

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

THE ECO GUIDE TO STUDY SKILLS

2019/20

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There are further resources on many other aspects of student learning available from the Student Support Services' Office and on its Learning Enhancement website: http://www.uea.ac.uk/services/students/let_service/advice_resources/LET_team. You can also email them at ask.let@uea.ac.uk

Alternatively you may contact the School of Economics Lead Support Tutor Dr Mike Brock. (michael.brock@uea.ac.uk).

This information is adapted from guidance leaflets on academic writing produced by the Student Support Services' Office at the University of East Anglia. It has been adapted, with permission, from study guides published by the Student Learning Centre at the University of Leicester.



Making the most of lectures

Although your ECO lectures will provide you with the key points about the topic, it is important that you supplement your lecture notes by reading the additional material suggested in your module outline.

Preparing for lectures

Look at the recommended reading in your module outline and try to do this before the lecture. It will then be easier for you to understand the lecture material.

Taking notes

- Use headings to order information
- Give each point a new line or number it
- Highlight examples and illustrations
- Use your own words and don't try to make detailed notes
- Use keywords to represent points
- Use abbreviations or develop your own 'shorthand'
- Make sure that you label diagrams correctly

Following up lectures

In ECO it is very likely that seminars will follow up the lecture material and give you opportunities to improve your understanding of particular topics. Ask for clarifications either in the lecture or at the end. Use seminars to discuss material and again clarify any points that you do not understand. Review your notes as soon as possible so that you can highlight any areas which need more information on, or which you do not understand.

Overcoming problems

Note taking during the lecture will help you concentrate. However, if you find that you cannot keep up then leave a space and compare your notes with another student's. Most ECO lecturers put detailed notes on the Blackboard site so you can go through the lecture and complete your notes in your own time.

Talking during lectures

Talking during a lecture is unacceptable and you may be asked to leave the room. Students who constantly talk during lectures are not helping themselves or their fellow students.

Note taking

1. Taking notes to select

When you are making notes for an essay, report or seminar paper, you will need to understand and select information. Use your essay title or question to provide the focus for your note taking and select your information accordingly.

Always make sure that a text is relevant to your needs. Do this by checking:

- the year of publication - how up to date is the information?
- the contents page and index - are there specific areas devoted to your topic?
- the introduction or preface - do they give an overview of the text?
- the beginnings and endings of promising chapters - are the chapters worth reading closely?

When you know the text has the information you need you can begin to make notes.

- Begin by recording the details you will need for your bibliography i.e. *author, date, place of publication, and publisher.*
- Use your own words to check you understand each point.
- Check that each point you record is relevant to the task in hand.
- Record the chapter and page number for use in referencing and so that you can easily retrace your steps should you need to check a point in your notes later on.
- Take down all quotations in inverted commas with full reference details. This will allow you to identify and acknowledge other writers' words in your essay or report.

Organising your information

- Use main and sub headings and numerical lists to organise your notes.
- Use keywords to summarise each point in the margin.
- Use colour to categorise points, make headings stand out.

2. Taking notes to understand

Use the following techniques to improve your understanding of the material

Underlining and highlighting: This will help you to identify the most important aspects of the text. Use underlining or highlighting in your own copy of texts or on photocopies, never on borrowed books. Small post-it notes could be used in borrowed books instead.

Using your own words: Putting the information into your own words gives you a chance to check that you understand the material.

Taking notes to remember: The following techniques will help you recall the content of your notes.

- (i) Use keywords to help you remember important information.
- (ii) Using colour and image to help you visualise a page of notes in your mind –.
- (iii) Use index cards to organise key concepts and ideas.
- (iv) Use diagrams in your notes. These can:

- help you gather and hold large amounts of information on one page;
- enable you to create an overview of a large topic or subject area;
- help you see links and connections in your notes;
- provide a powerful aid to memory by using the association of word, image, number, colour and spatial awareness;

Time Management

When you first start to study in ECO you may think that coursework deadlines, seminar presentations and examinations are a long way ahead. However, if you do not learn to manage your time effectively you may find that you struggle to meet deadlines later in the semester. As there are penalties for late submission of coursework it is important to plan ahead and not lose valuable marks by handing work in late.

Planning your time

Planning is an essential part of being organised. It involves predicting your future commitments and setting aside enough time to meet them.

Here are some steps to successful planning.

