Take Home Exams FAQs

**Updated**: April 7, 2020

**How do I receive my exams?**

All exams are posted by your instructor to CourseSpaces. For exams that are 2 days, 3 days, or 7 days in length, those will be posted at 1:00 pm. For the three first year exams that are 8 hours in length, those will be posted at 8:00 am.

**How do I submit my exams?**

Each exam will have clear instructions for submission. You must submit your exam as a Word document attachment to a member of staff via email. Remember to include your **codename** in the subject line of the email. Each exam will have a different staff member associated, so read the instructions to your exam carefully and double check before you submit.

**I am worried that my exam wasn’t received. How can I check?**

Staff is actively confirming receipts of all exams. If we do not receive your exam on time a staff member, most likely Yvonne Lawson will contact you.

If you have not received a confirmation from the staff member you sent your exam, make sure to follow up. In the event you do not receive a response you may contact Yvonne Lawson for inquiry.

Your email with the attachment in your sent mail will be the evidence that you sent your exam on time. If you don’t hear from Yvonne, you can rest assured we have your exam amongst the many that are received.

**I don’t have Word for Windows on my computer. Is that a problem?**

We need your exam as a word document. If you use another program, like Pages, that is fine. Email your exam. If we have any troubles opening it, we will be in touch.

**Can I delete my exam after it is sent?**

No. It will be important to keep your exam, without altering it in any way, in case there is any question about your exam in the future. Some of your professors will be marking your exams virtually, and you’re keeping a version of the exam you submitted will be a backup. But don’t worry if something happens, we also have the emailed version.
What do I do if I think there is an error on the exam?

If you find what you think is a factual mistake on the exam, please contact your professor immediately by email, with a copy to Associate Dean Calder or Yvonne Lawson. All exams are proof-read by a second faculty member so as to minimize the risk of mistakes. But on occasion there can be an error.

Your professors and the team in the front office are monitoring email throughout the exam period, and someone will get back to you as quickly as they can.

If there is a mistake on the exam a message will be sent to the whole class, most likely through CourseSpaces, so do check your email or your CourseSpaces site, during the exam.

If you don’t get an immediate response, don’t let it slow you down. Do what you can to move onto another question, or take a small break. The exam period for take home exams is 2 or 3 days to help us deal with these sorts of moments as well.

I am confused about a set of facts on the exam. Can I ask my professor about it?

You should feel welcome to contact your professor with any question during the exam. However, if the question is substantive, your professor is not likely to provide you with an answer. They are likely to say,

“That is a substantive question, I am sorry I can’t answer it. Make an assumption, state your assumption clearly, and carry on.”

That may feel frustrating, but it is the best advice.

But it is worth asking, just so you don’t tie yourself in a knot, and just in case there is a factual error on the exam. Your profs are amazing, but they are not perfect.

My exam has page restrictions, and they don’t seem long enough. What can I do?

Our take home advice is that the first thing you should do when you start your exam is make sure that you have formatted your pages correctly. Set the font, margins, and spacing. Then, as best you can, write your answer to the lengths given. It is really hard to edit down answers in a take home exam context.

No matter how tempting it may be, do not change the margins or the line spacing. Intentional formatting changes are issues of academic integrity.

Each exam will have either a page length restriction or a word count, and penalties for going over the length. These are maximums, and remember, they are the same for everyone.

Do I have to use the McGill Guide for citations on my take home exam?
Read the instructions carefully, if your professor needs you to do something (or conversely, not to do something) with respect to formatting, they will be clear. But a take home exam is still an exam, so ordinarily a cite in brackets (Oakes, para 23) will be good enough. Marks will not be added or deducted for issues of citation. But it is a take home exam so you do have a bit more control over how your exam reads. Spell check is your friend!

**I think I have forgotten to answer one of the questions after the exam, what do I do?**

Luckily, this is so unlikely to happen on a take home exam! You have lots of time to carefully read and re-read your exam, to make sure you have answered all the questions, to do the math on how many pages you should dedicate to each question, etc. The bonus of a take home exam is that you will never have to say, “I forgot to turn over the exam and answer question #3!”

However, if you have any concerns about your exam after you have submitted it. Do not make any changes to your exam, and contact Associate Dean Calder or Yvonne Lawson. Do not contact your professor.

**I have a deferred exam, and I know that the exam is up on CourseSpaces, but I want to access the site for notes. What do I do?**

You can access CourseSpaces during an exam, even if you have a deferral and have signed an undertaking. You are just not permitted to open the exam document. Logs on CourseSpaces enable us to track when exams are accessed.

**It looks like my exam is up early on CourseSpaces – what should I do?**

Mistakes happen, see above note about professors being awesome, but not perfect. We in the front office are doing are best to ensure that exams are posted at 1:00. If you see that an exam is available a few minutes early, you will not be penalized for your professor’s error. But we ask you, on your honour, to start the exam at the time set.

**Can I use my real name on the exam, instead of a code name?**

Again, read the instructions carefully. All exams in this exam period are under code name. It is tempting to identify yourself by writing a note to your professor at the end of an exam. This is really important. This is still an exam, even though you are writing it from home. So do your very best not to identify yourself.

Members of staff will check exams before they are made into PDF format and sent out to your professors, but the final check on the exam is yours.
During the exam I realize that I am missing a set of notes for one of the lectures. Can I reach out to a classmate for those notes?

There is to be no collaboration, whatsoever, with respect to the exam, during the time period that you have the exam. Unfortunately that means you can’t even contact a friend for notes, as asking for notes on a particular day is to signal that that day’s lecture is relevant to the exam.

That may seem harsh, but that is part of the take home exam process, to protect the integrity of the exam writing process. It just means that you have to be thinking a bit ahead to exams later in the exam period, and making sure that you have asked your questions, contacted your tutor, finalized your outline, reached out for missing notes, etc.

A friend contacts me about the exam during the exam, what do I do?

If a friend contacts you, just let them know that you can’t talk to them about the exam. Give them whatever reassurances are necessary that they are going to be fine. This is a tough time for everyone. This is not an academic integrity issue, and you don’t need to take any steps. Kindness and your own integrity should be the guide.

What if I learn that two students have worked together on an exam?

If you learn about an academic integrity issue during or after an exam, please contact Associate Dean Calder directly. She can talk it through with you, and your confidentiality will be protected.

The question I have about take home exam is not here, what do I do?

Send Jordan: lawaoa@uvic.ca Luke: lawsupport@uvic.ca Yvonne: lawmaass@uvic.ca or Associate Dean Calder lawassoc@uvic.ca a note and we will update this FAQ as need be.

April 7, 2020

You got this.