

Preparing for an online spoken assessment.

Online spoken assessments can take a number of different approaches: group or individual; vivas or presentations; purely audio or using audio and visuals; recorded or real-time. Check all guidance and restrictions with your tutor so you are clear about expectations and structure of the assessment.

Top tips:

Be clear about expectations:

Check with your brief and any further guidance, and ask your tutor if you are unclear:

1. Is it a video or an audio presentation/viva? (If video, should you be sharing a PowerPoint or being a visible speaker?)
2. What are the timings? (What time does your presentation/viva begin; how long does it need to be; does your time include opportunity for questions?)
3. What content should you cover? (Meet the Learning Outcomes and any further guidance.)

Check your tech:

Check your equipment is going to work and that you know how to access the things you need. Do this in advance and check more than once. Contact LearnTech if necessary for support (see link at the end of this guide).

1. Check your hardware (e.g. microphone).
2. Check the software (e.g. Collaborate).
3. Check you are clear how to use the functions of the software (e.g. sharing a presentation).

Gather the materials you need:

Get everything ready well in advance!

1. Check your guidance and check with your tutor, and if you are allowed, have your notes close to hand, and make sure they are in a format which helps you speak smoothly and effectively.
2. Have a drink close by.
3. If you live with others, let them know when your assessment is taking place and ask them to respect your need for space and/or silence at this time.
4. Turn off alerts, notifications and other distractions on your phone. If you struggle to stay focussed, you may want to turn off your phone or leave it in another room.

Practise!

Practise just as if you were preparing to speak to a physical group of people or panel.

1. Practise to yourself more than once.
2. Practise using your notes and any technical equipment.
3. Consider recording yourself as a rehearsal; for some people it can feel uncomfortable hearing yourself back, so decide whether you feel this would be helpful or unhelpful for you.

Learning Development

4. Apply the advice around in-person presenting/vivas (here is the [Presentation resource](#) from the Skills Hub and here is where you'll find the [viva resources](#)) - remember to adapt them to suit online assessments.

Further resources:

Technical support with Blackboard and Turnitin:

<https://libguides.northampton.ac.uk/Learntech/students>