1. Looking ahead

An important first step is to establish:

- what you need to do (e.g. coursework/taught sessions/private study)
- when things need to be done by (e.g. deadlines for assessed work)
- how long they are likely to take (e.g. time spent in taught sessions/time required to write an essay or prepare for a presentation).

Read through your course handbooks and other information related to your modules to establish the demands that will be placed upon your time.

2. Making plans

Once you have established your commitments, it might be useful to enter these on a plan or calendar. Plan each semester at a time.

3. Breaking up time

To begin taking control of your time you will need to break it up into manageable amounts. Try the following strategies for planning each day a week at a time.

Planning the week

Your study time over a week will be divided into two broad areas:

1. your contact time/taught sessions (lectures, tutorials, computer labs)
2. your private study activities (working on projects, reading, seminar preparation).

You may wish to draw up a timetable for the week showing your taught sessions for the week ahead and the time you then have left to allocate to other activities.

Effective time management involves doing the right thing at the right time. Don't try to write a presentation in half an hour at the end of the day if you know you will be tired. Move this activity to a more suitable time when you will have the energy to complete the task to your best abilities.

4. Setting priorities

You may find that within a week you will need to tackle more than one task at a time. Find a way of putting multiple tasks in order, establishing a list of priorities.

5. Reviewing progress

It is important to continually review your plan to make sure that it is up to date. It is possible that unforeseen circumstances have prevented you completing a particular task.

Using your time effectively

It is important to find ways of motivating your mind and stimulating your thoughts when working for an extended period. If you have a few study tasks that you don't enjoy doing, try to do them first so you can then move onto the topics you find more interesting.

How to keep going

Make sure that you introduce variety into your work. If you do the same thing for too long you may cease to be productive. Take breaks when and if you need to. This may be when your concentration is slipping, or when you have been staring at the computer screen for too long.

Know your own obstacles

There are many reasons why we avoid using time effectively. Some of these include:

- lack of motivation;
- poor concentration;
- noisy working environment.

Try to be active in overcoming your personal obstacles.

How to get the most out of seminars

In ECO you are required to attend seminars (smaller group teaching) aimed at supporting your learning. Module leaders will take a register or circulate a sign-up list – it is your responsibility to ensure that your presence is recorded.

Your module outline will provide all of the details about the format and expectations, particularly relating to any assessment of seminar presentations or other forms of participation. The success or failure of a seminar depends on the aims and teaching skills of the tutor - **but it also depends on you and your fellow students.**

If you are preparing a formal seminar presentation, make sure you know how long your tutor expects your presentation to last. If you are working as a team, make sure that you plan the presentation so that everyone has a chance to present. In many ECO modules presentations form part of the coursework assessment, so it is important for the tutor to see that everyone in the team has made a valuable contribution.

If you are shy, don't worry - make sure you are well prepared and use visual aids. Just remember that most students are nervous when presenting their work.

Take notes of points that came up in the seminar. Check them over as soon afterwards as possible and, perhaps, make a few additions.

Planning and Delivering a Presentation

These notes are set to complement the support session delivered in the Autumn Semester for first year ECO Undergraduates. The slides from this talk are available for all students on ECO Student Zone.

During your time as a student in ECO you can expect to make presentations – many of which will be assessed. Learning to give a good presentation is one of the most important transferable skills that you will develop at University as most employers will expect that graduates are able to communicate effectively in this way. You should always plan ahead, especially if you are working as part of a team.

Planning your presentation

1. Preparation

Many factors affect the design of your presentation. A good presenter will acknowledge and address each of the following:

- objectives
- audience
- venue
- guidelines.

Objectives

You need think about the reasons for making your presentation. Think about the key points that you wish to make and the best way to put them across to your audience. Remember that a presentation to a seminar group might require a balanced argument. Here are some points you need to consider:

- what do you want your audience to have understood?
- what action do you want your audience to take following your presentation?
- how can you best design your presentation to meet your objectives?

Audience

Your audience will have a variety of different experiences and levels of knowledge. Prepare for this by asking yourself:

- how much will your audience already know about your topic?
- how can you link new material to things they might already understand?
- will you need to convince them of a particular point of view?

If you are making a seminar presentation your audience should be familiar with the topic but you may need to think about ways to generate a discussion after you have given your presentation.

