

Requirements for an online written exam venue (School of Clinical Medicine)

1. **Exam Space:** A single venue capable of accommodating up to 350 candidates would be most suitable for exam administration, with the capacity for some smaller groups/rooms within this to accommodate students with additional requirements. However, dividing a larger cohort across two conveniently located venues is also manageable, provided the necessary infrastructure is in place at both locations. It is important to acknowledge that splitting exams across multiple venues increases logistical complexities associated with exam setup and invigilation. In addition, the lack of exam space may necessitate a 'quarantine' approach, which needs to be avoided if at all possible to maintain the exam integrity.
2. **WiFi connectivity:** Adequate bandwidth should be allocated to support the simultaneous use of multiple devices during exams. The MLA-AKT exam conducted at the Student Service Centre (SSC) in January 2024 serves as a valuable benchmark for the desired performance of a stable and reliable Wi-Fi connection for exam participants. However, it is important to acknowledge that this examination at SSC involved only around 150 candidates, whereas a full cohort could reach 350 candidates. The scalability factor should be taken into account when assessing network capacity. Another successful reference exam is the January 2025 MLA-AKT exam held at the University Printing House in the Cambridge University Press and Assessment (CUPA) site. The UIS Wireless Infrastructure team successfully deployed a WiFi network with additional resiliency for 250 concurrent users on short notice. A post-implementation validation survey was conducted prior to the examination to confirm the setup's readiness for the examination, and a post-examination check confirmed that the setup resulted in even device distribution across access points and balanced uplink traffic across distribution switches, resulting in no observed bottlenecks. Peak traffic was also confirmed to remain well below the site's 10Gbps connection to the larger University data network in place for the site. In addition, the setup of a dedicated network at the SSC for the January 2024 and January 2025 exam proved to be an efficient solution for administering a large number of hired laptops. While Eduroam represents a potential alternative, the individual setup required for each hired laptop makes it a less desirable solution due to administrative complexity. Should Eduroam become the sole solution available at the exam venue, this would necessitate further evaluation of the additional resources required to maintain a good level of performance.
3. **Power supply and connection points:** The exam venue's electrical infrastructure should be robust enough to support multiple devices charging concurrently. A centralized time-control power management system should also be considered to manage the potential associated risks when over-night device charging is required for multiple day exams. In addition, as the current device hiring arrangement with brand new laptops with good battery life cannot be always assumed in the future, ample and conveniently located power outlets should be provided, which can facilitate the use of power strips that allow the laptops to remain connected throughout the exam duration while avoiding hazardous floor wiring. Whilst a power socket per machine would be the ideal, it is recognised that this will be impossible in some venues (for example, the Sports Hall).
4. **Securely lockable venues:** For examinations using hired devices, where devices are installed in situ prior to the examination day, secure lockdown of the venue is crucial. This allows for device setup and testing on the day prior to the exam if needed, and secure storage if exams are conducted over multiple days. Secured venues can reduce the examination resources required and minimize the risk of accidental device damage during relocation. If access to the examination venue is restricted during the overnight period prior to the first exam day or between exam days, a secure overnight storage and charging facility, located nearby with direct access, is crucial for the secure storage and safe charging of devices, ensuring they are exam-ready for each day's exam.
5. **Dedicated space for students with reasonable adjustments:** The reasonable adjustments may vary, including adjustments to testing environments, equipment needs, or extended time allowances. The exam location should allow setting up of dedicated space/s for these students, which could take up to a third of the main cohort in some cases. An ideal solution would be a number of smaller spaces for the extra time students, some students have additional requirements requests for rest breaks and/or a lower density room for their exam. Current numbers for this in our Year 4 students is approximately 100 students with extra time/rest breaks and to effectively manage these requirements splitting into 3 rooms would be workable solution for invigilation.
6. Existing considerations that are applicable to exam space, such as ergonomic considerations, convenient road access for students, staff, and external suppliers, are considered essential and therefore not included here.

Other key considerations

- Existing Lecture theatres are unsuitable for the purpose of online exams, due to the risks of candidates easily being able to see each other's laptop screens.
- The timing of clinical course examinations is also heavily constrained, both by national requirements (in the case of the AKT), and by the complexity of the course which has to interweave hospital placements, general practice placements, and teaching in Cambridge, across all three clinical years in an interdependent way, in order to take account of NHS clinical capacity for teaching, across the East of England region. Final MB Part I and Part III examinations do not clash with the main Tripos examination period, as they are held in late June/early July, and January, respectively. Final MB Part II examinations do tend to take place within the main examinations period (i.e. late May).

