Graduate Tax Program Final Exam Handbook
Spring 2026

The Graduate Tax Program administers two types of exams: timed and take-home. The format is noted in the exam schedule. Residential students will take in-class, proctored exams. Online students can take the exam anywhere with a reliable internet connection.

1. **Timed Exams**
    - **Method:** Timed exams use a software application called Examplify from the company ExamSoft. Examplify locks your computer, so you cannot access anything else, for the duration of the exam. You must download Examplify from the ExamSoft website prior to the start of the exam period.
    - **Time Limit:** All timed exams have a 2.5 hour time limit. International students without prior education in English are granted one additional hour.
    - **Residential Students:** Timed exams will be taken in a proctored classroom at the date and time listed on the schedule.
    - **Online Students:** Timed exams are assigned to a 24-hour window during the exam period, beginning and ending at 2:00pm eastern. You have 2.5 hours to take the exam, and you can start it at any point during the 24-hour window. Once you start, the exam must be completed in one sitting. The latest you can begin the exam and still have the full 2.5 hours is 11:15am on the day the exam window closes.
    - **Password**: Passwords are required to access the exam. The exam password will be posted as an announcement to the Blackboard course site at 1:45pm on the day the exam opens.

2. **Take-Home Exams**
    - **Method:** Take-home exams are PDF files that you download from the ExamSoft website and re-upload there once finished. No special software is required.
    - **Time Limit:** Take-home exams have no time limit. You can download the exam file at any point during the window noted on the schedule. You must upload it to the ExamSoft website by 2:00pm on the day of the deadline.

Regardless of format, exams are due by the closing time on the day listed on the exam schedule. There are no exceptions to this, unless you have already received approval to take an exam on a different day. Once the exam period has started, we cannot provide extensions on due dates except in extreme extenuating circumstances. **Failure to submit your exam on time will result in a failing grade.**

You should first refer to the exam schedule to determine the type of exam you are taking, and then review the instructions for that exam type. Please print out a copy of these instructions if you are taking a timed exam, so you have them on hand during the exam.

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If you experience issues, you should contact the Graduate Tax Program. If you are taking a timed exam and have a technical problem while our office is closed, you should contact ExamSoft Support.

Contact Information	
Graduate Tax Program gradtax@bu.edu 617-353-3105 9:00am-5:00pm ET	ExamSoft Support support@examsoft.com 954-429-8889 Live Chat – log in to examsoft.com/bulaw, click Support at the top, then Chat at the bottom *ExamSoft support cannot extend download deadlines or provide additional exam downloads*

Exam Rescheduling/Accommodations

All students must take their exam in accordance with the published exam schedule. Failure to take the exam as scheduled, without prior approval, will result in a failing grade.

All requests to reschedule exams must be directed to gradtax@bu.edu. **Students must not contact their instructors with anything related to exam scheduling.**

Requests to reschedule due to exam conflicts

The exam schedule in the Graduate Tax Program is designed to minimize exam conflicts but some students may have two exams scheduled on the same day. In addition, students taking exams in the JD program may have conflicts that fall into the categories below. Students may request to reschedule a **timed exam** that is a part of a schedule of:

- Three exams in three consecutive 24-hour periods
- Four exams in four consecutive 24-hour periods
- Two exams in the same 24-hour period

In the case of three consecutive exams, the middle exam will be rescheduled. In the case of four consecutive exams, either the second or third exam will be rescheduled. In the case of two exams on the same day, either exam can be rescheduled.

The Associate Director will determine the date of the rescheduled exam, based on the rest of the student's exam schedule. Rescheduled exams will be set for as close to the date of the original exam as possible and must remain within the scheduled exam period.

Take-home exams cannot be rescheduled or extended.

Requests to reschedule for reasons other than an exam conflict

Requests to reschedule an exam for reasons other than an exam conflict must be submitted in writing to gradtax@bu.edu as soon as possible, and prior to the date of the exam.