Venue

Ask yourself what kind of atmosphere do you wish to create, how the room arrangement might affect your relationship with the audience, if you can do anything to change the arrangement of the room and what audio-visual aids are available.

Guidelines

Your ECO module outline may set out guidelines for your presentation, including how much time have you been allocated and whether these is a set format or style.

2. Choosing your main points

Once you have thought about the *design* of your presentation, you can define your main points. Try presenting no more than **three main points** in a ten minute presentation. Always allow time for an adequate introduction and conclusion. It is difficult for an audience to follow a more complex argument without significant help from the presenter. A powerful presentation delivers information in a logical, structured manner, building on the previous point and avoiding large jumps in sequence.

Ask yourself:

- what are the main points you wish to make?
- are these points structured in a **logical, coherent** way?
- do these main points **reflect your own objectives** and take account of the needs of your audience?

3. Choosing your supporting information

This evidence might take the form of factual data, points of detail or an explanation of process. It might be presented in imaginative ways using diagrams, pictures or video segments. Think about:

- what will add **clarity** to your argument (explaining complex terms, reminding your audience of any supporting theories)?
- what will add **authority** to your argument (making connections with other people's work, quoting experts, offering evidence from your own research)?
- what will add **colour** to your argument (showing a video clip or a slide, using a practical example or a vibrant analogy)?

4. Establishing linking statements

This can be achieved by using linking statements or 'signposts' to show clearly how your main points link together. Common linking statements include:

- *"The next stage in our project was to ..."*
- *"Another important issue of consideration was ..."*
- *"By following this argument we can now see that ..."*

Linking statements send signals to your audience, highlighting the next point in your argument, linking to earlier ideas or clarifying the stage you have reached in your argument overall. This may be of particular importance in a lengthy presentation where even the most effective presenter has to work hard to keep an audience involved.

5. The introduction

The introduction to your presentation is crucial. It is your first point of contact with your

audience; you can either capture or lose your audience's interest in a matter of seconds. Use your introduction to lay a clear foundation for the presentation to follow.

Try using the following structure:

- introduce yourself
- state *what* you will be talking about (a title or subject area)
- state *how* you will be talking about it (e.g. by comparing test results or reviewing the supporting literature)
- state what you intend to be the outcome of your presentation (an informed group, a lively discussion)
- state what you expect your audience to do (listen, take notes, read a handout, ask questions before/during/after).

Always give your audience a moment to absorb this information before moving into your first main point.

6. The conclusion

Your conclusion is important - you can use it to remind your audience of your main points, draw these points to a stimulating conclusion and leave your audience with a lasting impression of the quality of your presentation. The following structure provides a powerful conclusion:

- a review of your title or subject area
 - *"In this presentation I wanted to explore the relationship between X and Y."*
- a summary of your main points
 - *"We have discussed the following points..."*
- a summary of the process you have been through
 - *"By looking at X we have found that Y ..."*
- a conclusion clearly drawn from your main points (this must be supported by the detail of your presentation)
 - *"It is clear that there can be no substantive relationship between X and Y"*
- a parting statement to stimulate your audience's thoughts (this might be a question or a bold comment).

7. Reviewing your presentation

Once you have written your presentation make sure that you review its content. Ask yourself:

- does the presentation meet your objectives?
- is it logically structured?
- have you targeted the material at the right level for your audience?
- is the presentation too long or too short?

Delivering your presentation

Here are some points to help you become a good presenter.

1. Practice

Make sure that you are familiar with the material; you will feel much more confident if you really know what you are talking about and this will come across to your audience. Try not to rely on reading your notes. Practice delivering your presentation in an empty room, or ask a friend to be your 'audience'.

2. Assert yourself & Make Contact with the Audience

Try to appear confident during your presentation. Also you should stand at the front while delivering your presentation but remember that your audience needs to see your slides.

Here are some ways you can make contact with your audience:

- eye contact – this gives individuals a sense of involvement
- gestures and movement – make sure these are controlled and precise
- spoken contact – during the presentation you can ask rhetorical questions such as “how do we know this was true?”
- Make sure that your voice is loud enough for your audience to hear you clearly. Raise or lower the volume to add emphasis.

Essay Writing

These notes are set to complement the support session delivered in the Spring Semester for first and second year ECO Undergraduates. The slides from this talk are available for all students on ECO Student Zone.

