

Exams Guide

This information is for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students.

Getting ready for exams

Before your exams take time to think about the following:

- **Extra time:** If you need extra time or support because of a disability or learning difficulty speak to the Disability Advisory Service (DAS): <https://www.reading.ac.uk/do/disability-information-landing.aspx>
- **Location, date & time:** Make sure you know where your exams are being held and when they are happening, if you're not sure when or where your exams are, make sure to contact the Exams Office by calling +44 (0)118 378 3804 or emailing examinations@reading.ac.uk
- **Exam rules:** Check the exam rules and make sure you're not taking any unauthorised items into the exam room. Unauthorised items might include books, memoranda, notes, mobile phones, smart watches, headphones, ear pieces or any other electronic devices that you can use to send, receive or look up information.
- **Problems:** If you think there is anything affecting your performance (e.g. physical health, mental health, and bereavement, personal or family circumstances) it's very important that you submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) as soon as possible. You can find the form you will need to fill in and the deadlines for submission here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/student/exa-circumstances.aspx>

Study space

From April 2017 to Autumn 2019 the Library Refurbishment Project is taking place on Whiteknights campus. Printed materials are still available to borrow from the Library building (open 09:00-22:00 Mon-Sun), however there is alternative study space available in the following locations on [Whiteknights campus](#):

- **URS Building** near the Library (open 24 hours Mon-Fri, until 21:00 on Sat & from 08:30 on Sun)
- **The Study** at the back of the Students' Union building (open 24 hours Mon-Fri)
- **The Study @ TOB2** near Bridges Hall (open 24 hours Mon-Sun)
- **Eat at the Square** near the Students' Union building (open 15:00-18:00 Mon-Fri)
- **Chancellor's Building** near the bus stop (open 18:00-21:00 Mon-Fri)

There is also study space available in the following locations on the [London Road campus](#):

- **The Learning Hub** (open 08:30-17:00 Mon-Tues & Thurs-Fri, & 09:00-17:00 Wed)
- **The Dairy, Student Common Room, Art & Lecture Theatre & Teaching Space buildings**

Further information about the study spaces available across campus and a **study space map** can be found here: http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/_study/study-space.aspx

Revision tips

Feeling confident about how to prepare for your exams will make the exam itself a less daunting experience. With much to cover in a short time, it's essential to think carefully about how, when and what to revise. Here are some tips to help you revise successfully for your exams:

- Create a **revision schedule** with set times and targets for revision and short-term rewards to aim for (coffee break, chat with friend, gym session, videogame, cake)
- Try not to spend a whole day focusing on the same module, instead work in **blocks of 2-3 hours** with minibreaks before switching to a different module

- Make your notes **memorable** by use subheadings, bullet points, colours, spider diagrams, graphs, etc.
- Go through **past exam papers and mark schemes** to understand what the examiner is looking for
- After you have revised a topic, **test yourself** by writing down the key areas you have covered in the topic without looking at your notes (try doing this the next day too!)
- When you get closer to exam time, work out how much time you'll have in the exam for each answer and **practise writing timed answers** by hand

Want more guidance on revision techniques and exam preparation? The [University's Study Advice Team](#) can provide you with expert guidance on preparing for exams and help you to achieve better marks. You can drop-in to see a [Study Advisor](#) by visiting Room G18 on the ground floor of the URS building (12:00-16:00 Mon-Fri).

You can also email studyadvice@reading.ac.uk, telephone + 44 (0)118 378 4242 and check out the [Study Advice Team's](#) online resources which includes a specific [Online Study Guide for Preparing for Exams](#) (<https://www.reading.ac.uk/library/study-advice/guides/lib-sa-guides.aspx>)

Stress & relaxation

Adrenaline and pressure can have a positive effect on some, while others find themselves overwhelmed. If stress gets the better of you then performance in exams, assignments, happiness and your health can suffer. High levels of stress can cause headaches, racing heart, irritability and sleeping problems. Here are some tips to help you relax during exams:

- Practise breathing deeply and slowly
- Listen to relaxing music
- Take small breaks from studying
- Make time to exercise and socialise
- Sleep! It's hard to concentrate and maintain perspective if you're tired
- Try to keep studying and sleep separate so don't revise on or in bed

Keeping active

Getting active is a great stress-buster: a little exercise can make a huge difference to your mood. It doesn't have to be a two-hour gym session or a seven-mile run. Here are a few suggestions:

- Running and dancing can help your body to release endorphins that make you feel good
- Yoga can strengthen your body's natural relaxation response
- Martial arts are a great way to release energy, frustration and tension
- Team sports are brilliant for exercise, releasing endorphins and socialising
- Swimming allows you to focus on your breathing and can reduce stress
- Walking can help you to clear your mind and feel re-energised

Eating healthily

What you eat and drink can influence both your physical and mental performance. To boost memory, mood and concentration in the run up to exams try some of these:

- **Oily fish:** good for brain function, the heart, joints & general wellbeing.
- **Blueberries:** powerful anti-stress food, can improve memory & learning ability.
- **Porridge:** packed with fibre to sustain you throughout the morning.
- **Bananas:** powerful energy booster, also shown to improve your mood.
- **Seeds:** pumpkin and sunflower seeds contain a rich mix of protein, omega fatty acids and B vitamins.
- **Water:** stay hydrated to avoid dizziness, fatigue and poor concentration.
- **Wholegrain foods:** boost your concentration and help keep you mentally alert.

Who can help?

If things don't go so well, or you have problems on the day, don't panic! Advice and support is available, no matter what the problem.

RUSU Advice Service	<p>Drop-in by visiting RUSU main reception, 11:00-13:30 Mon-Tues & Thurs-Fri, & 14:00-16:30 Wed</p> <p>Email advice@rusu.co.uk or telephone +44 (0)118 378 4100</p> <p>Online advice request form https://www.rusu.co.uk/advice/advice_request_form/</p>
Counselling & Wellbeing Service	<p>Visit Room 106 on the first floor of the Carrington building for more info and to register for an appointment, 10:00-12:00 & 13:00-15:00 Mon-Fri</p> <p>Email counselling@reading.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)118 378 4216</p> <p>Online resources https://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/_support-and-wellbeing/counselling-and-wellbeing.aspx</p>
The Chaplaincy	<p>Visit the Chaplaincy Centre near the library, 08:30-17:30 Mon-Fri</p> <p>Email chaplaincy@reading.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)118 378 8797</p> <p>Online resources https://www.reading.ac.uk/chaplaincy/</p>
Study Advice	<p>Drop-in by visiting Room G18 on the ground floor of the URS building, 12:00-16:00 Mon-Fri</p> <p>Email studyadvice@reading.ac.uk or telephone + 44 (0)118 378 4242</p> <p>Online resources https://www.reading.ac.uk/library/study-advice/guides/lib-sa-guides.aspx</p>
Disability Advisory Service	<p>Drop-in by visiting Room G02 on the ground floor of the Carrington building</p> <p>Email disability@reading.ac.uk or telephone +44(0)118 378 4202</p> <p>Online resources http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/_support-and-wellbeing/disability.aspx</p>

RUSU Advice

If you would like further advice or to speak with somebody in person then a RUSU Adviser may be able to help. The specialist Advisers offer a confidential service, independent from the University so they can discuss your case with you in private.

Contact us by email at advice@rusu.co.uk, or visit us in the RUSU building.

You can book an appointment or attend a drop-in session. Drop in runs on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday (11:00 - 13.30) and Wednesday (14:00 -16.30).