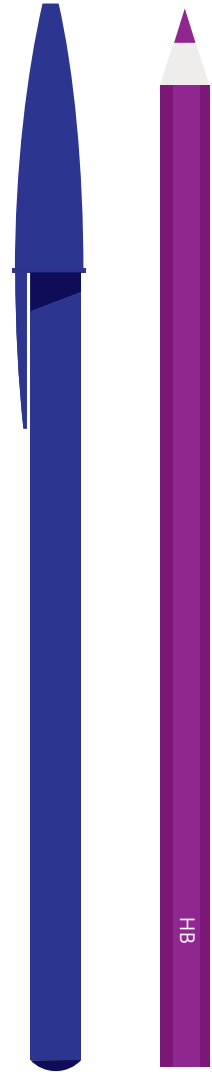
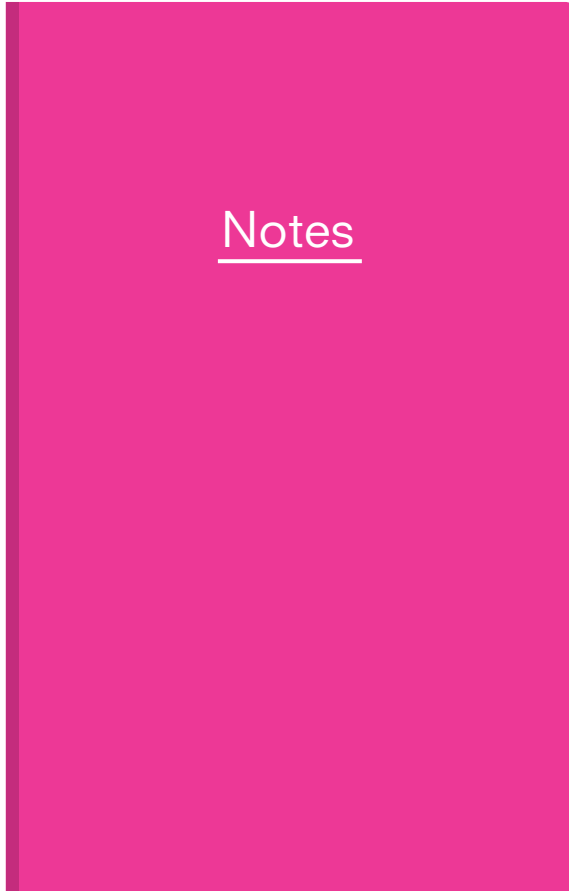


Exams



SS&D
Student Support
and Development

A Step by Step Guide
to Getting the Results
You Want



8 Steps

- 1 Study Preparation
(How to be organised)
- 2 How to Study Effectively
- 3 Sample Study Timetable
- 4 Exam Preparation
(What you need to know)
- 5 Exam Checklist
(Rules & Regulations for Exams)
- 6 Exam Performance
(How to perform at your best)
- 7 Healthy Body = Healthy Mind
- 8 After the Exams
(What next?)



1

Study Preparation

Checklist before you sit down to study.
Tick each box to help you get organised
and create an effective study plan

Materials

- I have gathered all lecture notes and my own notes from Weeks 1-12 for all subjects
- I have lecture notes in week order in a folder with tabbed sections to separate each subject
- I have past and sample exam papers to help revision
- I have enough books bought/on loan and photocopied/printed pages from books/journals/articles to supplement lecture notes
- I have printed extra information and statistics from the Internet in topic areas I know are coming up in the exam
- I have my exam timetable and know in what order the exams take place
- I have enough pens, paper and material for studying for the exams

Study

- I have a comfortable area to study with a desk that is quiet, well lit and with a power point, e.g. bedroom, library, etc... I have my mobile phone powered off
- I have an accessible study area available for early morning and late evening study sessions
- I have a study area that is well lit, well ventilated and comfortable temperature
- I have my study timetable set out for study sessions prior to and during the exam period
- I have factored in extracurricular activities and rest time into my study timetable
- I have enough food stocked in the house to eat healthily each day during the study period
- I have internet access for research during study periods

2

How to study effectively



To get the grades that you want, you must be willing to accept that you have work to do. Prior to the exams, you will have 1–2 weeks (BEd students – please see academic calendar) of no lectures. This period should focus on structured studying. When the exams start, you can then use the days in between exams to revise and catch up on all key facts. This way you are less likely to panic. If you have done the work, all you can do is go into the exam and do your best. Remember to focus on your goal and to think positively.

