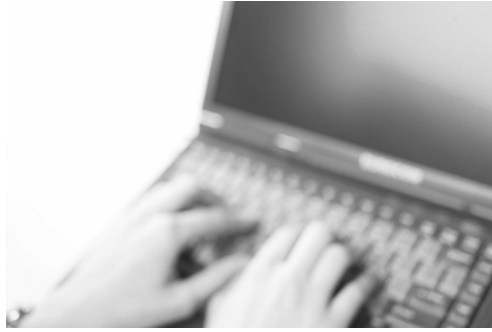


# Laptop Exams



***SofTest™ User Guidelines  
Registration Information  
Frequently Asked Questions***

## SofTest User Guidelines

### SofTest – How it works

SofTest serves as a simplified word processor similar to Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect for essay responses. The software is available to JD, LLM and foreign exchange students and blocks access to all applications and stored files on the laptop during the exam. Once the exam begins, you can work only on the exam and cannot regain access to your files until you exit the exam. Even if the laptop is shut off, crashes, or freezes, upon rebooting the computer a dialog box appears informing you that an unfinished exam has been located and giving you the option of continuing the exam or, if you are finished and want to exit, of exiting the exam and rebooting the computer (which then takes the laptop out of secure mode). The application creates multiple backup copies of the exam, which are refreshed every 60 seconds while an exam answer is being typed. If your laptop crashes during an exam and there are problems with rebooting it, multiple encrypted backup copies of your exam answer will be on the laptop, which only authorized law school personnel can retrieve.

Completed exam answer files are uploaded to a secure server immediately following the exam. The answer files are retrieved and printed by authorized law school personnel, and they are given to the professors with the handwritten exams. (The exams are still graded anonymously.)

### Minimum Laptop Specifications

1. Must have a PC-compatible laptop with U.S. English 32-bit versions of Vista\* or Windows XP (WINXP) with service pack 2 (SP2) installed.
  - \* Vista users – your computer must meet minimum specifications for the specific edition of Vista you are using. Please check the documentation that came with Vista to find these requirements.
  - \* Mac users – Mac OS X Leopard (10.5) on an Intel-based system with either Windows XP or Vista installed in a Boot Camp partition. (Note that Apple no longer supports Boot Camp on earlier versions of their operating systems.)
2. Laptop must have a 500 MHz processor, Intel Pentium III or higher preferred (or Industry Equivalent, i.e. AMD), with at least 256 MB of RAM or higher, 50 MB free hard disk space, and a screen resolution of 1024x768 or higher.
3. Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher.
4. An internet connection to download exam files before the exams and to upload exam answers when you finish each exam. You can download the exam files using our wireless network if your computer has been configured to do so. (AOL users must have AOL 6.0 or higher for home downloads.) To upload your exam answers when you finish each exam, you **MUST** have your laptop configured for our wireless network before your exams start because after each exam you must be able to connect to our VPN client.

### Spring 2008 Registration Deadline

Students who did not use SofTest for their Fall 2007 exams may sign up with ExamSoft, install the software, do the qualification exam, and register SofTest **beginning March 3 and no later than midnight on April 17, 2008**. Sign-up, download, installation, and registration with ExamSoft may take approximately 30 minutes, depending on your Internet connection. Any

student who has not registered the latest version of SofTest by March 3, 2008 will have to hand-write their Spring 2008 exams. Students who used the software for their Fall 2007 exams are not required to re-download SofTest unless notified by ExamSoft of an updated version.

## **Preparing Your Computer**

You can prevent difficulties in registering the software, downloading/uploading exams and system problems during the actual exam by preparing your computer before the exam period begins.

### ***Firewalls***

If your computer contains a personal firewall (e.g. Norton Personal Firewall, McAfee Personal Firewall, Zone Alarm, etc.) you can instruct the firewall to treat [www.examssoft.com](http://www.examssoft.com) as a trusted website. If you are unsure how to do so, please see your manufacturer's instructions. In most cases, you can also disable your firewall temporarily by right-clicking the firewall's icon in the System Tray beside the clock and selecting Disable. We recommend that you do this before downloading and registering the software, downloading an exam and prior to the start of each exam.

