INFORMATION ABOUT ASSESSMENTS FOR PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS
THIS INFORMATION APPLIES TO THE JUNE 2020 AND SEPTEMBER 2020 SESSIONS

As you all know, the suspension of all face-to-face activities at University has meant that many assessments could not be held in the usual format. The Department, in conjunction with IT services and a special working group set up by Senate, has worked hard during these past weeks to create alternative forms of assessment for many Study Units, specifically those which used to be assessed by means of an examination. The main reasoning underlying most of these changes is twofold - ensuring that the assessment reflects the original learning objectives of the Study Unit in question, and being as fair as possible to students in these trying circumstances.

General information about the different types of assessments you might need to tackle is presented in this document. Please be aware that we do not yet have answers to all the questions you might have. More specific information, where relevant, will be made available to you by your lecturers in due course.

Assignments
Some study units will be assessed by assignments. In this case, there will be no change from the normal way in which assignments are submitted, except that you will not be expected to submit a hard copy of the assignment. Expected word count will depend on the Study unit ECTS value, but will typically be between 2000 and 3000 words for a 4 ECTS course, and between 3000 and 4000 words for a 6 ECTS course. These guidelines apply when the assignment component contributes to at least 80% of the final mark of a study unit and can be reduced accordingly when the weighting is less. Assignments will be submitted on VLE through the specific Turnitin area created by the study unit co-ordinator (where there is more than one lecturer) or the lecturer for the study unit in question. Please note that assignments will be screened for plagiarism by means of the Turnitin software. Cases of suspected plagiarism and other intellectual dishonesty will be immediately referred to the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board as dictated by regulations governed by disciplinary action.

Oral Exams
A few Study Units will be assessed by oral exam. In this case, specific instructions will be given by the lecturers coordinating the respective Study Unit.

Asynchronous Exams
Some assessments will take the form of an open-book take-home exam. Typically, the exam paper will be uploaded onto a specially designed Exam VLE at a specific time and date communicated to the students, and will remain open for a period of 24 hours. Students can consult their books and notes when preparing the answer(s). These exams are most suitable for the assessment of the application of
theories and practices to a particular case or cases. In-text citations and a reference list will be expected.

Answers should typically be around 1500 words long, and should be formatted in Times New Roman 12-point font and double spaced, saved as a .pdf file, and submitted on the Exam VLE which will be set up specifically for this purpose. Please note that exam scripts will be screened for plagiarism by means of the Turnitin software. Cases of suspected plagiarism and other intellectual dishonesty will be immediately referred to the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board as dictated by regulations governed by disciplinary action.

Synchronous Exams

Other assessments will take the form of a timed exam. The exam paper will be uploaded onto VLE at a specific time and date communicated to the students, and will remain open for a specific period of time between 1 and 3 hours, depending on the particular study unit ECTS value. Students are not expected to consult books and notes as they will not have enough time to do so. These exams are most suitable for the assessment of knowledge using short-answer questions. The length of answer expected will depend on the number of questions and the time the exam is open for, but as a general guideline around 500 words per hour are expected. This translates to around 45 lines of typed text. So, for example, if the exam consists of 4 short answer questions for a 1-hour exam, you should expect your answers to be around 125 words/11 lines long each. Reference to named theories and authors in text will usually be expected. Answers should be formatted in Times New Roman 12-point font and double spaced, saved as a .pdf file, and submitted on an Exam VLE which will be set up specifically for this purpose. Please note that exam scripts will be screened for plagiarism by means of the Turnitin software. Cases of suspected plagiarism and other intellectual dishonesty will be immediately referred to the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board as dictated by regulations governed by disciplinary action.

Two possible types of issue may arise with the new exam format, particularly in the case of synchronous exams:

1. A few students might not have the possibility of taking the exam in fair circumstances (e.g. lack of availability of a quiet place to do so, laptop shared with others in the family, etc.). The University is endeavouring to provide a solution to these situations, but is not yet in a position to communicate one. Students envisaging this possibility must inform the Department as soon as asked to do so so that preparations can be made beforehand.

2. Students might encounter unexpected difficulties during the exam itself (e.g. internet disruption, power cuts, etc.). In this case, students should prepare all the evidence they can (screenshots of work completed, saved temporary files, etc.) and call the Department administration immediately to report the incident. All possible steps will be taken to help students still submit their work in these circumstances. If everything else fails, the
student will be able to resit the exam in the September session, with it counting as a first sitting.

Other points

Extra time will be allocated to cater for uploading, etc. in the case of synchronous exams. The exact amount of time still needs to be decided by Senate, but it will presumably be the same for all synchronous exams.

The Department will create a mock synchronous exam for each year group in one of the Study Units, the details of which will be communicated at a later stage. This exam will enable students to familiarise themselves with the system, and troubleshoot any possible issues which might arise.

Students may be subject to an additional viva (oral) online examination in cases where plagiarism and/or cheating are suspected. Students may also be selected randomly for participation in these viva online examinations.

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