Requests related to illness or medical emergencies must include a supporting statement from the student's physician.

Failure to take an exam at the scheduled or rescheduled time, or failure to submit a take-home exam or paper on time, will be excused only where the student's failure was caused by serious illness or other compelling causes beyond the student's control.

Disability Accommodations

Students who believe they are entitled to additional time on a timed exam due to a disability must register with, and get approval from, the BU Office of Disability and Access Services. If approved, they send documentation to the Law School that includes how much extra time the student has been granted. This process can take some time, so new students are encouraged to start early.

Timed Final Exams

If you have any issues while taking your exam, you should contact the Graduate Tax Program office first. If our office is closed, you can contact ExamSoft support at support@examsoft.com, 954-429-8889, or via live chat through the ExamSoft website (log in and click on Support at the top). Residential students will take their exams the classroom noted on the exam schedule. Exam proctors will administer the exams. IT staff will be in the classroom at the beginning and end of exams to assist residential students with any technical issues.

You will use Examplify, a software application from the company ExamSoft, to take your timed final exam.

- You must download and register the software prior to the start of the exam period (please see Step 2 below for instructions on how to download Examplify).
- Refer to the exam schedule for your program to determine the time frame for your exam.
- All timed exams open on the date and time indicated on the exam schedule. Once you begin the exam it must be completed in one sitting.
- Online students should refer to the exam schedule for the closing time of the exam. **For a 2.5-hour exam, the latest you should begin is 11:15am on the day the exam window closes if you wish to have the full time.** This allows time for the exam to start up in the beginning and upload at the end. Your exam will automatically shut down at the closing time, so be sure to leave yourself enough time.

Step 1: Prepare Your Computer

1. Confirm that your computer meets the system requirements for Examplify. You can find this information on the ExamSoft website: https://ei.examsoft.com/GKWeb/login/bulaw.

2. 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.examsoft.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.

3. Scan for viruses and spyware. Our Information Services and Technology (IS&T) staff recommend 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 IT Help Center website for anti-virus software or anti-spyware software.

4. Make sure your computer is configured in advance for internet access in the location you will be taking your exam.

Step 2: Download and Register Examplify

NOTE: If you used Examplify for your Fall 2025 exams you do not need to re-register and download the software. You should log in prior to the exam period to make sure you have the most up-to-date version.

If you did NOT use Examplify for exams in Fall 2025, you must download and register the software. Licenses are only good for one academic year.

1. Go to the BU Law's custom ExamSoft website: examsoft.com/bulaw.

2. Review the minimum system requirements, and make sure your computer meets them

3. Log in using the Exam Takers section in the upper left corner.
    a. Your Student ID is your BU ID number, starting with U. Your password is your Kerberos password.

4. After logging in, click the Download button in section 2 and follow the prompts to download and install the software.

5. After Examplify downloads, you will need to register the software. To do so, open the software on your computer and log in.
    a. The institution ID is bulaw. Your log in information is the same as for the ExamSoft website.

6. The software will automatically register upon your first login, and you will receive a confirmation email.

Step 3: Download the Exam File

You are not permitted to start your timed final exam until the exam window opens, as noted on the Final Exam Schedule However, you do have the ability to download the exam file in advance of the day you take your exam. **We recommend you download the exam ahead of time, so you are ready to take the exam once the window opens.** Exams will be ready for download 48 hours prior to the exam.

***IMPORTANT*:** *Do not use a law firm or company computer to take your timed exam. There are likely firewalls and/or antivirus software that can cause issues.*

To download the timed final exam file:

