

Preparing for and producing your final assessment

First thoughts

Have you done an OU final assessment before?

- Yes (one)
- Yes (two)
- Yes (3+)
- No never!

Please use the poll to select the answer that applies to you

Timing

When is your Assessment due?

- 11th – 13th September
- 16th – 18th October
- Other
- I don't have a final assessment due in the near future

Type of Assessment

What type of assessment are you due to sit?

- Exam – first time
- Exam - resit
- EMA / eTMA first time
- EMA / eTMA resit

Important!

- In this session we can not give any module specific advice
- If you are doing a remote exam please look very closely at the information provided by your own module for specifics
- Please make sure you read <https://help.open.ac.uk/remote-exams-and-icmes>
- <https://help.open.ac.uk/exam-arrangements-booklet>

Review the exam specific session from May

- <https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/get-well-prepared-your-final-exams-16-may-2023>

Feelings word cloud

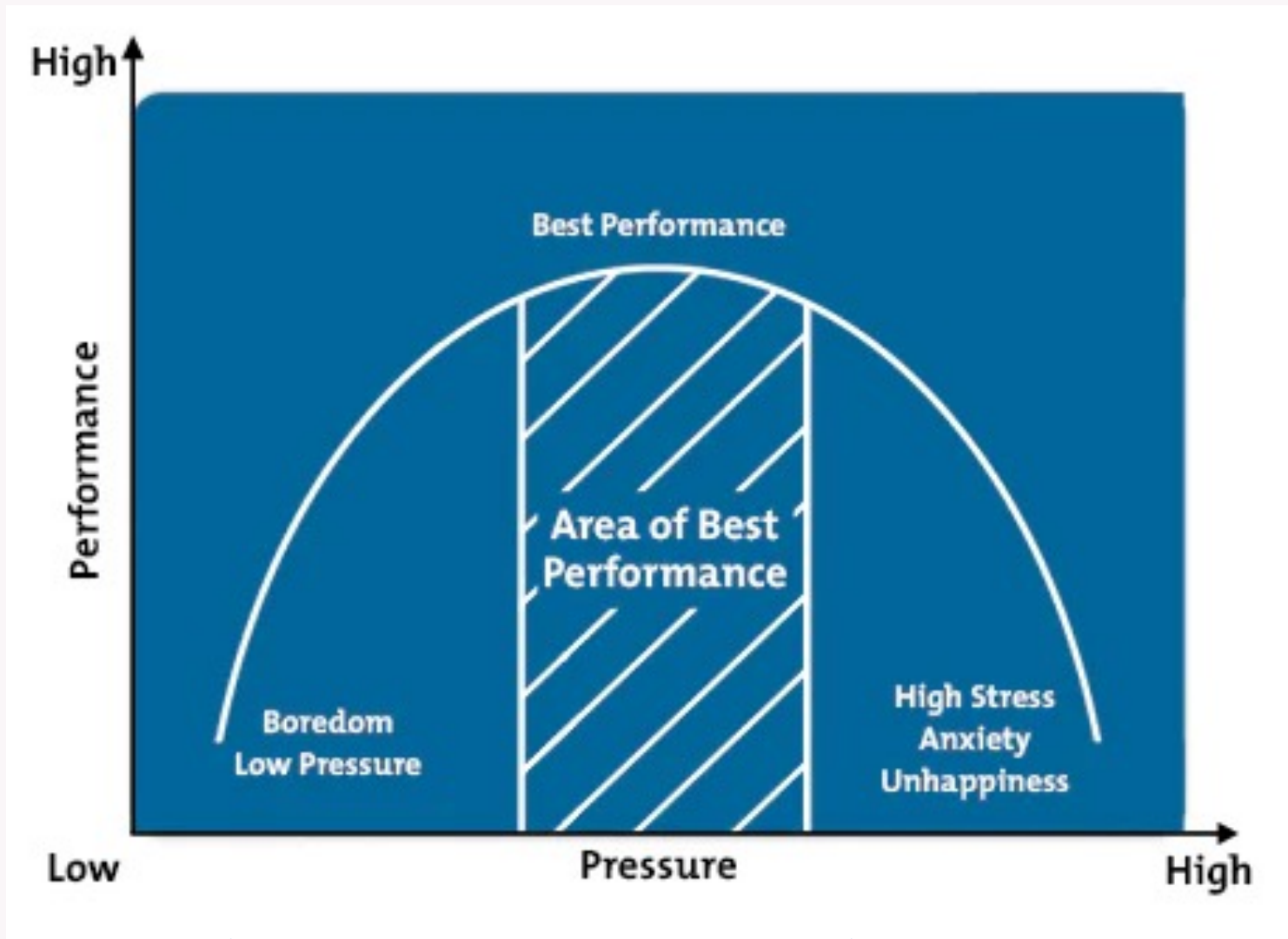
- Using the option to type in where it says enter word here say **What is the main emotion you feel when you consider your upcoming assessment?**
- Note that these need to be single words rather than phrases, if you press the space button your first word will go through. Phrases can be entered using _ or -

