



Laurence

My name is Laurence Knell. I'm a distance education tutor.

Exams have a very important purpose. They are a great opportunity for the university to understand the student's progression, understand their learning, and how well - or otherwise - they may be learning.

For a student, they also play a very important role, in helping them consolidate their knowledge, gain greater insight and understanding into what they've been learning, but also to demonstrate that knowledge. So actually, for a student, I would say that they have a very positive purpose as well.

For distance learners, typically exam centres are set up in central locations. So, whether they're, for example, in the UK but in different parts of the UK, or maybe in mainland Europe. So, for students who are unable to reach an exam centre, my university will work with them and their organisation, to ensure that a responsible person within the organisation is able to monitor the exam and create exam-like conditions for them. I've even heard of students who were sailing round the world on ships sitting exams.

Yes, there can be additional challenges. And that's where practice, repetition and rehearsal really play an important role. Focus on answering the question, making sure that their response is clear, simple and concise, and that their grammar is as simple as possible.

Ideally, yes. It is an exam in an academic context. However, it is understood that nobody writes the same in an exam as they do in a formal assignment or other piece of written work.

A good student exam paper, simply put, is legible. It has to be readable. It needs to be concise. It needs to be to the point and, most importantly, it needs to answer the question, using relevant evidence and examples from the course and elsewhere.

My advice to students who are really nervous in exams is to see it as an opportunity: an opportunity for them to demonstrate to their tutor - to the markers - that they actually do know the material, they have engaged with the course, and to see it in a positive light.

Go the distance.