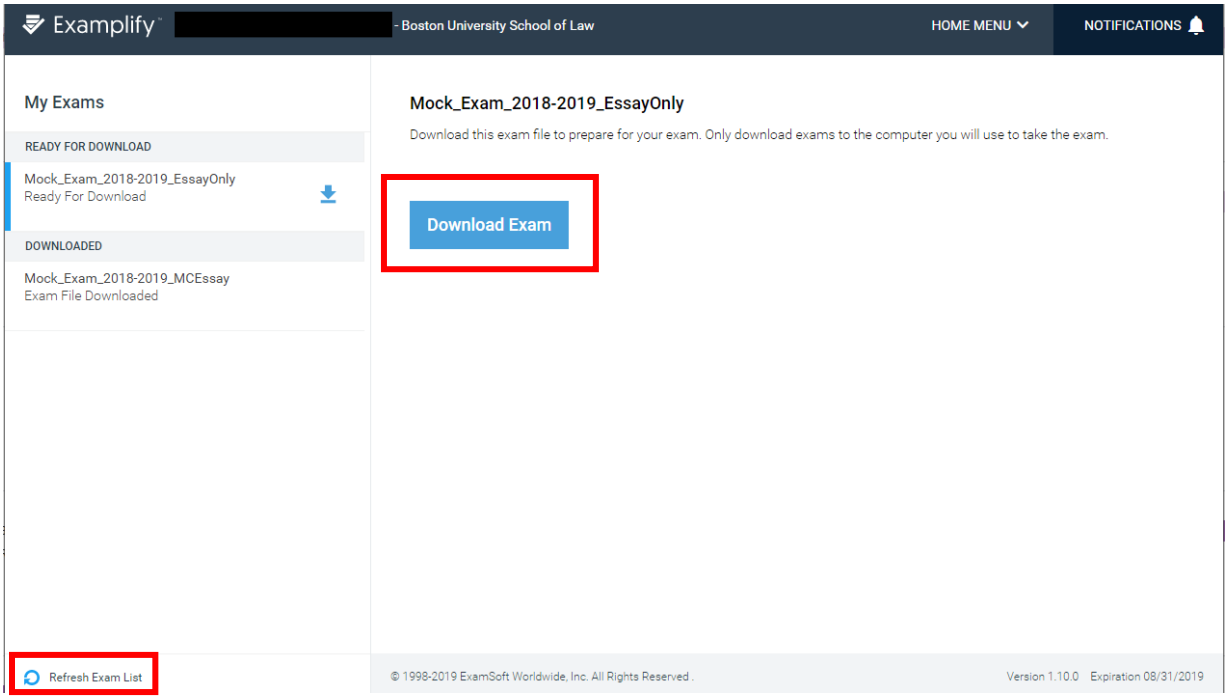
1. Open the Examplify program on your computer.

2. Enter your ExamSoft login credentials. You are required to re-enter this information if you previously logged out of Examplify.
    a. Your StudentID is your BU ID number (starting with a U, no dashes).
    b. Your password is your Kerberos password.
    c. The Institution ID is bulaw.

3. Upon logging in, you will see your Dashboard. On the left-hand side is your exam list, with sections for exams that are ready for download, exams that you have already downloaded, and exams that you have completed.

4. To download an exam, select the exam from the "Ready to Download" list and click the download button.
    a. Exams will be available for download 48 hours prior to the opening of the exam window. If it is less than 48 hours before the exam window opens and you do not see the exam listed, click "Refresh Exam List."

b. **You will only be able to download the exam once.** If for some reason you need to download it again (for example, you got a new computer) you will need to contact the GTP office ***prior to the day of the exam.***



Step 4: Taking a Timed Final Exam

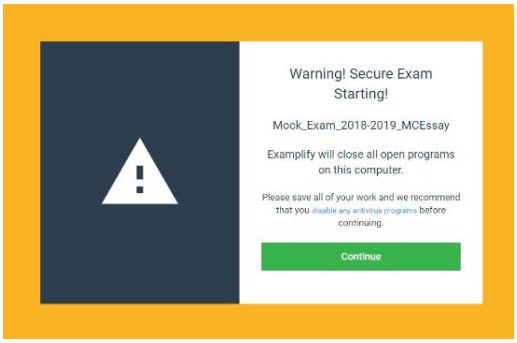
IMPORTANT*: ExamSoft recommends that you disable your anti-virus software prior to taking an exam. Information on doing so is here:** https://examsoft.force.com/emcommunity/s/article/Disabling-Anti-Virus-Software. ***You should also disable any firewalls, your laptop's "install automatic updates" feature, and hibernation mode.

