

Online learning

Q. Where will my online learning take place?

A. Many of you will already be familiar with learning online through using GCU Learn. This is our virtual learning environment using the Blackboard platform : [GCU Learn](#)

Q. How will I know when to ensure I am online?

A. Students should stick to the timetable they have been issued for Trimester B, this will ensure there are no module clashes. Module tutors will endeavour to use these slots to deliver teaching or facilitate a discussion forum or direct students learning etc Module tutors will also be able to respond to student questions in these slots or through the discussion board, by email or via other technologies.

Q. How will my tutor keep in touch and how will I get information about my module (s)?

A. The key ways that your lecturers will use GCU Learn to offer online learning will be through the module GCU Learn site. Here you can find:

- Announcements
- Module handbooks
- Learning materials
- Assignment guidance
- Discussion board and use of Collaborate Ultra

Check the module announcements every day. Your module team will post information and guidance here.

Q. How can I get information on how to use GCU Learn?

A. There are many resources to support you to learn online for those new to learning in this way. The key source of information on how to make the most of learning online is available to you by clicking on the Student Help tab when you log into GCU Learn.

Q. What if I can't engage with my modules over the remainder of the teaching period in trimester B?

A. Module teams are developing a 'catch-up' plan to support students who, for whatever reason, will be unable to engage over the next four weeks. These plans will be enacted when the University campus is open again. Information on 'catch up' will be provided by module teams and will be developed locally to meet programme and module specific needs.

Q. What is a discussion board?

A. A discussion board is an area where you can post your ideas and share these with others. You can post comments in response to others, and this creates an opportunity for discussion to take place.

Q. What is Collaborate Ultra?

A. Your lecturer may invite you to join an online group discussion, or to view a recorded version of a planned lecture. This will probably use Collaborate Ultra as the tool on GCU Learn. Collaborate Ultra works best using the Chrome browser, so download this if you do not already use this. If you are unfamiliar with Collaborate Ultra, full guidance is provided on the Student Help tab on GCU Learn. (Your lecturers may employ voiceovers to Powerpoint slides, so please ensure you have your device sound switched on.)

Q. I'm new to online learning, can you give me some practical tips to prepare myself?

1. Be patient: Your lecturers have been asked to make their teaching available to you online at the last minute. The best online learning takes time to develop. Please be patient with yourself and them if things don't go right for you the first time. Ask for help.
2. Embrace online: Online learning will become more and more common in the future, so this is a great chance for you to develop some skills to help you succeed.
3. Develop your communication skills: You will communicate in different ways on various online formats (email, discussion boards, social media, online seminars). Be professional and appropriate, but don't be afraid to project your personality.
4. What if I have a technical issue? Develop your initiative and resilience. Don't give up if you hit a technical issue. For example, if your reading link is broken, maybe you can search for the journal article yourself by using the GCU Library search.
5. Stick to a routine: There are many time-management techniques, so find one which works for you. There will likely be daily and weekly tasks for you to do, plus longer-term targets like deadlines. Plan a daily, weekly and monthly schedule to manage these different timescales.
6. Get connected: Be proactive with communicating with your course mates. Set up course Whatsapp groups or a Microsoft Teams group (or another platform if you prefer) for offline chatting and engagement. Form small virtual study or reading groups and work through online materials together.
7. Find somewhere quiet to work. Yes, you can work from bed but this might not be the most comfortable! Make sure you have somewhere peaceful to work, try to use a workspace such as a desk or table, and cut down on external and online distractions.
8. Use the right channels to solve your problems: This will be signposted for you in your course, so contacting the

correct person will help you get your problem solved more quickly.

9. Embrace discussion boards: If your GCULearn module has them, these are a great way to discuss with your peers and work through learning as a group. Ask questions, comment on your course mates' answers, and enter into dialogue.
- 10: Online learning communities can be as rich, supportive and exciting as on-campus learning. We hope you can adapt to this experience and benefit from it.

Above all "be kind to yourself" - now is an anxious time, take care of yourself and others. Thanks to @katesymons for these useful tips.

