

Dear Student

TIPS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE UPCOMING JUNE 2022 EXAMS

The initial exam period (that is before supplementary exams) starts on 11 June 2022 and runs until 30 June 2022.

Set out below is guidance on approaching the upcoming exam that has been put together as a proposal for you to consider, rather than a set of rules that you have to comply with.

If you feel confident that you have all your academic studies and preparation for the exams under control, please **stick to what is working for you**. Nevertheless, we do recommend that you skim through the information below to see if there is anything that you can gain from this to improve your current study methods.

However, if you are feeling somewhat unsettled or unsure of how to go about preparing for the first semester exams, then the following information may be useful.

Rules for Examinations

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

It is expected of you to familiarise yourself well with regulations and rules for examinations. Ignorance concerning these regulations will not be accepted as an excuse for any transgressions.

NOTE: You should take note that, if found guilty of academic misconduct or non-compliance with these rules, you could, among other disciplinary measures, forfeit your credits for a module and/or be suspended from the University for a period that could range from one year to permanent suspension. Your student record will be blocked for the period of suspension and you will not be entitled to a certificate of good conduct from the University during this period. You should also take note that, if found guilty of academic misconduct, it may negatively influence your admission to other universities and/or registration with professional bodies/councils.

Follow the link for more information on the general rules:

<https://www.up.ac.za/yearbooks/2022/rules/document/general-academic-regulations-and-student-rules-2022>.

Therefore, ***Cheating is not an option!***

NB: Context of the exams

The upcoming June Exams and exam period cover all the work that you have done thus far in the first semester and in the case of year modules, during the year up to now. As an exception, lecturers may indicate that only part of the work would be examined and then you should obviously focus on only that. Consequently, this is **your last chance to master the work**. **NOTE: If you fail some first semester or year modules you may be prohibited from taking the follow-up modules in the second semester as you may not have met set module prerequisites.** See more guidance under the *Current Students* block on the EMS website or by following the link:

https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/5/ZP_Files/2022/ems-exclusion-criteria-updated-for-2022-general-regulations-final.zp219685.pdf. It is therefore imperative that you study all work diligently, understand the work and commit it to long-term memory.

Note that there two formats of examination will be used during the June 2022 exams; some will be **invigilated on-campus exams** and other **online exams**. The principles addressed below are generic, but since most modules will do online exams, we have firstly added tips for a successful online exam directly below.

Tips for a successful online exam

- Find a spot with a strong internet connection.
- Negotiate exam space and time with those around you.
- Charge all your devices to the fullest (you must do this) to ensure that you have backup power should electricity fail.
- Relate to the task that lies before you – you need to see the point of the exam.
- Cramming the night before and data dumping will not work on the day of the exam.
- Be familiar with your subject material. **Cheating is not an option**, given that the exam is unique and highly contextualised. Furthermore, if you cheat, you will be struggling and setting yourself up for failure in the following year – do the right thing, do not shoot yourself in the foot and do not set yourself up for failure! If lecturers detect that you were dishonest, you will be handed over for a disciplinary investigation and may face **expulsion or other sanctions, if found guilty**.
- Do not expect to have time during the exam to review your notes, re-read your textbook or discover new information pertaining to the paper, as these will be timed exams.
- Read the online exam instructions carefully, make sure you are familiar with those and execute them to the letter.

For more detailed information on exam guidelines, please **click** on a heading below. Alternatively you can scroll down to the next page;

1. Where do I start with my exam planning?

- 1.1 **Keep up to date with your work from today onward**
- 1.2 **Plot all your study time and exams on a monthly planning schedule from now until the last exam day**
- 1.3 **Allocate study time to these days for each of your modules**
- 1.4 **Be well-prepared for your exams and train yourself to concentrate for the duration of exam papers**
- 1.5 **Rank the topics to be examined and start studying at the one you struggle with most**
- 1.6 **Allocate the topics to days and study slots during those days**
- 1.7 **Master all your exam topics; don't ever spot**
- 1.8 **Avoid potential disruptions/social media during your studies**

2. Matters to consider during the exam preparation phase

- 2.1 **Be familiar with different types of possible questions that can be asked**
- 2.2 **Ensure that you understand and pay attention to direction key words**
- 2.3 **Consult on mistakes previously made during a test to ensure you do not repeat those in the exam**

3. Proposed time management in the exam paper

- 3.1 **Quickly review questions and note the mark allocation per question**
- 3.2 **Calculate the time allocated per question and stick to the time limit per question**

4. Attempting the exam

- 4.1 **Option 1: Start with Question 1 and proceed in a chronological order (most likely in online exams)**
- 4.2 **Option 2: Start with the questions you are most comfortable with**

1. Where do I start with my exam planning?

1.1 Make sure you **keep up to date with your work** from now until the last day of lectures, and in doing so, are up to date with and know everything covered up to the last day of lectures.

1.2 Plot all your exams on a **monthly planning schedule** and count all the open days between your exams from now, until the date of the last exam that you have to write.

1.3 Taking the total number of days determined in 1.2, **allocate these days to your modules** taking into account how much time you need to spend when studying for each module.

1.4 It is very important to be well-prepared for your exams and take them in your stride as far as this is humanly possible. It is similar to preparing for a marathon – you need to condition yourself to run the full distance. One part of this **preparation is to be able to comfortably concentrate for at least the duration of your longest exam paper**. To do this, we recommend that you add half an hour to the duration of your longest exam paper (find out how long it is from your lecturers) and then schedule at least one of your study blocks per day, to equate this time period. For example, if the duration of your longest exam paper is 2 hours, then you need to add 30 minutes to the 2 hours to calculate the duration of the ideal study block – in this case this will amount to 2,5 hours. Using this principle, at least one but preferably more, of your study blocks on every day should be equal to 2,5 hours. If you are not used to studying for this long in one go, gradually build yourself up to this point by adding 30 minutes to the length of your current study block(s) every three/four days, and increasing the length of your study block(s) gradually until you achieve the newly targeted study block duration. The idea is this: *Adding 30 minutes to the duration of your longest exam paper to determine the time of your study ideal block, prepares you to be so fit, that by the end of your “normal” exam time you are still going strong.*

1.5 **Rank the topics** that will be covered in the exams in each module from those that you know the least (struggle with the most), to those that you have mastered completely.