1. **PASSWORDS ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE TIMED EXAMS!** The password will be posted as a Blackboard announcement 30 minutes before the exam begins. Students taking the exam in-person will also receive the password from the proctor. Residential students will receive the exam password in the classroom.
    - If you were granted permission to take the exam on a different date, you will receive an individual email with your password at a half hour before the exam window on your rescheduled exam date. This password will be different from the one for the regularly scheduled exam, so you can disregard any other announcements.
2. Launch the Examplify program on your computer.

3. Select the exam name from the Downloaded Exams list on the left side. If you previously downloaded the exam and do not see it in your list, click the Refresh Exam List button at the bottom left of the screen. If you still do not see it, you may need to log out of Examplify and then log back in.

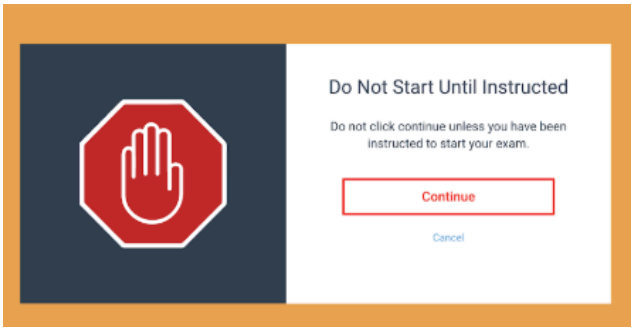
4. Enter the exam password provided in the announcement mentioned in step 1 above and click on the green "Enter" button. Please note that this does not start the timer.
    - If you have any open programs, you will be prompted to close them at this time. You must close them in order to start the exam.

5. A warning screen will appear. If you have not yet disabled your anti-virus software, you should do so now. Once you are ready, click Continue. You will now be entering secure mode. This may take a few minutes to load, so please be patient.

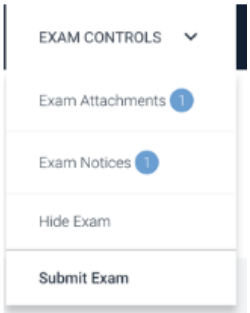


6. Exam notices will appear next. Please review these, as they will include exam-specific instructions. After reviewing the notices, click Next.

7. You will then see a "stop sign" screen. Click Continue.



8. On the next screen, check the box next to "I am authorized to start my exam" and then click the green Start Exam button. This will take you into the exam and the timer will start.
    - **Do not click the Start Exam button until you are actually ready to begin the exam, as this starts the timer. The timer cannot be paused and you will not be able to exit the exam.**



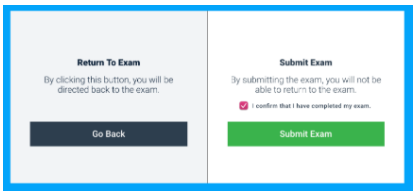
9. **Before you answer any questions, you should download and review the PDF of the exam**. To do so, click on the Exam Controls button at the top right of the screen, and the click Exam Attachments. ***You should review all exam-specific instructions included in this document.*** The PDF will also allow you to review the entire exam before beginning to answer the questions within the software. You can also re-read the exam notices that were presented prior to the start of the exam.

10. Answer the exam questions.
    - **Multiple choice questions:** click on the answer you would like to select. **You must click on the answer itself and NOT on the "eye" icon on the far-right side.**
        - After clicking on an answer, the border around it will turn blue and a checkmark will appear on the far-right side. Text above the answer choices will also tell you what answer choice you have currently selected
        - The "eye" icon on the far right allows you to eliminate an answer from consideration.
    - **Essay questions:** Type your answer in the provided response box

11. Click the Next button to proceed to the next question.
    - The list of question numbers on the left side shows you your progress. Once you have answered a question, the circle will turn blue. The question you are currently working on will be white with a blue border. Questions you have not yet answered will have no color.