Essay writing is an essential skill and one that ECO students need to acquire if they are to gain a good degree. Students are required to write essays for two reasons: (i) it is an effective way of learning and (ii) it enables tutors to see how much students have learned and understood.

A good essay presents material in a way that is well structured, follows a clear line of argument and includes relevant material. Preparation and planning are important and it is advisable to use an **essay plan**.

Planning your essay

Check your school's guidelines and take account of the requirements that are set out in all ECO module outlines. You need to know:

- how long the essay should be and the penalties that will be imposed if your work exceeds the word length.
- when the deadline is, and the penalties that will be enforced if your work is handed in late
- relevant assessment criteria
- requirements for layout, referencing and bibliographies.

The next stage

- Identify the keywords in the question
- Find the relevant resources
- Make notes from journal articles, text books, lecture material
- Organise your material – the essay plan allows you to try out different structures
- You may prefer to use diagrams for your essay planning.

Starting your essay - the introduction

The introduction tells the reader how you intend to answer the question. You will need to indicate the main areas your essay will cover. An introduction will answer the question: what does the reader need to know before he or she can understand the main part of the essay? It should have the following three elements:

- **Context and Background:** set the scene and explain why it is worth examining
- **Outline of Structure:** describe how your discussion will be structured.

While writing your essay it is important to keep looking at your introduction; this will help you remained focused on the question and stop you from diversifying. Once you have completed your essay you may find that you need to change your introduction, as it is only then that you really know what you are going to say.

Paragraphs

You now need to use paragraphs to take your reader step by step through each section. Each paragraph you write should express clearly one point or one aspect. Your paragraphs should link together to provide the reader with a sense of logical progression, using 'signpost' words and phrases such as *however*, *nevertheless*, *in contrast*. A paragraph should:

- introduce the point and purpose
- present and comment on evidence and illustrations
- make a link to the next paragraph.

The use of evidence– this is very important for ECO students

You should use evidence to illustrate and support your points. Evidence may be the opinion of an expert, your own findings, or the results of a study or experiment. It may be written or in diagram format.

Use the evidence to:

- add authority to your point;
- add credibility to your argument;
- add interest and useful illustration to your discussion

Opinions and evidence should always go together. Your essay should not state evidence without any analysis of what point it demonstrates, nor should your essay offer an opinion that is not justified by evidence.

Tables and graphs

You may be able to strengthen the line of an argument by inserting a well-designed table or graph. Word has facilities for creating tables that can enable you to present statistical data effectively. On the other hand, take care not to over use statistical material. The reader will not be impressed by irrelevant data. Ask yourself whether the data you are considering using supports your argument. If it does, explain its relevance. If not, leave it out.

A table in one of your sources may simply be reproduced in your essay - or you may construct it from statistical data that you did not originally find in that form. Alternatively you can construct graphs and charts using Excel. These can be copied and pasted into your Word document.

When creating tables or graphs it is vital that they are given a reference label (Table 1, Figure 2 etc.) and an explanatory title. Axes on graphs must be labelled. You will need to refer to these forms of evidence in your written work.

Maths and Equations

Make sure that you familiarise yourself with using standard mathematic notation and symbols – mostly Greek – and learn to use the Equation Editor in Word.

Important point about referencing:

Also see the Section of your Study Skills Booklet for further information on this

Whenever you refer to someone else's ideas or opinion you must acknowledge your source through referencing. Students in ECO typically have to use the 'Author-Date' method of citation to do this.

At the end of your essay you must include a bibliography which lists all the books, journal articles and websites you have consulted in writing your essay.

The conclusion

The conclusion is another signpost to your reader. It gives you the opportunity to:

- revisit the original question
- demonstrate that you have answered the question by summarising the main points of the argument and re-stating your point of view.
- you should not include new material in your conclusion, but you might:
- consider the wider significance and implications of your argument.

Drafting and Editing your essay

All assessed work should be typed. It enables you to make amendments and changes to your essay easily. Remember that you can regularly refer to the question in the writing of your essay. Use the essay question to check that you are keeping to the point and that your material is relevant to answering the question.

It is often difficult to edit your own writing. Read your work aloud as this will help you identify problems with clarity of expression or sentence structure. Spell checks on computers do not always identify an inappropriate use of a correctly spelt word. Have a break from your essay to make a final check more effective.

Typing and layout

Remember that all essays should be typed, contain full bibliographic references and a word count. Students are required to keep electronic copies of all assignments for the duration of their degree. Here are some points to note on other aspects of layout.

