



Digital Examinations Policy

1. Context and Introduction

Online Examinations at the University of Worcester have evolved from computer-based assessments held outside traditional exam weeks to more inclusive, flexible formats using Blackboard Ultra. The new system improves marking and supports extra time for students. However, inconsistent processes have emerged, and regulatory requirements now mandate in-person, invigilated exams for some courses. To address academic integrity concerns, Lockdown software is introduced. The term 'Digital Examination' is proposed to clarify that it covers any computer-administered exam.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 To support academic integrity in Digital Examinations while upholding equity, inclusivity, accessibility and assessment innovation.
- 2.2 All credit-bearing courses where academics elect to use the learning management system to undertake a Digital Examination.
- 2.3 Complement the Procedures for Examinations to facilitate Digital Examinations.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Lockdown Software: The University has access to two forms of Lockdown Software, one intended for in-person usage, and the other for off-campus.
- 3.2 Lockdown Browser (LB): is a custom browser that secures the learning management system when using a digital examination on campus.
- 3.3 Remote Monitor (RM): is a form of remote proctoring enabling students to undertake a digital examination off-campus.

4. The Policy – Planning and On the Day

- 4.1 All Digital Examinations (using the University learning management system) are conducted on campus (except when cohort size is prohibitive >200) with the use of an LB to secure the working environment.
- 4.2 RM is only used in extenuating circumstances, as detailed above, or those that prevent on-campus attendance.
- 4.3 All students will have the opportunity to undertake a Formative Digital Exam to familiarise themselves with the software, how it functions, the question types and any additional aspects they may require, i.e., read-aloud software. Details of the Formative and Summative Digital Examinations should be in the module specification and module outline.
- 4.4 The summative Digital Examination is written in advance and submitted to External Examiners for verification (i.e. number and types of questions used). If any external software (e.g., statistical software) or web links (e.g., for reference values) are required, these are agreed with colleagues in IT in good time. Advice and support on writing a Digital Examination in Blackboard can be obtained from the Technology Enhanced

Learning (TEL) team.

- 4.5 Students who require extra time as per their Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) are allocated the correct percentage in the 'Time Limit Accommodation' section, if a time limit is to be used for the Digital Examination. The Module Leader should consider whether additional rooms are required for these students. Wherever possible, examinations should be designed from the outset to be inclusive for all students, particularly concerning timing considerations
- 4.6 Facilities are booked in advance by the Module Leader, and an additional window (~15 minutes) is factored into the booking before the exam starts to enable any login or technical issues to be resolved.
- 4.7 If separate rooms are required to fulfil a student's RAP, these are organised in advance with additional invigilation as necessary.
- 4.8 Students should be instructed to arrive at least 15 minutes before the exam starts, with their login details memorised or accessible. The exam should begin with staff using a passcode (displayed on the room's screens, communicated verbally, or handed to students) to synchronise the start. Time release is not recommended as students who are not present could access and complete the examination remotely without invigilation.
- 4.9 Late admittance: before a student who is late enters the examination room, they should confirm to the invigilator that they know their login details, meaning they should be able to sit at a computer and log in without disturbing others. As Digital examinations are individually timed, the student(s) should be notified of the time the examination will stop. The invigilator will need to instruct the student(s) to submit at the time the examination concludes for the other students.
- 4.10 The student may not leave the examination room, except in an emergency, within 30 minutes of the start, or less than 30 minutes before the end, of the examination, as Digital Exams are typically shorter. i.e., those that are an hour in length, students may not leave until the exam is completed.
- 4.11 Students (subject to prior verification and a suitable setting, i.e. provision of sockets) could 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) to support those who require specific software as per their RAP, or international students so that they can use their native keyboard. If this is the case, then they must have the LB downloaded in advance and bring a power cable so that the device remains powered throughout.
- 4.12 For examinations with two or more candidates, there should be a minimum of two invigilators present in each examination room. Where there are more than 80 candidates in an examination room, there should be one additional invigilator for every 40 additional candidates.

5. The Policy – Marking, Feedback and Reassessment

- 5.1 The Digital Examination should be marked in accordance with standard University Practices, with the following additional considerations:
 - 5.1.1 All subjective questions have agreed points for the allocation of marks.
 - 5.1.2 If partial credit is used for any question, this is specifically checked, and a single decimal point is entered if required.
 - 5.1.3 The question-marking tool (which enables every student's answer to be compared at once) is used to ensure consistency of marking practices across the cohort.