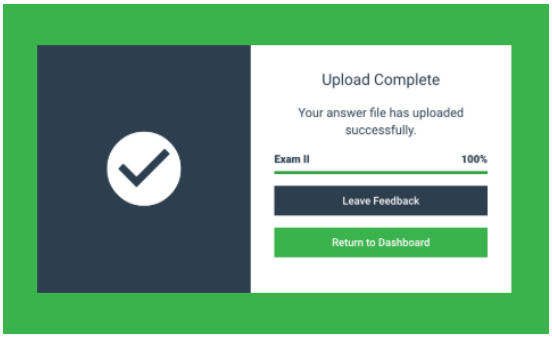
12. **To submit your exam, click the Exam Controls option at the top right of the screen, and then click Submit Exam.** You can also click the Finish button on the last question of the exam.
    - Before clicking Submit, make sure each question number in the list on the left-hand side has a blue circle, indicating that you have answered every question.
    - If you run out of time, your answers will be saved, and your exam will submit automatically as-is.
    - **If you run out of time because it the exam window has closed, your exam may not automatically submit. If you do not see the green confirmation screen, contact the GTP office immediately.**

13. The application will exit out of the exam view and you will see a confirmation screen. To submit your exam, click the check box and then click Submit Exam. If you came to this page in error, click the Go Back button. Clicking Submit Exam is final, so do not do it until you are completely sure you have completed all exam questions.



14. **PLEASE DO NOT PANIC** if it takes several minutes for upload process to be completed. This is normal – just be patient.

15. If the upload was successful, you will see a green confirmation screen. Click Close. Once you have reached this screen, your exam has finished, and you will not be able to re-enter the exam. You will also receive a confirmation email, and the exam will show as Completed on your Examplify home screen.
    - If you do not see a green confirmation screen that confirms your exam successfully uploaded, or the exam does not appear as Completed on the Examplify home screen, please contact the GTP office immediately.



Troubleshooting

You are not able to download Examplify
Contact the Law School IT office at 617-358-5555 or lawhd@bu.edu.

Examplify, your keyboard, and/or your mouse has stopped responding during an exam

1. Turn off your computer by pressing and holding the power button until the computer turns off
2. Turn your computer back on
3. An "Examplify Exam Restart" window will appear. Select Resume/Yes to return to the exam. You will be returned to within 59 seconds of where you left off.

You did not receive an email confirming that your exam successfully uploaded, or it does not show in your list of completed exams in Examplify.
Contact the GTP office at gradtax@bu.edu or 617-353-3105. If you ran out of time because the exam window closed, your exam may not have had time to upload. The GTP program can assist you in uploading it. If you experienced some other technical issue and the exam didn't upload, we can walk you through the process of finding the exam on your computer's hard drive. **If our office is closed, please contact ExamSoft support (contact info on page one of this document).**

Your computer crashes after you have downloaded an exam
Contact the GTP after you have re-downloaded Examplify to your new computer. Each student gets only one download per exam, so we will need to manually give you an additional download.

Your exam does not show in the list of exams available for download (less than 48 hours before the exam)

1. Ensure that the exam you are you are taking is in fact a timed exam, and not a take-home (please see the section on take-home exams for instructions)
2. Click the "Refresh Exam List" at the bottom left of the screen
3. If the above doesn't work, log out of Examplify and log back in
4. If neither of the above work, contact the Graduate Tax Program

Take Home Final Exams

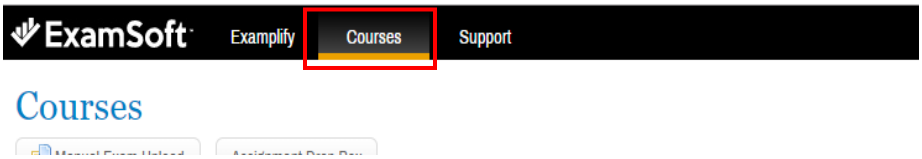
You DO NOT use the Examplify software for take-home exams. However, you WILL need to log in to the ExamSoft website in order to download the exam (a PDF document) and to upload your completed exam. You can download the file at any point within the window noted on the exam schedule, and you must upload it by the deadline on the date it is due. Files cannot be downloaded prior to the opening date listed on the exam schedule.