Enter word here

Well being

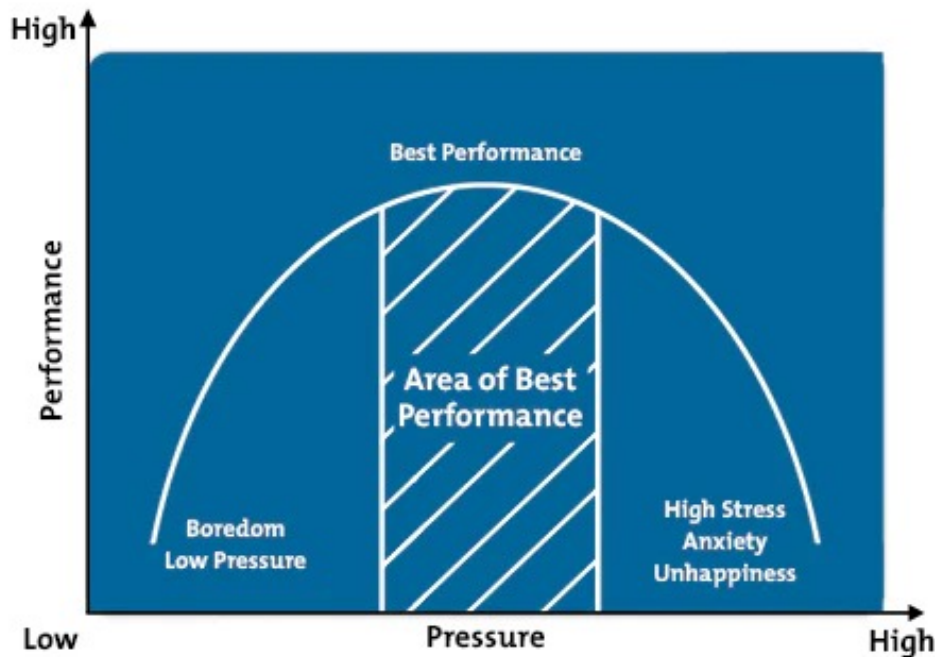
- I asked about emotions as these can impact our achievement
- Before covering some practicalities and advice about academic preparation I want to cover preparing yourself appropriately
- Assessment can be stressful and also impacts existing concerns and disabilities

