

Case Study Exams

Case study exams are designed to enable students to show how they can apply their knowledge and understanding of a subject in a real life scenario. Such exams often ask you to solve a problem using your knowledge of the subject.

Preparation for the exam

In-depth understanding of any subject takes time to develop. This is why lecturers expect you to build knowledge by reading, revising and taking notes throughout the semester rather than cramming everything at the end. Our brains need time to process, to 'incubate' our understanding.

Here are some study tips to make your study *much easier* when it comes to exam time.

Attend

Turn up to classes, particularly the first and last lectures when it is most likely that the lecturer will talk about what will be on the exam.

Actively participate – do the readings before class, listen, take notes, ask questions about the things you do not understand.



Read

Keep up with your readings each week. If you cannot get through all the weekly readings at least make sure you do some. Skimming is a quick method of reading that creates an overview of material. (*Refer to Studywell > Reading and Notetaking > Fast Reading Techniques*). Do not wait until the end of semester to read.

Take notes of the main points and their links to other aspects of the subject. Understanding involves not only being able to remember facts and ideas but also being able to explain the connections between them, often through the use of examples.

Rewrite

After attending classes and reading the assigned material each week, you need to rewrite the ideas in your own words. Use text, diagrams or concept maps to make the ideas memorable.

A suggestion for rewriting is set out in the table below.

Main Idea/ Topic/ Theme/	Explanation in your own words	Example of how, when, where, why can/do I apply this?	Connections to other topics	References relevant to the topic

Chunk

When the time comes for you to revise for your exams you need to summarise all the information you have collected over the semester.

'Chunking' means to summarise large amounts of information into smaller, connected 'chunks'. These chunks provide headings and summary information to help you link back to more complex ideas.

You need to develop an overview of all the topics which may be on the exam and an understanding of how they link together.

Sitting the Exam

Read the questions first

Case study exams often include a scenario and then a list of questions at the end. If your exam is this type, then read the questions before you read the scenario so that you know what information you need to focus

on. Some scenarios include a lot more information than you will need to answer the questions.

Read the scenario carefully so you don't miss any vital details. Read once for an overview. Twice to clarify details

Read the scenario carefully

Read the scenario carefully. It is easy to miss vital details that are important in your solution to the problem posed. Read the scenario once to get an overview of the case. As you read it you should underline key points or put notes in the margins as you go.

Skim the scenario again *each* time you answer a question. Use a different coloured pen to highlight sections of the case relevant to particular questions.



Answer questions carefully

Make sure you allocate time for each question so that you don't use too much time on one question and then have to rush others. Use double-spacing or small writing to write your answers.

Write the main answer of each question in the first sentence using the same words as the question asked. Ensure that you not only provide the solution to the problem but you also explain why this is correct.

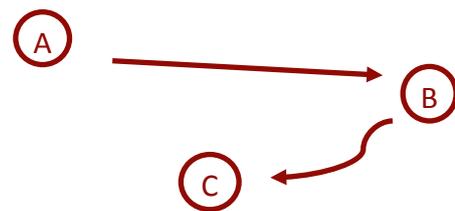
Use evidence from both the scenario and your knowledge of the subject to back up your points. The more you integrate your readings from the semester, the more likely you are to do well.

Consider counterarguments to your solutions in your answer. Provide reasons why these counterarguments are not successful.

Leave time to edit

Allow enough time to edit your answers before finishing your exam. It is likely that you forgot an important detail, found better evidence or clearer words by the time you finish your first draft.

1. Rearrange paragraphs with arrows or alphabetic or numeric symbols to indicate order, so that the marker can easily follow your ideas.



2. Cross out words you do not want with a clear line through the top middle.

evidence

3. Insert new ~~information~~ [^] for your answer above text you have already written with a caret (^).

PHOTO REFERENCE

'student in classroom reading, long brown hair ', In: [http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/res.nsf/A5D019A32FB1A7C7802573370032A1AB/\\$file/student.jpg](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/res.nsf/A5D019A32FB1A7C7802573370032A1AB/$file/student.jpg), ed, 2009, student in classroom reading.

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