1.6 Commence by **allocating the topics** identified in 1.5 to the days available to study as determined in 1.3. Start by allocating the topics that you do not grasp **FIRST** and then proceed towards those topics that you have under control completely. If you run out of study time and have not covered those that you have mastered earlier, there should be no harm done.

1.7 Never walk into an exam hall/ log onto your computer to write an exam, knowing that you have not mastered any topic at all. **You need to have at least a 50% level of knowledge of each and every topic** when you attempt an exam. Should you not have mastered a specific topic by the time you write the exam, this will put you under severe stress and

you really do not need this in the exams. Should your nightmare topic be asked, you may become so stressed that you even forget the topics that you do know. This called managing or reducing exam risk and is a very important point.

1.8 Avoid potential disruptions whilst studying, **by switching off your cell phone, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and any other forms of social media**. You should check urgent messages only during your breaks between study blocks.

#Tip: *You might need to spend more hours than recommended/planned mastering topics you find challenging!*

2. Matters to consider during the exam preparation phase

2.1 Make sure that you are **familiar with different types of questions** that can be asked and be prepared in terms of how to answer the different types of questions (i.e. multiple choice questions (MCQs/objective assessments), short questions, long questions, case study questions, fill-in-the-missing-word, true or false, calculation questions, etc.). Not being prepared for different types of questions may cause confusion or panic during the exam. To be safe, you can test yourself on each different type of question.

2.2 Ensure that you understand and **pay attention to direction key words** (e.g. list, identify, illustrate, calculate, etc.) before the exam so that you know how to answer the question. These may appear in your study or learners' guide. Doing this may help you with creating a specific structure on how to answer the questions.

2.3 Practise answering Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) by using a process of elimination if you are not 100% sure of the answer. Eliminate options one by one to eventually select the correct one.

2.4 **Consult** with your tutor or lecturer **on mistakes previously made** during class tests/ semester tests to ensure that you do not to repeat the same mistakes in the exam.

#Tip: *Lectures often modify questions in the exam to determine if you have a good understanding of the module material or merely memorised it parrot fashion – read questions thoroughly!*

3. Proposed time management in the exam paper

Review how many questions there are and determine how much time you should spend on each question;

3.1 **Calculate how much time is allowed per mark**. For example, if you have a 2-hour paper (120 minutes) and it counts 120 marks, it means that you have 1 minute per mark to answer the question. Of course, this may differ from one module to the next, so be careful that you know exactly what is appropriate for each module.

and

3.2 **Stick to the time limit** of each question. Do not overrun on any question! If you overrun on one question you may be utilizing the first 50% of the time of the next question, and that is where you could have earned the most marks.

3.3 **Do not over answer questions/dump everything**. Be concise, accurate and yet thorough. This will make it possible for you to complete the exam on time and probably score a higher mark.

#Tip: *Allow enough time for more difficult questions that are weighted heavily!*

4. Attempting the exam

Exams can be attempted in a number of ways, and set out below are two of the most popular ways:

4.1 **Option 1: It is probably safer to start with Question 1 and do the questions in the exam paper in chronological order**. Unless you are allowed to choose which questions you would like to answer and don't have to answer them all, you have to answer all the questions anyway. For example, if you have five questions in the paper and you have to do them all, you start with Question 1, then 2, 3, 4, and finally 5. If you really get stuck on a question (say Question 3) and cannot answer it, we advise that you read through the question carefully and then skip it and continue with your other questions (in this instance Question 4 and 5) - but still keeping to the original time allocation per question (refer to section 4). Once you have completed all questions other than Question 3, you then return to Question 3 (the question you could not address in the first place) and attempt it now. [Be careful here, in a fully online exam you may not be able to go back to a question] You will, in all probability be able to recall something by now as your sub-conscious mind has been working on the problem without you even knowing about it. **DON'T EVER** hand in a **blank answer sheet or script or leave out questions in their entirety in an online or other assessment (unless you are permitted to**

choose which question you want to do as part of the exam instructions), as you will then definitely receive no marks for the question as there is nothing to mark.

4.2 **Option 2: Read through the entire paper (NOTE: this may not be possible in some online exams) and (if possible) rank the questions** from those containing the topics you are most comfortable with, to those that you are the least comfortable with. Start with the questions you are most comfortable with and do those questions first. For example, if a paper has three questions and Question 3 is the easiest, Question 2 is the most difficult and Question 1 is fairly reasonable. You would then commence with Question 3, proceed to Question 1 and lastly do Question 2. **DON'T EVER** hand in a **blank answer sheet or script/ book or leave out questions in their entirety in an online assessment (unless you are permitted to choose which question you want to do as part of the exam instructions)**, as you will then definitely receive no marks for the question as there is nothing to mark. We are wary of this approach, since if you miscalculate and the easiest question according to you, turns out to be the most difficult one, this could really throw you!

We do hope this will assist you in preparing for your June examinations and wish you the best of luck in the exams! Your goal should always be to finish your degree in minimum time (3 years) and this exam is a crucial step in achieving this worthwhile goal and all its associated benefits and rewards.

Best wishes for the exams and make the most of it – you can do it!

Regards

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