

REshaping Assessment Excellence: COVID-19 and the New Now at the University of Bath

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Context and Scope

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There are many changes in Higher Education as well, which are not going to be reversed: we look at one area: assessment, and in particular the written examination.

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Indeed, the final examination is a university institution that would appear to be off-limits as far as innovation is concerned. To put this into context, while faculty and students alike will not stray too far from a computer as they go about their daily business, it is still the norm for examinations to be conducted using pen and paper. Does this imply, therefore, that some element of modern learning theory might be sacrificed if it were abandoned in favour of some alternative instrument? Or, given it is still the most commonly administered summative assessment instrument in universities today, is there some other special intrinsic value attached to a closed-book, invigilated exam that justifies its continued use? [WW09]

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- January 2022** three-hour (still thought of as 2+1) examinations for all, but now fixed the start time.
- May 2022** Following very substantial pressure by the academics, the university allowed some **Trad-C** examinations in first-year subjects.
- Future** Some Trad-C, mostly Electronic-O, experiment with Electronic-O in an invigilated setting.

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Certain exams are more relevant in open-book, online format, but not all. [CS]

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[Wil22] also reports a worrying rise, but data come from an online proctoring company.

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- “I have an online Statistics Examination from 08:30 to 11:30 next Friday. Is anyone familiar with “Definition of continuous random variables (RVs), cumulative distribution functions (CDFs) and probability density functions (PDFs). ... [a screenshot of what was obviously a 1st/2nd-year syllabus]” please bid to help me.
[<https://www.freelancer.com/jobs/statistics/>].

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- **Stress** on students’ ethics — do we prepare them for this? We have seen nothing written on this.
- **Definition** of proper/improper online resources. We haven’t seen a good definition that will allow Wikipedia searches but not tools that write programs [FADB⁺22], say. JHD says “non-interactive Internet resources”: this hasn’t met a lawyer.

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- A5 How to measure? But see [JMW⁺14] “The assessment level incorporated into the course had a significant impact on students' conceptual understanding and final achievement scores” .



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