Key Points to Studying Effectively

Time – Set up a study timetable for the study period prior to the exams (see step three). Remember to allocate time for recreational activity – this allows a certain amount of leeway in your day so that if you ‘run over’, you have some time to play with. This also reduces the feelings of guilt or frustration when you do take time out – as you have factored it in.

Energy – Notice when you have the most energy during the day and schedule study time for those periods. Some people are more alert early in the day and others in the evening or late at night.

Management – Break down the study schedule into exams to be taken, number of topics to be studied for each subject and the number of hours given to each subject, each day.

SMART Goals – Goal set for each session, day and for each week of study, keep them SMART (specific, measurable, action, realistic, time). This keeps your focus in the here and now.

Research – Allow time for searching the internet for extra facts and figures that will help you answer exam questions more effectively. Up-to-date statistics and figures help bring more depth to your answers.

Learning Style – Know what type of learner you are – Take the VARK Questionnaire to see what your learning style is and use this information to study effectively. Go to www4.dcu.ie/studentlearning/assess-learning-style.shtml

Sample Study Timetable



Monday

9.00am – 10.30am	Session 1
10.30am – 11.00am	Break
11.00am – 12 noon	Session 2
12noon – 1.00pm	Session 3
1.00pm – 2.00pm	Lunch
2.00pm – 3.30pm	Session 4
3.30pm – 3.45pm	Break
3.45pm – 5.15pm	Session 5
	Evening Free

Total Hours 6.5

Thursday

Morning	Lie-In
12noon – 1.30pm	Session 1
1.30pm – 1.45pm	Break
1.45pm – 3.15pm	Session 2
3.15pm – 4.00pm	Break
4.00pm – 5.30pm	Session 3
5.30pm – 6.30pm	Dinner
6.30pm – 8.00pm	Session 4

Total Hours 6

Tuesday

Morning	Lie-In
12noon – 1.30pm	Session 1
1.30pm – 1.45pm	Break
1.45pm – 3.15pm	Session 2
3.15pm – 4.00pm	Break
4.00pm – 5.30pm	Session 3
5.30pm – 6.30pm	Dinner
6.30pm – 8.00pm	Session 4
	Evening Free

Total Hours 6.0

Friday

9.00am – 10.30am	Session 1
10.30am – 11.00am	Break
11.00am – 12noon	Session 2
12noon – 1.00pm	Session 3
1.00pm – 2.00pm	Lunch
2.00pm – 3.30pm	Session 4
3.30pm – 3.45pm	Break
3.45pm – 5.15pm	Session 5
	Evening Free

Total Hours 6.5

Wednesday

9.00am – 10.30am	Session 1
10.30am – 10.45am	Break
10.45am – 12.15pm	Session 2
12.15pm – 1.00pm	Lunch
1.00pm – 2.00pm	Session 3
2.00pm – 3.00pm	Session 4
3.00pm – 3.30pm	Break
3.30pm – 5.00pm	Session 5
	Evening Free

Total Hours 6.5

Saturday

9.30am – 10.30am	Session 1
10.30am – 10.45am	Break
10.45am – 12.15pm	Session 2
12.15pm – 1.00pm	Session 3
1.00pm – 2.00pm	Lunch
2.00pm – 3.00pm	Session 4
3.00pm – 3.30pm	Break
3.30pm – 5.00pm	Session 5
	Evening Free

Total Hours 4

Key Points

- Sessions are broken down to 2 x 1 hour sessions or 1 x 1 1/2 hour sessions. The brain needs to keep fresh so if you are doing a 2 hour session – change the subject you are studying half way through.
- If you play sport or are planning a night out – allow for a sleep-in the next morning.. It is okay to have a social life and getting out is a good balance.
- Make sure you take at least one day off. It is also good to analyse your work to make sure you are on top of everything.
- You need study time and free time to have a healthy balance!



4

Exam Preparation



Your hard study is now complete and you are on the last stretch of the road. Here are important tips to prepare for the exams

Exam Timetable – Make sure you know what rooms your exams are in and what time they start. Also make sure you know what CAMPUS you will be on!

Materials – Do you have enough pens, pencils, a watch, calculator, ruler, glasses, student card?

Food for Energy – Have a balanced breakfast or lunch before the exam. A meal with lots of carbohydrates and proteins will give the body enough energy to get through the exam, e.g. breakfast with eggs, meats, toast, etc. or a chicken and pasta lunch.

