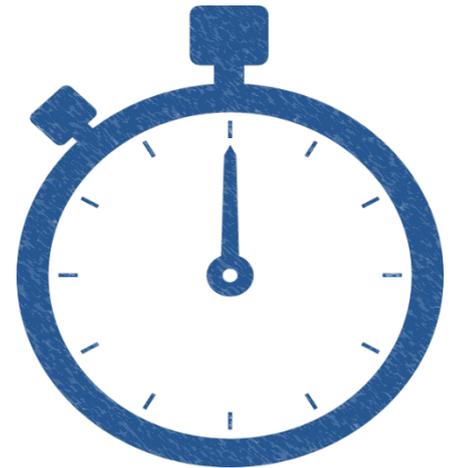




Practical Tips for Exam Questions



Practical tips for addressing multiple-choice questions (MCQs):

1. When approaching each question, identify and eliminate answers that are incorrect.
2. Review the answer options remaining – can you identify the correct answer? If so, select this. If not, note what you determine to be possible answers and return to this question later.
3. Proceed to the next question and repeat the process (1 and 2).
4. Once you reach the end of the MCQs, use the time remaining to return to any unanswered questions. Try using the process of elimination once more and identify your best answer.

Tips for dealing with numerical questions:

- **Read the problem carefully.** Take some time to determine the requirements of the question before answering it.
- **Analyse what kind of problem it is.** Which approach is applicable? In formula-based questions, a favourite trick of examiners is to make you rearrange a familiar equation before you can work out the answer. Another is to make you use two or more equations in series.
- **Decide on the format and units in which to present the answer.** NB – This may be suggested or made clear in the question.
- If a problem appears complex, **break it down into component parts.**
- **Never give up.** Even if you think you cannot complete the answer, give it your best effort.

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Practical tips for Essay style assessments:

- **Be aware of instruction words for assignments and exams.** You must take the whole question into account when answering. Take opportunities to utilise key words in the title when planning and structuring your answer.
- **Make a plan** before you begin to write, to help you structure your answer and formulate your argument.
- Keep your writing simple. In an exam situation, you will not have the time and space afforded in a coursework situation to refine and redraft your answer. Avoid labouring the introduction with fine phrases – get straight to the point of the question and how you intend to answer it.
- Balance your efforts. For example, in exam answers, an introduction need not be overly long. The majority of marks will be awarded for the main body and conclusions. Give time and energy to the points that you wish to cover and the order of these.
- Create space for thinking and analysis in your answer. You can gain marks by:
 - offering relevant detail in your answer;
 - providing an analytical answer (rather than one that is simply descriptive);
 - giving evidence of your reading – you do this by paraphrasing or quoting directly from relevant literature, including author names and dates of publication;
 - Considering and commenting on the issues / debates. Take time throughout the answer to offer your considered view (and conclusions) in response to the evidence that you have presented.

Time management – when answering any question in an exam, it is important to allocate a set amount of time for completing your answer. **Tip:** look to the rubric of past papers for some indication of an appropriate time allocation for answering each question. Or, ask your module convenor for advice on time management in the exam.

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