5.2 If a student would like feedback about their examination, they should book a tutorial with a member of the module teaching team. The examination should not be shared with students, as it is the University's property.

5.3 For the reassessment of a Digital Examination, the reassessment policy guidance needs to be followed.

6. Procedure for creating exams in the Learning Management System

6.1 An example of how to create a Digital Examination is appended below, all future iterations of this policy should refer to the training and guidance that will be available.

Appendix – Example procedure for creating exams using Blackboard Ultra Tests

1. In the respective learning module, click on **⊕ Create and Test**. Enter a title for the Test, which should include the words Formative or Summative Exam, **and** add your questions to your Test using the **⊕** icon. Add a text area above the questions with instructions for the students. Remember to add any hyperlinks to web domains that students are allowed to access to the instructions, or within the individual questions.

2. The settings for a self-marking question are as follows:
 - Allow partial credit where there is more than one answer.
 - Negative scoring is not permitted, so enter 0% for incorrect answers in the percentages field.
 - Extra credit is not permitted, so leave this unticked.
 - Enable automated feedback and enter correct and incorrect feedback into the text fields.
 - The default question score is 1 point per question. It is the tutor's responsibility to adjust this as necessary, depending on the complexity and depth of the question. Ensure the number of marks aligns with what is being asked.

The screenshot shows the 'Question 1' configuration page in Blackboard Ultra. The question text is 'A triathlon consists of the following events (Please select all that apply):'. The options are 'Bike', 'Swim', 'Kayak', 'Run', and 'SUP'. The percentages for 'Bike', 'Swim', and 'Run' are 33.33%, 33.33%, and 33.34% respectively, while 'Kayak' and 'SUP' are 0%. The 'Extra Credit' checkbox is unchecked, and the '1 point' score is set. The 'Automated Feedback' checkbox is checked, and the 'Available after submission' option is selected.

Options	Percentages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bike	33.33 %
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Swim	33.33 %
<input type="checkbox"/> Kayak	0 %
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Run	33.34 %
<input type="checkbox"/> SUP	0 %

3. The settings for a tutor-marked question are as follows:
 - Adjust the question points to reflect the complexity and depth of the question.
 - Enter an example of a correct response to assist tutors when marking and adding feedback. Ensure the points and the individual responses sought align.

Question 1 6 points ...

Explain the acronym DRCABC. Define each letter and explain what it means.

Students can use the editor to answer

Example of a correct response ^

The acronym DRCABC stands for Danger, Response, Catastrophic Bleed, Airway, Breathing and Circulation

D - Danger. Before approaching the casualty, ensure the scene is safe for you and the casualty.

R - Response. Check the casualty is responsive by gently tapping them and asking if they are ok.

C - Catastrophic Bleed. Check if the casualty is losing blood quickly from any bodily location.

A - Airway. Ensure the casualty's airway is open and clear.

B - Breathing. Check if the casualty is breathing

C - Circulation. Assess the casualty's circulation by checking for a pulse and normal colour in the skin

Assessment Settings

4. Under 'Details & Information', select **No due date**.

Mock Exam

Assessment Settings

Details & Information

Due date

Date

Time

☒ **No due date**

☐ **Prohibit late submissions**
In-progress attempts will be submitted automatically at the due date and time

☐ **Prohibit new attempts after due date**
Students can't start new attempts once the due date and time has passed

☐ **Allow class conversations**

5. In the 'Presentation Option' section, it is recommended to choose:
 - **Display one question at a time** (use the page option to display related questions)
 - **Randomise questions** (unless a specific order is required)
 - **Randomise answers** (if you have multiple choice questions with the answer that all are correct, you can still use this option as long as 'All of these answers' is used instead of 'all of the above').
6. If it is a formative exam, in the 'Formative Tools' section, tick the options:
 - **Formative assessment**
 - **Display formative label to students**

Marking & Submissions

Grade category

Test

Attempts allowed

Unlimited

Attempts to mark

Last attempt

Mark using

Points

Maximum points

9

You can't edit the maximum points for an assessment that contains individually scored questions

Anonymous marking

☐ Hide student names

You can't hide student names because automatic grade posting is turned on.