Written Exam Schedule in 2024/2025

Year	Exam Type	Date ¹	Time	Digital?
Year 4 (Part I)	Single Best Answer Paper	3 rd Jul 2025 (There has been discussion about this exam moving to Wednesday 2 nd July 2025)	9am-12nn	Y (planning to use MLA-AKT platform to be run in Student Services centre and the Clinical School)
	Single Best Answer Paper (2 nd sitting) ²	6 th Oct 2025	9am-12nn	Y
Year 5 (Part II)	Short Answer Question Paper	28 th May 2025	9am-12nn	N
	Single Best Answer Paper	29 th May 2025	9am-12nn	N (currently no confirmed space and timing clashes with MLA-AKT schedule)
	Short Answer Question (2 nd sitting) ²	30 th Sep 2025	9am-12nn	N
	Single Best Answer Paper (2 nd sitting) ²	1 st Oct 2025	9am-12nn	N (to be consistent with first sitting)
Year 6 (Part III)	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 1	14 th Jan 2025	10am-12nn	Y (CUPA)
	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 2	15 th Jan 2025	10am-12nn	Y (CUPA)
	Short Answer Question Paper	17 th Jan 2025	9-11am	N
	Prescribing Safety Assessment ³ (We ask our students to attend this sitting if at all possible, so this is usually for the majority of our cohort with very small numbers using the second sitting, we rarely use the 3 rd and 4 th sittings listed below).	30 th Jan 2025	9am-5pm	Y (run across multiple sittings and rooms in the Clinical School)
	Prescribing Safety Assessment (2 nd sitting) ^{2,3}	20 th Mar 2025	9am-5pm	Y
	Prescribing Safety Assessment (3 rd sitting) ^{2,3}	1 st May 2025	9am-5pm	Y
	Prescribing Safety Assessment (4 th sitting) ^{2,3}	5 th Jun 2025	9am-5pm	Y
	Short Answer Question (2 nd sitting) ²	3 rd March 2025	9-11am	N
	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 1 (2 nd sitting) ²	5 th March 2025	9.30-11.30am	Y
	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 2 (2 nd sitting) ²	6 th March 2025	9.30-11.30am	Y

Written Exam Schedule 2025/2026 (exams in future years will follow this same pattern with dates rolled over accordingly)

Year	Exam Type	Date ¹	Time	Digital?
Year 4 (Part I)	Single Best Answer Paper	2 nd Jul 2026	9am-12nn	Y
	Single Best Answer Paper (2 nd sitting) ²	Late Sep/Early Oct 2026	9am-12nn	Y
Year 5 (Part II)	Short Answer Question Paper	27 th May 2026	9am-12nn	Y
	Single Best Answer Paper	28 th May 2026	9am-12nn	Y
	Short Answer Question (2 nd sitting) ²	Late Sep/Early Oct 2026	9am-12nn	Y
	Single Best Answer Paper (2 nd sitting) ²	Late Sep/Early Oct 2026	9am-12nn	Y
Year 6 (Part III)	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 1	13 th Jan 2026	10am-12nn	Y
	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 2	14 th Jan 2026	10am-12nn	Y
	Short Answer Question Paper	16 th Jan 2026	9-11am	Y
	Prescribing Safety Assessment ³ (We ask our students to attend this sitting if at all possible, so this is usually for the majority of our cohort with very small numbers using the second sitting, we rarely use the 3 rd and 4 th sittings listed below).	29 th Jan 2026	9am-5pm	Y
	Prescribing Safety Assessment (2 nd sitting) ^{2,3}	26 th Mar 2026	9am-5pm	Y
	Prescribing Safety Assessment (3 rd sitting) ^{2,3}	23 rd Apr 2026	9am-5pm	Y
	Prescribing Safety Assessment (4 th sitting) ^{2,3}	4 th Jun 2026	9am-5pm	Y
	Short Answer Question (2 nd sitting) ²	2 nd Mar 2026	9-11am	Y
	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 1 (2 nd sitting) ²	4 th Mar 2026	10am-12nn	Y
	MLA-AKT (Single Best Answer) Paper 2 (2 nd sitting) ²	5 th Mar 2026	10am-12nn	Y

Notes

1. Exam dates listed are subject to change from year to year.
2. Smaller scale examinations, such as resits, which typically involve smaller student groups (up to 40 students).
3. Due to limitations of the existing venue size, the number of students participating in the exam will determine if it needs to be divided into multiple sessions across the day (9am-5pm).
4. Significant numbers of students (up to 25%) can be eligible for extra time in their exam, to avoid disturbances from other candidates we traditionally sit these candidates in a separate room or series of rooms depending on numbers and availability of space/staff.