### ***Scan for Viruses and Spyware***

Our Computer Systems staff recommends that you run anti-virus and anti-spyware software to check your laptop in advance. If you do not have either program, BU has site-licensed software that you may download for free. Visit the PCSC website at <http://www.bu.edu/pcsc/safe/> for anti-virus software or <http://www.bu.edu/pcsc/spyware/> for anti-spyware software. Should you encounter a virus or spyware that the software is unable to remove you may contact Computer Systems (Room 1770) for assistance.

### ***Wireless Card***

We require you to install the Cisco VPN client and configure your wireless card to the BU Law network in advance. ExamSoft has received intermittent reports from some users of lag time between typing and text appearing on screen during their exam. If your computer has an 'external' wireless card, remove it from your computer prior to launching SofTest. If your computer has an 'internal' wireless card, you must locate the switch or button combination used to turn the card off prior to launching SofTest. Remember to reinsert or enable the card after exiting the exam so that you can upload your exam file.

If you still experience this problem, it may be caused by an existing application on your PC using a large amount of processor time during an exam. ExamSoft Support is capable of examining your computer and determining the application that is causing the lag time. You may contact ExamSoft Support at 866-429-8889.

### ***Hibernation Mode, AntiSpyware and Automatic Updates***

If you have Microsoft® Windows AntiSpyware installed on your computer, you must disable it prior to the exam. Also disable your hibernation mode, and the install automatic updates features on your laptop. These features may be turned on immediately following your exam.

## **How to Register**

*Before you visit the ExamSoft web site be sure to verify your class schedule is correct. For JD students, a course confirmation was mailed to your local address at the conclusion of the spring add/drop period. JDs are responsible for immediately notifying the Registrar's Office of any errors. LLM and Exchange Students should contact their program office. Note that you will only be able to download exams for classes in which you are officially enrolled.*

### ***Download SofTest***

1. Visit the ExamSoft web site at [www.examssoft.com/bulaw](http://www.examssoft.com/bulaw). Instructions for both first-time and returning users are included on this custom home page.
2. Download and install the latest version of the software (SofTest).
3. Take the qualification exam.
4. Register SofTest.

**\*\* If you experience any problems with downloading the software, you must contact ExamSoft directly at their toll-free number, which is 866-429-8889 or at [support@examssoft.com](mailto:support@examssoft.com). Their hours are 8:30-5:30 EST, Monday-Friday. Assistance with installing SofTest is provided only by ExamSoft. The Law School's computer services staff are unable to assist with this process.**

### ***Confirmation***

ExamSoft will e-mail you a confirmation once you've completed the entire download and registration process. If you do not receive e-mail confirmation we recommend you confirm that you've completed the steps by logging onto our custom home page on their website ([www.examssoft.com/bulaw](http://www.examssoft.com/bulaw)) and checking your registration status or by running a self-test procedure on your laptop.

### ***Mock Exam***

We strongly advise you to take the "Mock Exam" so that you become familiar with the software and to alert you to potential computer-related problems. The Mock Exam feature was added to provide an opportunity to experience downloading, taking and uploading an exam administered in secure mode using SofTest. Once you register SofTest, you will be notified on-screen that there is an exam file available for download. You may download, take and upload the Mock Exam at your convenience up to two times.

## **Downloading Exams**

You will receive an e-mail when your exam is available to download. You will have seven days in which you are able to download a particular exam. **You must download the exam file prior to the exam.** Students who have not downloaded the exam file before they arrive on exam day will have to hand-write their exam. The starting time of the exam will not be delayed, nor will the ending time be extended. (Be sure to check your firewall status before downloading an exam.)

### ***Download Instructions***

1. Connect to the Internet
2. Double-click the “SofTest” icon on your Windows Desktop. The “SofTest Launcher” window should appear.
3. Click the “Download Exam Files” button
4. Enter your BU ID number (including the “U”) and your ExamSoft password then click “Next.”
5. If the Download Password screen appears, leave it blank and click “Next.”
6. Select an exam from the list and click “Download.” If there is a second exam in the list, do the same. When you have downloaded your exam file(s), click “Close.”