Best performance 1



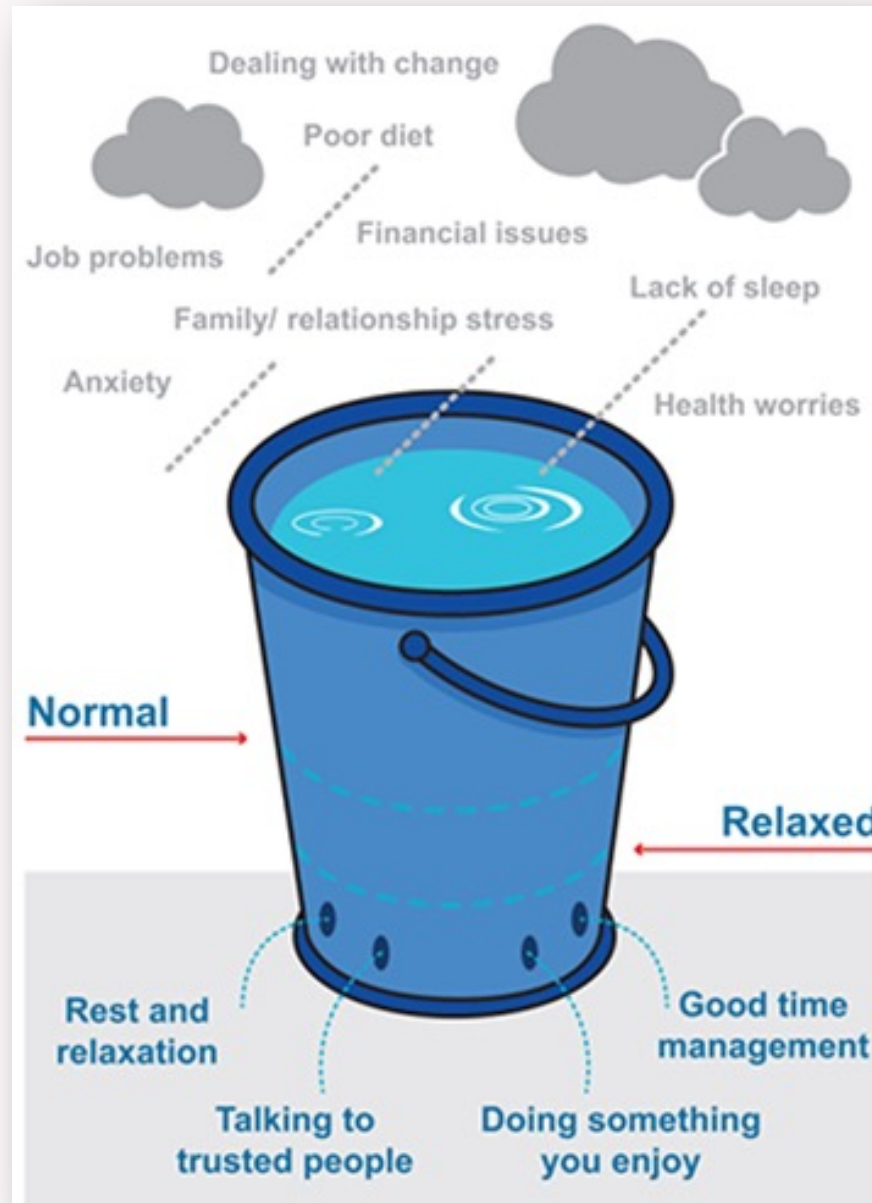
<https://www.mindtools.com/ax20nkm/the-inverted-u-theory>

Best performance 2



- Too low = 'boreout'
- Ideal zone encompasses Comfort and stretch
- Zone of delusion begins with strain and then burnout

Managing stress 1



Managing stress poll

- What things do you do to dissipate stress (allow the water to flow out of the bucket)? Please use the poll pod to say and let's see what ideas we all have that may help each other

Help available

- <https://help.open.ac.uk/mental-health-support>
- Student support team
- Disability support team
- Open University Students Association
- Tutor (module related)
- Carer network
- Family / friends

We can't provide all the answers now but please do make use of help available 😊

Time management

- First things first – when is your assessment due?
- How much time will it take to do?
- Have you allowed contingency time for anything going wrong?
- Consider planning quite tightly using some of the resources available at <https://help.open.ac.uk/planning-and-prioritising>

Time management for EMA

5	6	7	8	9	10 Working Deadline	11
12	13	14 Own Deadline	15	16 Assessment Due	17	18

Create your own deadline(s) to work to at least a couple of days before the fixed deadline. Aim for this. Don't work knowing that you won't keep to it. It's for emergencies only

- EMAs have fixed deadlines. The cut off is noon on the deadline day (there is the standard grace period with no penalty until midnight)
- Some modules may have a penalty period for submission - CHECK
- Tutors cannot authorise extensions and if they happen extensions are extremely rare and only for serious unexpected extenuating circumstances, e.g. hospitalisation.
- It is YOUR responsibility to make sure you know your deadline and plan appropriately

- Each OU exam is designed to be completed in 3 hours. This means you should aim to complete in roughly that amount of time (longer if you normally have additional requirements that have been discussed and agreed with the exam board).
- You can take longer if you wish **if you have access to the paper for longer**
- It is worth planning to complete in 3 hours as that may help you to focus and get it completed

If your final assessment is a remote exam:

- Book day off work
- Arrange child care
- Arranged to go to mum / dad / friend's quiet house / flat

There is very little that can be done if you miss the remote exam.

Planning to complete it all

- Some assessments are a series of questions just from one document, others require you to undertake activities from a variety of places and combine them together at the end
- You need to ensure you complete all parts of the assessment
- There may be different amounts of time to dedicate to different questions – look at marks available

Planning logically

- This links to time management, but don't spend as much time on a 3 mark question as on a 30 mark question, it isn't worth it
- Use the number of marks as an indication of how much is needed

How is this assessment different?

Assuming you have looked at your upcoming assessment / past papers / SEP can you see a way that it is different from the TMAs you have done?

Please use the poll available to give your answer

How might this assessment be different?