Evaluation options

☐ Delegated Marking


Assessment grade


☒ Post assessment grades automatically


7. Under the 'Marking & Submissions' section, select:
- Grade category – **Test**
 - Attempts allowed – **Unlimited**
 - Attempts to mark – **Last Attempt**
 - Mark Using – **Points**
 - Delegated Marking - **Unticked**
 - Post assessment grades automatically – **Ticked for formative (MCQs will be released, any other question type will need marking) and unticked for summative exams.**


Assessment results

Automated feedback, scores and answer availability conditions will apply after the student submission is visible.

 **Submission View**
Available after all grades have been posted

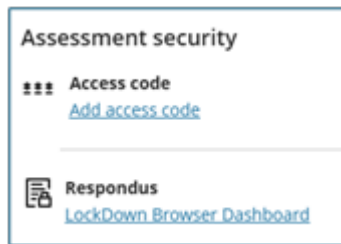
 **Automated Question Feedback**
Available after all grades have been posted

 **Question Scores**
Available after all grades have been posted

 **Correct Answers**
Available after all grades have been posted

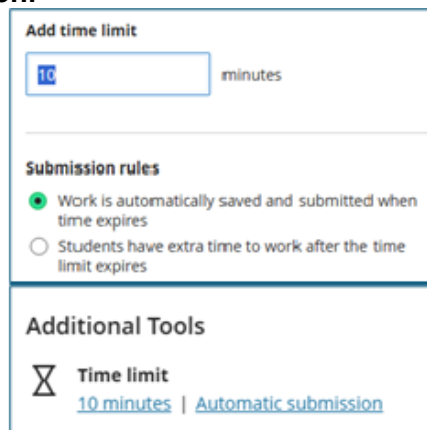
8. Under 'Assessment results' choose:
- Submission View – **Available after all grades have been posted.**

- Automated Question feedback - **Available after all grades have been posted.**
 - Question Scores - **Available after all grades have been posted.**
 - Correct Answers - **Available after all grades have been posted.**
9. Under 'Assessment security', click on **LockDown Browser Dashboard** and enable it.

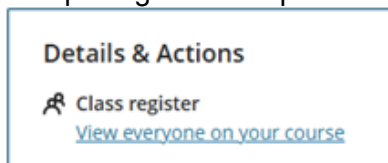


Enabling Respondus LockDown Browser will provide students with experience of using the software under real exam conditions. Once enabled, students will be prevented from opening any other program, browser or browser tab, and they will be locked into the Blackboard Test. Tutors can make exceptions to this, and web domains and a calculator can be added at their discretion. Assistive software for individual students will not be prevented from functioning as normal.

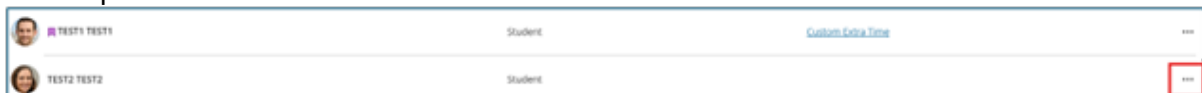
10. In the 'Additional Tools' section, add the exam **time limit (if applicable)** and set it for **Automatic submission**.



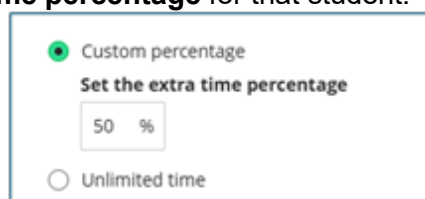
11. Time accommodations for individual students can be made in the 'Class Register' in 'Details & Actions' after completing the test options.



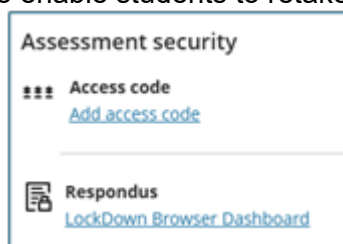
- Select the '3 dot' menu at the right-hand side of each student name you want to provide accommodations for.



- Then **Set the extra time percentage** for that student:



12. If you use the Access Code to control the initial release, please remove it once this has taken place to enable students to retake the test, if permitted.



Approval/Review Table

Item	Notes
Version Number	1.0
Date of Approval	27 th November 2025
Approved by	Academic Board
Effective from	19 th January 2026
Policy Officer	Darren Cooper
Department	Quality and Educational Development
Review date	January 2028
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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	n/a
Accessibility Checked	15 th December 2025

Recent changes

Committee	Date	Change