**You can reach ExamSoft Support at [support@examsoft.com](mailto:support@examsoft.com) or 866-429-8889. Note that support personnel cannot provide exam file passwords nor can they extend download periods.**

### **Steps to Take Before Exam Day**

- ▣ Verify class enrollment
- ▣ Configure laptop for BU Law wireless network
- ▣ Download and Install SofTest (if necessary)
- ▣ Take the qualification exam (if necessary)
- ▣ Register SofTest
- ▣ Take Practice Exam and/or Mock Exam (recommended)
- ▣ Run anti-virus and anti-spyware programs on your laptop
- ▣ Check your e-mail for important reminders!
- ▣ Download Exam files (instructions above)
- ▣ Obtain your semester exam number (will be available through Student Link)
- ▣ Double-check your exam day, time and room assignment. (Exam rooms are posted 2-3 days prior to the exam on the BU Law Registrar’s Office web page and on the bulletin boards opposite the Registrar’s Office on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.)

## What to Expect on Exam Day

### Reminders

- ▣ Bring your BU ID to exam
- ▣ Bring your semester exam number (available through the Student Link)
- ▣ Remember your laptop power cord (you may not rely on battery power for an exam), your battery (in case of temporary power outage) and your Wireless Card.
- ▣ If you have Microsoft® Windows AntiSpyware installed on your computer, you must disable it prior to the exam.
- ▣ Also disable your hibernation mode, any firewalls, and the install automatic updates feature on your laptop. These features may be turned on immediately following your exam.
- ▣ Be sure to arrive 30 minutes prior to the schedule start time
- ▣ Leave an empty seat between you and your closest neighbor(s)

### Take an Exam

You may begin to power up your computer and launch SofTest before the exam proctor arrives. **Do not proceed further than step 6 below.** Full instructions for launching SofTest, exam passwords and upload instructions will be provided by the proctor on Exam Day.

1. Double-click the “SofTest” icon on your Windows Desktop.
2. Click the “Launch SofTest” button. SofTest will load.
3. Select the appropriate exam from the Exam File drop-down list. Text should appear in the “Exam Name” field. If it does NOT, notify the proctor.
4. If not already there, enter your Semester Exam Number in the ID field and enter the password provided by the proctor.
5. Click “Begin Exam” to start the exam. Your computer will reboot into SofTest’s Secure Mode.
6. Read each Notice window carefully and click “OK” to advance to the next window. STOP when the last Notice window with the Red Stop Sign appears.
7. When instructed by the proctor, type “begin” and click the “Begin” button.
8. To exit the exam, click “File” then “Save and Exit” or click the “Exit Exam” button. Click the “Close Exam” button. On the yellow window, click the “Exit” button.
9. Follow the instructions to reboot your computer back into Windows.

### Upload Answer Files

1. Your exam will automatically upload to the secure server when the computer reboots into Windows and your internet connection is established. Students should not leave the building until their file has successfully uploaded or has been retrieved from the laptop by authorized personnel.

### Upload Confirmation

ExamSoft provides two methods of verifying that your answer file uploaded:

1. You will be e-mailed confirmation that your answer file uploaded.
2. Log in to the Exam Takers section of the website and select “Exam History.”

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: Who is eligible to sign up for ExamSoft?**

ExamSoft is now available to all J.D., LL.M., and Exchange Students whose computer meets the minimum specifications.

### **Q: Will the Law School provide a laptop if I don't have one?**

Unfortunately, the Law School cannot provide laptops. You may want to look into renting a laptop or borrowing a laptop, *but you must make sure that the laptop meets our minimum specifications!*

<u>Possible places to rent laptops:</u>	Rentex (800-574-1702)
	Rent-a-PC (877-RENTAPC)
	Schneider Leasing Company (800-752-7368)

***Please note that these companies are NOT affiliated with Boston University, and unfortunately we cannot guarantee the quality of any laptops from those companies.***

According to our financial aid office, students who need to purchase a laptop can use private or federal loan funds. The University allows students to add up to \$2,500 to their student budget to cover the cost of a computer. This amount can include a printer, additional software, peripheral equipment, and warranty or service contracts. Students must make purchases during the academic year in which they are requesting the increase or after July 1 of the summer before that academic year. Students who purchase a computer for less than \$2,500 may request the balance in subsequent years if needed for replacement or upgrade purposes. If you want to add the cost of a computer to your student budget, you must bring a copy of the invoice or receipt with a letter requesting the increase to your budget to the Law Financial Aid Office, 13<sup>th</sup> floor.

### **Q: My computer does not meet the minimum specs but my roommate takes their exams on laptop? Can I borrow their computer for my exams?**

Students may use a borrowed laptop as long as the laptop owner is not registered for the same classes as the borrower and there are no exam time conflicts. Any student who plans on using a friend's laptop to take their finals must notify the Registrar by the registration deadline (April 17, 2008). The Registrar's Office will provide further instructions.