Assessment

Q. Should I plan to complete and submit coursework associated with the Trimester B modules?

- A. Yes, you should submit coursework assessments as per normal processes. Assessment will continue as planned except for formal examinations scheduled for the Tri B assessment period. If you have coursework due over the next few weeks, you should go ahead and submit it as normal through the usual channels. Please check GCULearn regularly for any assessment updates from your Module Leader.

Q. Will Trimester B formal examinations go ahead for Level 1 and 2 students?

- A. No, the University, in line with others in the sector, has decided to cancel all formal examinations for Level 1 and 2 students unless the examination is a requirement for registration with the Professional, Regulatory or Statutory Body (PRSB). If your Module team feels they can offer an alternative assessment that would meet the PRSB requirements, you will be asked to sit this alternative in the assessment period as planned. Where no alternative is acceptable to the PRSB, the examination will be scheduled for a period when the campus is re-open. You will be informed by your Module Leader as to whether or not their examination falls within the PRSB category and if an alternative or rescheduled current examination is being delivered.

Q. My Level 1 or 2 module only had one piece of assessment, which was a formal exam. How will I be assessed?

- A. Where a level 1 or 2 module is only assessed by a single formal exam, this will be replaced with an online alternative assessment (subject to conditions relating to the PRSB, as outlined above). Details will be provided by the Module Leader on GCULearn.

Q. I am a Level 1 or 2 student, with my formal exams now cancelled, will this stop me progressing to Level 2 or 3?

- A. If you have passed or pass the coursework element(s) of your module you will be given a pass/fail grade for the overall module and will be eligible to progress in the normal way. Module teams will consider whether or not additional learning sessions are required to ensure all learning outcomes have been met and will plan when these would be delivered in future years. Should you fail the module, you will be required to re-take the assessment as per normal practice.

Q. What if I'm a Level 3 student with a Level 2 formal exam resit scheduled for Trimester B?

- A. You will not be expected to retake this component as all Tri B formal examinations have been cancelled for Level 1 and 2 modules. Other forms of assessment will go ahead as planned, eg coursework. As with others taking a Level 1 or 2 module in Tri B, your overall module decision will be based on assessment components already considered and a pass/fail grade will be given.

Q. Will class tests continue to run?

- A. Your Module Leader may remove class tests, practical lab tests, etc, where it is not possible to run these assessments online. Please review the announcements page of your module on GCULearn for information on your module(s).

Q. Will the set assessment/submission deadlines for coursework currently due in be altered?

- A. Yes, recognising this unprecedented situation will create challenges for all students, all current coursework deadlines have been extended by one week. Some deadlines for assessments and online submissions may be subject to change. Please check each module on GCULearn regularly for further information on this.

Q. If I have to undertake an alternative assessment will the details relating to this include the time I have to complete it?

- A. Yes, your Module Leader will include details regarding the new assessment, duration and submission information in their assessment update to you in GCULearn.

Q. If I am ready, can I submit my coursework/assessment by the original deadline?

- A. Yes, your Module Tutors will have extended the submission timeframe to allow students to submit early, so please submit when you are ready.

Q. Although I recognise all students have been given a one-week extension, if I am struggling to meet the new assessment deadline, can I request an extension?

- A. Yes, in the normal way, please contact your Module Leader as early as possible to discuss your circumstances.

Assessments: Levels 3, 4 and Masters/ Taught Doctorate

Q. I am a Level 3, 4, Masters or Taught Doctorate student, will my assessments scheduled for the Trimester B assessment period go ahead?

- A. Yes, but formal centrally-timetabled examinations scheduled for this assessment period will not go ahead. Module teams are designing an alternative which can be undertaken while students and staff are off campus e.g. online examination, open book through GCULearn, coursework, etc. The time available to students to complete an individual assessment will be notified through each module on GCU Learn.

You will be required to complete the alternative assessment unless the centrally timetabled examination currently scheduled is a requirement for registration with the Professional, Regulatory or Statutory Body (PRSB).