Step 1: Download the take-home exam file.

1. Go to BU Law's custom ExamSoft website: examsoft.com/bulaw

2. Log in using the Exam Takers section in the upper left corner. You will log in with your Kerberos ID and password.

3. Click on the "Courses" tab at the top of page.



4. Click on the name of the course that applies to the final exam you intend to download.

5. In the Notifications/Actions required column, click on the "Action" box next to "Download Instructions/Assignment."
    - If it is not yet the time that the window opens, you will not see anything here.

6. Click "Download" in the popup box, and the exam will download as a PDF document. Save the file to a folder on your computer where you will be able to find it easily. You will only get one download; if for some reason you need an additional download, please contact the GTP office.

Step 2: Complete your take home exam as a Word document

Do not use your name anywhere on the exam.

1. Insert a header in your word document and type your **Spring 2026 Exam Number** into the header so that it appears at the top of every page.
    - All examinations at the Law School, including take-home examinations, are given on an anonymous basis. The Registrar's Office will assign all students a four-digit exam number each semester. Exam numbers will be released through the ExamSoft website. Students may locate their exam (or "blue book") number by clicking on your profile on the top right of the page after logging in. Please note that the Final Exam option on the MyBU Student Portal does not apply to law students.

2. As you work on your exam, you should save it regularly and back it up to an external source. We are not able to extend due dates if you lose your file.

3. Once you have finished your exam, save it as a Word document using only your **Spring 2026 Exam Number** as the title. Be sure to remove any other identifying information (such as your name as the author in Word).

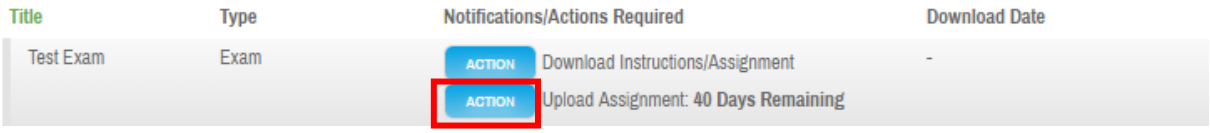
Step 3: Upload your completed take-home exam document.

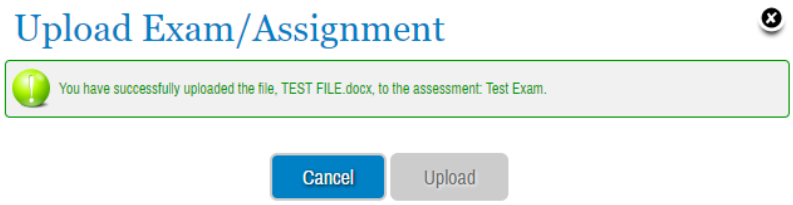
***You will not be able to upload your exam after the deadline*, so do not wait until the last minute.**

1. Once you have completed your take home exam and saved it as your **Spring 2026 Exam Number**, log in to www.examsoft.com/bulaw as an exam taker using your login credentials (your BU ID and Password).

2. Click on the "Courses" tab at the top of page and then click on the name of the course.

3. In the Notifications/Actions required column, click on the "Action" box next to "Upload Assignment."



4. In the pop-up box, click Browse to find your file on your computer, then click Upload

5. If the upload was successful, a green box in the pop-up window will confirm your upload. You can X out or click Cancel.
    - **You may not receive a confirmation email.** If you saw the green box, then your submission was successful. You may also refer to the upload page in ExamSoft and confirm that there is data in the Upload Date and Upload File Name columns.