- Number pages consecutively.
- Leave margins of at least one inch at the top, bottom and sides. The marker may use this space for comments and queries.
- Try to use double spacing or one and a half spacing between lines.
- There should be a space after commas, colons and semi-colons and two spaces after a full-stop.

- Short quotations (i.e. of less than about 50 words) should be enclosed in quotation marks and run on with the main text. Longer quotations should be separated from the main text by being indented without quotation marks.
- Interpolations in quotations are permissible if enclosed in square brackets (never parentheses) thus: 'To be true to ourselves [he argued] we must be true to others.'
- Ellipsis, that is missing text within a quoted sentence, should be indicated by three ... full stops, taking care to leave a space before the first one; ellipsis at the end of a sentence should be indicated by four full stops.

Keeping directories in good order

As you collect information and draft essays throughout your career as a student, you should be saving many documents electronically. It will be an enormous help to you if you keep this information organised logically right from the beginning of your studies so that, at any later stage, you can rapidly find what you have written earlier and build upon that base of understanding. An obvious way of doing this is to have a directory for each module; in it you can keep separate files for downloaded material, seminar preparations, references, lecture notes, notes from books and articles and essays. If you have exclusive access to a computer then you can keep this stored here - but make sure that you take backups as well.

If you are using computers in the university, you should save files onto your student drive and a working memory stick. **Do get into the routine of making backups; particularly if you are saving work to your own computer.** Keep your back-ups in a safe place. Be aware losing unsaved work or uploading incorrect versions of a document **will not** be considered as reasonable grounds of receiving an extension or dispensation.

Referencing

These notes are set to complement the support session delivered in the Autumn Semester for first year ECO Undergraduates. The slides from this talk are available for all students on ECO Student Zone.

An appropriate use of quotations ('quotes') greatly enhances an essay. Note, however, that your essay should not rely too heavily on quotations; it is important that you also include your own opinions.

Any text that is not in your own words should be contained within quotation marks ".....".

Also beware not to merely repeat what is generally agreed and already common knowledge. The object is to allow the readers to locate sources of information with which they may not be familiar, are out of the ordinary, or which are characteristic of some school of thought with which you are proposing to take issue. **Whether you quote or paraphrase, you must cite your source.**

Citation

The reason for citing sources is to indicate to your reader where you obtained your information. In academic writing builds on the work of other writers, researchers and teachers so it is essential that you acknowledge their contribution. You must distinguish your thoughts and findings from those you have drawn from others. Citation is an important element of this process and you will have to learn and adopt the conventions for achieving it. Since the object is to allow readers to locate the sources of your information, it is essential that your citations are accurate and specific. For example, when citing a book you should normally give a page reference as well as details like author, title, date and publisher.

Using the 'author-date' method

The author-date method is that which is mostly used in the School of Economics. This style reduces or eliminates the need for footnotes or endnotes because it leads the reader straight to the page number of the book or article in the bibliography.

In the body of the text, the citation of the reference would normally consist of surname(s) of the author(s), followed by the date of publication and then the page reference. However, if the author is mentioned in the sentence then this does not have to be repeated in the citation. If you are citing more than one publication in the same year by an author, you must indicate this by an appropriate letter of the alphabet. Sometimes, you will wish to cite several publications together. Here are three examples of citation:

Smith (1997:143-147) argues that inflation is no longer a threat. Some economists have argued that inflation is still a potential threat (Jones and Brown 1998: 57-59). There is considerable controversy among economists now over the risks of inflation (Smith 2001a: 48-50; Jones 2001: 137-143; Smith 2001b: 197-201).

When a publication has more than two authors, it is usual in ECO to give the surname of the first author followed by *et al* (an abbreviation of the Latin for 'and the others'). However, when there are only two authors both names are usually given.

Your bibliography

The bibliography should be in alphabetical order by author surname.

Book references should be in this format:

Jacques, I. (2006): *Mathematics for Economics and Business*, fifth edition. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

Journal references should be in this format:

Taylor, P and Walker, A. (1994): The ageing workforce: Employers' attitudes towards older people. *Work, Employment & Society*, 8 (4), 569-591

Tables and Diagrams

Remember to include references to the source of any tables and diagrams that you include in your work. For example:

Table 1: Unemployment rates in different sections of the labour market: 2004 Q1 (taken from Sloman, 2006: Table 14.4 p.399)

e-journals

Internet journals are referenced similarly to paper journals. There are no page numbers to record, but you must include the URL and the date accessed. For example:

"Job seekers with college degrees and those age 45 and older have had an especially difficult time finding work, with long-term unemployment for those groups rising by 299.4% and 217.6%, respectively". (Allegretto and Stetner, 2004). You could also use (www.epinet.org).

