exact details of the timings of each assessment will be communicated to you on 3 April.

In most cases there will be no change to the basic format of the exams. We recognize that the online exams will allow you to have access to books or materials, and examiners may therefore replace simple bookwork questions that can be easily looked up with alternative questions. Your lecturers will give you more specific information for each course. It is our intention to make our exam fair and suitable for an online setting. Parts of the exam may be phrased differently in order to test your understanding while still having the difficulty level comparable to previous years.

Thus, you should study for the upcoming exams in the usual way.

You are required to complete the exam by yourself using only the material that is allowed for the exam. This means that we expect you to subscribe to an Honour System. We do have experience with take-home assignments and expect to be again successful in detecting those who, by cheating, put their degree at risk. We will have safeguards to ensure that your work is your own, including additional oral vivas (by video link), both randomly and if there are cases where we suspect dishonesty.

Mark distributions might be different than usual in these circumstances, as exams are open book and because the timeframes are different. We do not expect to see lower average marks than usual, and it might even be that students do better than usual. You are part of the cohort that had to study and take exams under unusual and challenging circumstances and you will be recognized for that in better days to come.

We understand that you may be facing personal challenges that are impacting your studies. Our priority is to be flexible and understanding of individual circumstances. As outlined in previous communications

<<http://londonchoolofeconomiccommunications.newsweaver.com/flyer/i17ttqs6x>>, you will be able to defer assessments to the next appropriate assessment opportunity. More information on the process will be communicated within two weeks, but please do talk to us if you have concerns.

I would also like to reiterate that we are here to advise and support you. LSE's campus may be closed but we are still open. On the Moodle pages of your courses there are details about revised teaching. There is a range of support available, from one-to-one sessions with LSE LIFE <<https://info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/lse-life/LIFE-goes-on>>, guidance from the Student Services Advice team <<https://info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/student-services/advice-team>> on regulatory matters, and suggestions on how to stay connected while studying remotely <<https://info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/staying-connected-off-campus>>.

Keep on persevering with your studies. Contact us if you think we can help you with anything. We'll get through this together.