Some of our suggestions:

- More questions
- Less didactic instructions
- More mixed style questions (using several skills)
- Using information from various places within the module
- Might involve an activity e.g. search, evaluation, project
- Won't be marked by your allocated tutor

- Remote exam has tighter timescales to complete and are likely to be unseen
- EMA is an end of module assignment
- emTMA is an end of module TMA
- They differ somewhat –mainly in who marks them – emTMA is your own tutor
- Marks for both come at the very end of the module with your final module grade

How much is the final assessment worth?

How much is your final assessment worth in terms of your overall module grade? Please use the short answer poll pod to say:

TMA v final assessment

- In many modules the EMA is worth more of the summative marks, e.g. the marks that count towards your final grade than any single TMA
- TMAs and EMAs are different, although TMAs will build towards the EMA.
- EMAs are looking for a higher level of understanding than TMAs, they are after all assessing the WHOLE module

Final Assessment marking

- This is done by experienced tutors but not your allocated tutor.
- The marker **will not know you**
- You have to be crystal clear and signpost your answer and understanding
- You can't expect the marker to 'just know' what you mean
- Markers will mark a large number of scripts in a short time so you need to make it clear and easy for them to award you the marks.

Using available papers for remote exams

If your final assessment is a remote exam:

- Have you looked at past exam papers for your module?
- Have you looked at the specimen exam paper (SEP) for your module?

Using the SEP

- The SEP will set out the structure of your module's exam and show you how many questions there will be, whether any are optional and what mark allocation there is
- It may also show you a worked through example of how to approach 1 or more questions
- It may also give example answers to some of the questions that are in it.
- Use it to test yourself

Reading the question

Reading and answering the actual question is crucial when tackling any essay

- Read out loud
- Underline key words
- Make the essay title into a question if it isn't already (but don't change the question in the process)

Process words

These are the instructions that tell you what you need to do:

- Describe
- Explain
- Critically analyse
- List

We strongly recommend the studenthome > study skills resources here -

<https://help.open.ac.uk/understanding-the-question>

Considering material

What information are you going to need to find out? What does the question assume in terms of knowledge?

- Think definitions
- Think facts
- Think what might need to be included

Unpack the question

- Unpacking the question involves coming up with things that you might need to find out and then considering the material and what might be relevant
- You aren't expected to know everything before you even start!

What is drafting?

- Drafting is writing your answer
- There can be a tendency to spend a lot of time collecting information and the actual writing can then be delayed
- There can also be a tendency to go straight onto writing without a plan.
- <https://help.open.ac.uk/drafting-your-answer> gives some advice including the fact that a plan gives you the road map to follow so you don't get distracted and write about the wrong thing.

What are you writing about?

- Make sure you keep going back to the questions and use the learning outcomes to help as well
- These can give you clues about the type of information that will be required

What is editing?

- It's taking your draft answer and making sure it is fully meeting the criteria that are set
- It's making sure you haven't gone off on a tangent
- It's making sure you haven't missed anything out
- It's making it the best answer possible that convinces your reader that you understand what you are writing about

Writing in your own words

- When writing your answer from your notes think about how you made those notes.
- If you copy out sections from your module text you will need to make sure that you are rewriting correctly and fully in your own words.
- <https://learn1.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=100043> is a site about developing good academic practices and takes you through how to write in your own words, as does <http://www2.open.ac.uk/students/skillsforstudy/writing-in-your-own-words.php>

Take home message

- Final assessments are different to TMAs but you are still 'at home' so they are all seen in the same way as exams
- There are different rules to them
- They are covering the entirety of the module you have been studying so will require a holistic approach

Feedback

Please complete the feedback form that is available at:

<https://forms.office.com/e/QvQDrSJMFe> This is immensely valuable to provide information on how studenthublive is beneficial to students as well as to help us plan our future programme

(Please remember that as explained earlier studenthublive is non modular and we cannot provide subject based sessions- sorry!)



05-Sep, 7pm Managing your time better

12-Sep, 11am Neurodiverse community/ neurodivergent students:
starting out effectively

14-Sep, 11am Resilience: planning for success

19-Sep, 11am Freshers - Welcome to the OU: Finding your way around

20-Sep, 11am Freshers - Being a great OU learner

21-Sep, 11am Freshers - Access students

22-Sep, 11am Freshers - for student carers

22-Sep, 7pm Freshers - Friday night social

information from <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>

Past student hub live online study skills sessions [here](#)

Visit us at <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/> and subscribe for events as they are announced. Send us feedback at studenthub@open.ac.uk