Last minute revision – It may help to use blank cards for writing your key notes to help with last minute revision. Some students prefer to switch off before an exam and leave the notes at home.

Nervous? – Yes, this is normal – it is adrenalin moving around the body – use this energy to motivate yourself to do well. Focus on positive thoughts to help relax your body and mind.

If you are worried about anything – talk to your lecturer, Chairperson, family or friends. Student Support Advisers are also available Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm if you have any concerns and you wish to talk.



5

Exam Checklist

1 – Check your examination timetable on your portal page and DCU website prior to starting your examinations to ensure that you are certain of all dates, times and venues. At the start of the examination you will receive an answer booklet. You will be required to enter your student ID number on a sealed flap on the answer booklet and you are then required to seal the flap securely. Your examination number, your seat number and the first four digits of your portal page password (as received at registration) must be written accurately and legibly, on the front of the answer booklet in the spaces provided. Be sure to take note of your six digit anonymous marking examination number which you will need for all examinations. This can be found at the top of your exam timetable which is available on your portal page. The examination numbers are also available outside the exam centre.

2 – Ensure you are familiar with the University's Examination Regulations. They can be found at www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/regulations.shtml

3 – You are required to bring your current student identification card to all examinations.

4 – Reference your seat number outside the exam centre before entering the room. (You are NOT required to sign the list displayed outside the venue.) You will receive a different seat number for each exam. Please ensure that you sit in the correct seat.

5 – Some items not permitted in the examination centres are: Mobile phones / text storing or programmable calculators / notes or books of any kind (unless expressly approved) / pencil cases / paper, log tables, statistic tables, graph paper, formula (all supplied by the invigilator) / food and drink.

6 – When you receive the examination paper, check it to ensure that you have been given the correct one.

7 – Ensure that all of the details are completed on the front of your answer booklet before returning it to the invigilator.

8 – If you have any queries during the examination, if you have forgotten an item of stationery or are feeling unwell, you can discuss these issues with one of the invigilators. Source: www.dcu.ie/registry/examinations/regulations.shtml

Healthy
Body =
Healthy
Mind

6

Exam Performance



“You may now turn over your papers” – What next?

Write your details, as requested, on all answer sheets.

Read the exam paper a couple of times to make sure you understand the instructions and questions. Do not dive into writing without first reading the entire paper.

Calculate how much time you will give to each question and stick to it.

If you have rough work done at the back of the answer sheet – note it near your answer so that the examiner can see it.



Solutions if things go wrong!

Panic – Take three deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth. This will slow the heart down and reduce panic.

Going Blank – As above, breathe deeply for a few moments and then write down key words on the exam paper to help jog your memory or try to remember the day you studied this topic and see if this helps.

Emergency – If you have been ill during term or during the exam or an event took place that greatly affected your performance, you can submit an ‘Extenuating Circumstances’ form signed by your Chairperson to the Registry. Please check the academic calendar for the deadline for submission. If you are unsure what to do, contact Registry on the Glasnevin Campus at 01 700 5338 or a Student Adviser at 01 700 7165.

Extenuating Circumstance Form http://www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml

Academic Calendar www.dcu.ie/timetables/index.shtml

7

Healthy Body = Healthy Mind



You need energy for the body and for the mind when you are studying and during the exams. Here are a few tips to ace the exams.

Power Food – Smart foods include ‘Omega-3 Fatty Acids’ such as tuna, salmon, eggs and bananas, as they release energy slowly – and iron-rich foods including red meat, breakfast cereal and green vegetables.

Water – The more hydrated you are, the more efficient your brain and body will work. Keep a bottle of water at your study table at all times.

Exercise – During your study break, get out and play football for 30 minutes or go for a 30 minute walk/run with friends. During study you can also keep your head, neck and shoulder muscles relaxed. Simple exercises include: 1. Gently roll the neck clockwise whilst breathing in and out slowly and then anti-clockwise (5 times). 2. Put hands on your lap whilst sitting in a chair. Pull your shoulders up, breath in and squeeze muscles. Exhale forcefully and let the shoulders drop.

Relax – Try mindfulness meditation which has been proven to help relax the body and mind. www.dcu.ie/students/counselling/mindfulness-podcasts.shtml for more details and podcasts to listen at home.

