Preparing for Exams Checklist

Start early
- Read unit outline and objectives in Week 1
- Find a note-taking strategy that works for you
- Keep up with set readings and complete all set tasks and activities
- Take notes before, during and after all lectures – review these at the end of the week
- Pay attention to directions given in lectures, tutorials and online

Know what to expect
- Know the exam day, time, location, duration, weighting and special instructions
- Know the exam type – is it a multiple choice, short answer, essay or open book exam
- On exam day, arrive early, read questions carefully, calculate exactly how much time to spend on each question, start with questions you feel confident with, get the main points down

Use effective study strategies
- Organise study topics into manageable chunks and gather all relevant readings and texts
- Set out a study schedule and stick to it
- Revise in short sessions often, rather than one long session
- Set study goals and reward yourself
- Read actively – use highlighter, write summaries, cluster information into hierarchies, maps, tables, flow charts, pyramids etc. and use diagrams and colours
- Overlearn by revising, then test yourself soon after, recap the next day and review a week later
- Teach someone else everything you know about a topic
- Move from notes to summaries to points to memory triggers
Know how to overcome common dilemmas

- Not complying to exam rules – arrive early and listen carefully to instructions
- Going blank – take a few deep breaths, look for memory triggers or move on
- Using exam time poorly – allocate exact time limits to all questions and watch the clock
- Writing everything you know about a topic but not answering the question – read the question
- Abandoning structure – know the expected format e.g. essay, and be concise and legible

Find ways to relax and stay calm

- Learn some relaxation techniques prior to the exam or contact Student Support at SCU