Where this is the case, and no alternative is acceptable to the PRSB, the examination will be rescheduled for a period when the campus is re-open. Please check the announcements page of your module on GCU Learn, where you will be informed by the Module Leader regarding assessment requirements.

Q. I am scheduled to undertake lab-based assessments or practical examinations, will these go ahead?

A. No, face-to-face teaching has been suspended. Where a lab examination or practical, for example, is a programme requirement, these will be rescheduled for a period when the campus is re-open.

Q. Where do I find out details about the alternative assessment for my modules?

A. Each Module Leader will provide information via GCU Learn on the alternative assessment you are required to complete.

Q. How will I receive my alternative assessment and how do I submit it?

A. In the information provided by your Module Leader on GCU Learn they will explain whether your formal examination has been replaced by, for example an online examination, open book, report, coursework, etc. They will also include details of when this will be available to you, how long you have to complete it and how and when to submit it.

Q. When will my alternative assessment take place?

A. Recognising alternative assessments are, for many students, a new way of working, the University has decided to move the "Exam" diet period back by two weeks, to allow students more preparation time. The assessment period will now commence Monday, May 11. As stated above, your Module Leaders will provide details of dates regarding alternative assessment on GCU Learn.

Q. How long will I have to complete the alternative assessment?

A. Due to the exceptional circumstances, you will be given additional time to complete the alternative assessments. The assessment and completion time available will be provided for each of your modules on GCU Learn.

Q. What is an open-book examination?

A. An open-book exam is an assessment which allows you to refer to either class notes, textbooks, or other approved sources while answering questions. In some open-book exams, students are provided with the questions prior to sitting the exam and, in others, students can attempt the exam at home and submit their completed assessment online. If your assessment is open book, it is important to check the details for the module in GCU Learn, particularly the information given on the time you are allowed to complete it and the materials approved as sources.

Q. What if I am not able to complete the alternative assessment?

A. If you have particular circumstances which means that you are not able to complete an alternative assessment, please contact your Module Leader as soon as possible to inform them of your circumstances.

Dissertation projects: Level 4, Masters and Taught Doctorate

Q. How will I be supported to complete my dissertation?

A. Your supervisor will reach out to you to arrange the method by which you will continue to be supervised eg skype, telephone, etc.

Q. Should I submit my Honours Project/dissertation by the normal hand-in date?

A. Yes you should submit as planned (adjusting for the blanket 1 week extension) unless advised differently by your programme leader and Supervisor.

Q. I have not yet collected or completed my data for my dissertation, what should I do?

A. You should discuss this with your Supervisor, who will advise on a case-by-case basis, and to establish if there are any adjustments which can be made to your current assignment.

Assessment Feedback and Results

Q. When will I receive feedback for my coursework and other assessments?

A. While we will endeavour to stick to the three-week turnaround for coursework feedback, under these unique circumstances, this will be unlikely in some instances. As soon as Module Leaders are aware that the three-week timeline will not be met, students will be informed of this and when feedback will likely be provided.

Q. Will Progression and Award Boards still be held as per the academic calendar?

A. While it is hoped that we will be able to maintain the planned schedule for activities, including being able to hold Progression and Award Boards within the currently published calendar, these are under review and, should any changes be required, these will be notified to students.

Q. When will my formal results be communicated to me?

A. While unratified results will be returned to students as soon as the marking of their assignments has been completed, it is likely that, due to extensions to deadlines already stated, the current deadline of June 11 for communicating all formal results is unlikely to be met. Your patience and understanding is very much appreciated.

Q. Is the University looking at the Assessment Regulations to ensure students are not disadvantaged?

A. Yes, the University is constantly monitoring the assessment regulations to ensure students are not disadvantaged.

Mitigating Circumstances (“MITs”)

Q. The Coronavirus has meant that the University has had to deliver my studies online and offer alternative assessments, should I submit Mitigating Circumstances (MITs) in recognition of the potential impact this might have on my performance?