Here is the bibliography entry:

Allegretto S and Stetner A (2004): "Educated, experienced, and out of work Long-term joblessness continues to plague the unemployed". *Economic Policy Institute*

http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/issuebriefs_ib198 (accessed 20 May 2019).

Secondary referencing

Occasionally you may find that the author of an article you are reading cites a useful quotation or piece of information from another text.

How to use secondary referencing?

(this information is taken from a Student Support Services' help sheet on secondary referencing)

Here is an example. Suppose the book you are reading is:

May, Tim (2001): *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Processes* (3rd ed). Buckingham: Open University Press. In it, on page 30, you find the following quotation:

“Theory aims at the production of thoughts which accord with reality. Practice aims at the production of realities which accord with thought. Therefore common to theory and practice is an aspiration to establish congruity between thought and reality.”
(Cohen 1984:339)

Checking the bibliography, you find that this quotation is taken from:

Cohen, G. A. (1984): *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.339. This book is not available to you.

In-text referencing systems (e.g. Harvard, American Psychological Association (APA) or Modern Language Association (MLA)).

The in-text part of the reference in your text would then look like this:

(Cohen, 1984:339, cited in May, 2001:30).

In your full reference list, you should usually include only the details of the book you actually read, not the original. If the reader wants to find out more about the original, they can find it through the references of the work you read.

Avoiding Plagiarism

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work. It can take the following forms:

- a) The reproduction without acknowledgement, of the work of others (including the work of fellow students), published or unpublished, either verbatim or in close paraphrase. In this context, the work of others includes material downloaded from computer files and the internet, discussions in seminars, ideas, text and diagrams from lecture handouts.
- b) Poor academic practice which is unintentional

It can occur in 'open-book' examinations and/or coursework assessments which may take a variety of forms, including, but not exclusively confined to: essays, reports, presentations, dissertations and projects.

Plagiarism may arise because a student has deliberately cheated and tried pass the work of others off as his or her own. However, it is also likely that it is committed through misunderstanding, carelessness or the inability to reference correctly.

To avoid plagiarism, students must always take care to fully acknowledge the sources and ideas used in their work. (See the section on referencing).

Revision & Exam Skills

These notes are set to complement the support session delivered to first and second year ECO Undergraduates. The slides from this talk are available for all students on ECO Student Zone.

Revision

Revision involves revisiting your course material to make it easier to understand, remember and adapt to specific questions. Also it is useful to work through seminar exercises and past exam papers.

Organising Revision

Find out as much as you can about the format and scope of the exam. For example:

- Will you be required to write essays or short answers?
- Is there opportunity to select topics for revision or will you need a broad area of knowledge?

Look at past papers and ask your course tutors for further guidance.

Check that your notes are complete – Blackboard is useful here because most ECO lecturers put their lectures on this site.

If you will have a choice of questions, then select a range of topics to ensure good coverage for the exam.

- **Condense your notes** into a form that is easy to understand and remember. Highlight key points; use revision cards if you find these helpful.
- **Check your exam timetable** – you can then plan your time efficiently. Make certain that you are sure about the venue, before the exam, and allow yourself plenty of time to get there.

Exam Technique

The best exam technique is to prepare and practise your approach **before** the exam.

Question analysis

Make sure you read each question carefully, focussing on its exact requirements, especially the subject and the instruction.

Planning answers

Under time pressure it is tempting to ignore the importance of planning your answers. A few minutes spent planning the answer will help you make sure that you:

- select relevant information for the question.
- order information logically and coherently.
- write your ideas down to help you remember your key points

Using past papers

- Practise analysing questions and setting out plans to answers in order to test your recall and ability to adapt material to the set question.

- Practise writing a full answer in the time allowed.
- Review your answers by checking them against your notes and highlighting any missed or inaccurate information.
- Analyse your answer to see how it could have been improved.
- Be aware that module organisers are **not expected to provide solutions** to past exam papers.