Sample Smart Food Plan for the Exams

Breakfast

Wholegrain cereal with milk, fresh orange juice or

Bowl of porridge with sultanas or

Wholemeal toast with chopped banana or

Full Breakfast with sausages, bacon, egg and toast (Grilled)

If you are too nervous to eat a full breakfast, blend a banana, apple, pear, cranberry juice and yogurt to make a smoothie

Lunch

Vegetable soup with wholemeal scone/bread or

Chicken/ham/egg sandwich or

Chicken and pasta meal with a sauce

Tuna/pasta salad with wholemeal bread

2 glasses of water

More information about balancing your diet from the SS&D Booklet ‘Nutrition at University’, is available in the Student Advice Centre, Glasnevin Campus or at www.dcu.ie/students/advice/resources/health_wellbeing.shtml

8

After the Exams

Unexpected Absence from Exam

Sometimes, due to unforeseen circumstances, a student may not be able to present him/herself for examination on the day. In this unfortunate event, don’t worry – here’s what to do:

Contact your Chairperson by email/telephone (leave a message if necessary) as soon as possible to explain your absence and fill out the ‘Extenuating Circumstances form which can be downloaded at www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml Please note the date for submission on the form.

Extenuating Circumstances

Should you feel that difficult circumstances beyond your control should be taken into consideration when the Progression & Awards Board is reviewing your grades, the Chairperson of your programme should be made aware of this. These circumstances could include illness, accident, bereavement or other personal issues. The only official mechanism to do this is to fill out an extenuating circumstances form, which can be found on the Registry website at www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml

Consultation Days

Make sure to book an appointment (via email / telephone or in person) with your lecturers to get feedback on exams and/or assignments during the official Consultation Days (see Academic Calendar for confirmation of dates www.dcu.ie/timetables/index.shtml)

During this period, your lecturer will be happy to discuss your performance in the exam/assignment and provide important feedback – especially if you are disappointed with your results.

Word of Advice

Academic Integrity

Each year a handful of ill-advised students find themselves in a situation that they feel unprepared for the exams or assignments. Some students chance a few notes on the hand, in the jacket pocket or perhaps a few chunks from somebody else's essay. They feel that this might give them that additional edge that they need to get through a particularly difficult subject. Being a member of the Disciplinary Committee of the University gives me the unfortunate duty of having to deal with students who are found to fall for the fallacy that this is the right thing to do and that the 'risk' is worth it.

In order to uphold the academic integrity of the University – and the validity of and respect for a DCU degree, the University takes this major offence extremely seriously. Students will be penalised and will put their entire degree in jeopardy.

Take it from somebody who has seen the distraught students sitting in front of the Committee, suddenly realising this was the wrong thing to do – don't even contemplate it. Speak to your lecturer or to me directly if you are really feeling unprepared... there are always better ways of solving this problem.

Dr. Claire Bohan
Director of Student Support & Development

Useful Contacts

Absent from Exams/Deferral of Exams

**Registry
Glasnevin
Campus** www.dcu.ie/registry/current.shtml
T (01) 700 5338
E registry@dcu.ie

**Registry
St. Patrick's
Campus** T (01) 884 2242
E registry@dcu.ie

Out of Hours Contact (Security)

**Glasnevin
St. Patrick's** T (01) 700 5999
T (01) 884 2299

Other Contacts

**Student
Support
Services** www.dcu.ie/students/index.shtml
T (01) 700 7165

Health Centre www.dcu.ie/students/health
T (01) 700 5143

**Past
Examination
Papers** www.library.dcu.ie/index.shtml

**Glasnevin
Library** www.dcu.ie/library

**St Patrick's
Drumcondra
Library**

Produced By Student Support & Development
Ground Floor,
Henry Grattan Building
Dublin City University
Dublin 9
T (01) 700 7165
E student.support@dcu.ie
W www.dcu.ie/students

Opening Hours

Morning
9.30am to 12.30pm
Afternoon
2.00pm to 5.00pm

Monday - Thursday
9.00am - 1.00pm
& 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Friday
9.00am - 1.00pm
& 2.00pm - 4.30pm

Opening Hours

Glasnevin Library
Monday - Thursday
8.30am - 10.00pm

Friday
8.30am - 9.00pm

Saturday
9.30am - 5.00pm
(Service Desk closes at 4.30pm)

Sunday
10.00am - 5.00pm (Study Only)

St Patrick's Library

Monday - Friday
9.00am - 5.00pm

Saturday & Sunday
Closed

SS&D Student Support and Development

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Spirituality

Log on www.dcu.ie/students
Write student.support@dcu.ie
Call (01) 700 7165
Drop in Student Advice Centre