A. No, you will not have to submit MITs due to the general disruption that is being felt by everyone. Progression and Award Boards will be taking the extraordinary circumstances into account when considering marks and progression/award decisions and have the necessary academic judgement when considering final award levels and preserving attempts for any resubmissions required.

Q. I have other mitigating circumstances, how do I submit a request for these to be taken into account?

A. The University is in the final stages of introducing a streamlined online form for Mitigating Circumstances and details will be provided shortly. However, given the circumstances, no evidence will be required for those that submit MITs. Support in completing mitigating circumstances form is available from the [Advice Centre](#) in the Students' Association.

Q. Do I need to submit evidence along with my MITs form?

A. No, there will be no need to provide evidence for any MITs but we ask that you still provide details of the impact that any exceptional, serious, acute and unforeseen problem that has impacted your studies, as per the current MITs Policy.

Catch-up period

Q. What if I am unable to engage in my studies at home or if parts of my module cannot be delivered e.g. lab or practical classes, will there be a catch-up period when the University re-opens?

A. Yes, programme teams are planning what material should be delivered to students once the campus has re-opened. How and what will be included in the catch-up period will be decided locally and communicated to students by programme teams.

Placements

Q. If my placement is cancelled, what happens?

A. In the event of any placement being cancelled the University will review this requirement and assess where the placement is needed. Should placement work be essential to your course, an additional placement will be offered at a later date. Placement FAQs can be accessed via the [website](#)

Equipment

Q. I do not have access to a computer and or wifi outside the University.

A. If you have a mobile device, GCU Learn can be accessed this way.

Help

Q. What additional learning support is available to help me with learning online?

A. Services at the University will be operating remotely. You can still contact your programme/module leader and personal tutor. The following services are also available and can be accessed remotely;

- [Learning Development Centers](#)
- [The Library](#)
- [Academic Librarians](#)
- [The Disability Team](#)

Q. Will I still be able to contact my personal tutor for help?

A. Yes, you can contact your personal tutor through the channels you have agreed e.g. email, skype etc

Library

Q. Will I be able to access the library?

A. Although the Sir Alex Ferguson Library building will be closed, the library team will continue to provide support to students remotely. Should you be having difficulty accessing any resources online, please access the [library webpages](#) where there are self-help guides and or you can contact a member of staff to help with your enquiry.

Students with disabilities

Q. I have a disability and need additional support, how can I access this help?

A. [The Disability Team](#) is available remotely and can be accessed via the contact details online.

Students who need help

Q. Will I be able to access Student Support Services?

A. Our Student Support Services will be available to support you remotely. Information on how to contact these services can be found online:

- [The Student Funding Team](#)
- [The Careers Service](#)
- [The VISA Team](#)
- [The Disability Team](#)
- [The Counselling Team](#)

Q. I haven't accessed student services before, but what if I need to now?

A. If you have a generic student support query, please email studentsupport@gcu.ac.uk Otherwise you can access support through the links above.

Q. If I have a mentor currently, will I still be able to access this support?

A. Yes, your mentor will arrange with you how they will continue to support you.

Campus Access

Q. Will any of the campus be open?

- A. In light of the Prime Minister's announcement on March 23, the IT facilities that were available to students at the Learning Café on our Glasgow campus will be closed as of March 24 until further notice. This is the same for the facilities that were available to students at our GCU London Campus. Only essential staff will be allowed on campus."

International students

Q. I am a Tier International Student - where do I get advice regarding ensuring compliance with my visa?

- A. Specific advice and information is being provided direct to International students - however for all visa related queries, please contact the VISA team at visa@gcu.ac.uk

SA web chats

Q. If I feel isolated or down what can I do?

- A. Students' Association Online Activities- The Students' Association services are still available online, to find out how to get in contact please visit www.gcustudents.co.uk The Full Time Officers will also endeavour to host online activities twice a week for you to engage with. Please visit the GCU Students' Association Facebook page for more information.

Module content can't be delivered

Q. What will I do if my module or part of my module cannot be delivered online?

- A. The University will offer a catch-up period to all students who were unable study online once the campus has reopened.