Planning your use of time in the exam

Where there is a weighting for particular questions or sections then your timing should reflect this.

Essays and long answers

- Begin by carefully checking the instructions on the paper. Highlight key instructions.
- Read through all the questions first so you can choose the best questions for you. Tick possible choices, and then go back and read them again.
- Start with the easiest question first. This boosts your confidence and gets your thoughts flowing. It does not matter in which order you answer the questions as long as you make sure you number the question on your script.
- Leave a few minutes at the end of each question to check your work for any obvious errors of expression or important omissions.

Exam nerves

It is important to talk to someone about your worries if you are very anxious about taking exams. This could be a friend or your tutor, or one of the Learning Enhancement Tutors in the STS Office.

Skills you will acquire in ECO and using these post-UEA

As well as the knowledge content of your degree programme, you will acquire a range of skills. Some skills are specific to knowledge content, for example how to interpret the intersection of supply and demand curves. Other skills are useful for a range of different study situations and may be important in employment. You may also acquire valuable skills from extra-curricular activities, such as organisational skills from being involved in student societies.

Skills which can be applied in situations outside those of the university are often referred to as transferable skills. Here are some examples:

Communication skills

Ability to express yourself clearly in writing using correct grammar and spelling.

Ability to express yourself orally. This is important for public speaking, presentations and job interviews.

IT skills

Keyboard skills

Using software packages such as Microsoft Word and Excel, PASW for statistical analysis

Numeracy

Understanding of numbers: ability to analyse and manipulate them - and interpret their meaning

Ability to create and interpret tables of statistics and graphs

Problem-solving

Ability to analyse critical elements and their inter-relationships - and to resolve difficulties

Working with others

Ability to work effectively in groups

Getting the best out of others

Improving your own performance

Prioritising appropriately and meeting deadlines

Monitoring your performance, reflecting upon your learning process and thereby improving your capacity to learn effectively

You should try to become aware of the skills you are acquiring during your time at UEA. These skills are important when you enter the labour market or if you decide to undertake further study.

When you eventually leave UEA you will wish to convince employers or institutions that you possess the appropriate motivation, knowledge and skills. You will need to present yourself effectively in applications, a curriculum vitae and face-to-face selection procedures. Make sure that you and potential employers are aware of the subject specific and transferable skills that you have acquired.

If you are at an early stage of your degree, some choices you make now will ensure that you gain the skills and knowledge that will help you in your chosen career. The Careers

Centre can provide information on many different occupations and the sorts of qualities employers demand in each case. However, remember that it is also important to select some modules because you find the topic interesting, regardless of whether it is directly related to your possible career. University education is an opportunity for you to enhance your personal development, as well as preparing you for the labour market.

Online Submission of Assessment

e:Vision submission

For a complete guide, take a look at [Submission of work for assessment using e:vision](#)

- You will be able to submit coursework electronically **from one week before the deadline** using the link from your e:vision page.
- Late assessments must also be submitted electronically; however the link might not show up if you have already submitted once (either before or after the deadline). You can hand in your work directly to the Front Desk of the Hub in this case.
- Work uploaded **after 3pm on the deadline day will incur a late penalty** unless you have an approved extension.
- Remember to **give yourself time** in case you encounter any computer problems.

* * *

Blackboard submission

Assessments can also be submitted via Blackboard. Your module organiser will inform you if your coursework is to be submitted via this route.

- Blackboard offers the ability to submit various different kinds of media (depending on the assessment criteria). Detailed instructions are available on the [UEA Learning Technology Assessment site](#).
- A key point to remember is that you may save drafts at any point before the deadline but **once you click submit, your submission is final**. The submission point is open 7 days before the due date and for 40 days following the due date.
- Work must be submitted by 3pm on the day of the deadline. It will incur a late penalty if you have not submitted by that time unless you have an approved extension.

* * *

General Advice

Be aware that if you submit a copy of an assessment online, you **MUST close the original document**. If you do not do this, the submission will fail to upload properly.

Always check that **charts, figures and tables** have not disappeared or become distorted in the process of converting files

If you encounter any problems, please [contact your Hub](#).

* * *

Further information can be found at either of the two links below, or by typing '**online submission**' into the UEA portal search engine and following the relevant links.

<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/learning-technology/assessment/students#pressSubmit>
<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/learning-and-teaching/students/coursework/submission-guide#ES>