

Policy on Examinations and other assessment held around the world in different time-zones

Procedures for Scheduling Examinations Classified as 'Some or Considerable Advantage'

The University has in place a Policy on examinations and other assessment held around the world in different time-zones (<https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/learning-teaching/policies/qescpolicyexams.pdf>) which requires the classification of assessments into one of two categories ('no advantage' or 'some or considerable advantage') based on the type of advantage (if any) that would be gained by students having advance knowledge of assessment content.

The Policy requires that:

- where advance knowledge of assessment content would give some or considerable advantage to students possessing such knowledge identical examinations / assessments **must** be held at the same Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) worldwide.
- where this is not possible different examinations / assessments must be set. Where different examinations / assessments are set, a robust moderation process must be followed to ensure equivalence and consistency of quality and standards.

No overlap of examination times is permitted due to the potential difficulties in managing the arrival and departure of candidates.

In order to manage the implementation of this Policy the University schedules its examinations within two separate time-zones:

Time-zone 1 Western Time-zone: Europe, America, Africa, Asia (west)
(including Scottish and Dubai campuses)

Time-zone 2 Eastern Time-zone: Asia (east), Australasia
(including Malaysia campuses)

Where examinations fall into the 'some or considerable advantage' category and take place within both time-zones, Schools are required to provide two examination papers per examination diet, one for each time-zone. Example timings of how these examinations might be scheduled are detailed within the following pages (based on a three hour examination).

In some isolated cases, due to significant time differences, it may not be possible to simultaneously schedule an examination with its counterpart within the nearest time-zone; where this occurs students may be required to travel to a location where it is possible to simultaneously schedule the examination; it is envisaged that such situations would be exceptional.

Heriot-Watt University respects religious and cultural diversity and aims to support individuals in their religious and cultural observance, where academic aspects and business priorities permit; this is supported through its Religious and Cultural Observance Statement which is available on the University's website at: <https://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/religious-and-cultural-observance.pdf>. Every effort will be made by the University to uphold this observance in terms of avoiding the scheduling of examinations on non-working days and religious observance days, however, at times this may not be possible.