**Q: What if I miss the deadlines for registering with the Registrar's Office or with ExamSoft. Can I still register and take exams on my laptop?**

Unfortunately, **no extensions** for any reason can be granted if you miss the deadline for registering with ExamSoft. Any student who has not registered the latest version of the software by April 17 will have to hand-write their Spring 2008 exams. The reason we have to be strict with these deadlines is that scheduling exams in this facility is a very complicated puzzle. We have limited rooms for exams since, unlike some schools, we have exams in the J.D. program and four LL.M. programs all happening during the same time period. We simply don't have the space to make last minute changes.

Also, for the exams on laptops, we have to have our computer staff available for questions and problems that may arise, plus we need to have proctors who are more sophisticated if possible. This can't be done on a last minute basis. We appreciate your understanding.

**Q. How will the Registrar know which exams I want to take on laptop? What if I change my mind?**

We will assume that students who are fully registered with ExamSoft are taking all exams on their laptop unless we are otherwise notified. Any JD student who changes their mind and decides to take one or more exams with standard bluebooks must notify our Registrar, Mary Jo Sullivan, by e-mail ([sully@bu.edu](mailto:sully@bu.edu)) **no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 17**. Please indicate to which exam(s) this applies. LLM and exchange students should contact their graduate program office.

**Q: Will I need to plug in my laptop during the exam, or can I just rely on battery power?**

Laptop users will be required to plug their computers into outlets and may **not** rely on battery power.

**Q: If I use a laptop for exams, will I be in the same exam room as those who are writing or manually typing their exams?**

In most instances, laptop users will be in a separate room, and must report to the exam room **no later than 30 minutes before the scheduled time** of the exam in order to perform the required set up. Software must be opened within 15 minutes prior to the start of the exam. **If the software cannot be opened at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam, the student must hand-write the exam. The starting time of the exam will not be delayed, nor will the ending time be extended.** The actual time you have to do the exam is the same as for others who are not using laptops for that exam. On occasion, laptop users and hand-writers will be assigned to the same exam room. (This is usually limited to smaller courses.) If so, the Registrar will provide ear plugs for the hand-writers.

Please note that because of space constraints, laptop users may be in exam rooms where more than one exam is being administered at the same time.

**Q: What if I have a problem with my laptop or the software during the exam?**

**Immediately** inform the proctor, who will contact computer systems staff. Generally, the experience at other law schools has been that most technical problems can be solved within a few minutes. If any hardware/software problems occur during the exam, you must start hand-writing the exam. (Standard bluebooks will be available in the exam room.) In that case, the professor will be given the typed part of the exam plus any used bluebooks.

**\*\*No additional time will be given to complete the exam even if there are problems during the exam with hardware/software. \*\***

**Q: I take my notes on my laptop and my exam is open book. Can I use the notes stored on my computer during the exam?**

No. ExamSoft will fully block access to all computer programs and the internet. Even if an exam is open-book, you will not have access to any notes, outlines, etc. that are stored on your laptop. You must bring hard copies of notes or other materials that are allowed for any open-book or restricted open-book exam.

**Q: How is my exam answer printed out?**

When you finish the exam, your answer file will automatically upload to a secure server once you connect to the internet. Authorized law school personnel will download your exam file and print out the exam. (It is impossible to print out the exam without specialized software that only authorized law school personnel will have.)

**Q: What if I registered to take an exam(s) on my laptop but I then get permission to reschedule the exam? Can I still use my laptop when I take the rescheduled exam?**

We will attempt to accommodate students taking rescheduled exams in proctored exam rooms. We cannot guarantee proctors or technical support will be available to handle laptop issues for rescheduled exams.

**Q: Will I be at a disadvantage if I don't/can't use a laptop on my exams?**

No. Schools that have allowed law students to use laptops on exams have not found that those students receive higher grades than students who do not use laptops. In fact, faculty members sometimes report that it is easier to spot weaknesses in answers when they are typed.

**Q: What if my computer crashes after the Registration Deadline?**

Students who have fully registered with ExamSoft by the April 17 deadline may return to the website and re-download the software, if necessary. Students who experience computer problems after April 25 should notify the Registrar's Office of any difficulties. (Students who have already downloaded an exam file when their computer crashed will require an adjustment to their account before they can re-download the exam file.)