Tutorial: Exam revision

Purpose

To give you a chance to practise exam style questions and get feedback from your tutor.

To give you a chance to internalise what a good exam question is.

1 Actual exam questions

1. On the University web page of past exam papers, you'll see that several recent past papers are available. These are a good guide to the kind of question you can expect. However, I won't make sample solutions available for these because they are questions I wrote and Informatics policy is that we don't make our solutions to real exams available. I or your tutor will, however, be happy to comment on your solutions on an individual basis. (In a tutorial, while the assessment and marking boycott persists, not by marking written work: see comment on the "Feedback to you" page on the course web site.)

2. Going back to before the course rewrite, here are some still-applicable questions:

   - Summer main diet 2010, Q2
   - Summer main diet 2010, Q3 (omitting part (a) if you wish: I will not, this year, set an exam question asking you to develop a use case diagram, although I might expect you to read one).
   - Resit diet 2010, Q2
   - Resit diet 2009, Q3

   Since I didn't write these questions and haven't seen the official mark scheme I did feel free to indicate what I'd do faced with such questions – see the companion web page to this.

   See also the Summary lecture notes, when considering what question types to anticipate. Just as the "draw a use case for..." questions would not be appropriate this year, there are some question types that could be set this year that you won't find in past papers: most obviously, writing OCL and working with patterns. The questions from the tutorial sheets are a good guide in those areas. (Rest assured, though, that unlike tutorial sheet questions, exam questions are scrutinised both by colleagues and by an external examiner, so vague or misinterpretable questions seldom survive!)

2 Write your own exam question

A seriously good exercise, believe it or not, is to try writing your own exam question. Now that you've seen the style, have a go. If you send me your question and your solution, I'd be happy to comment on both (to what extent I think the questions you're setting are things I could reasonably put in an exam, and whether I think your answers are reasonable). Make sure your question:

1. is a good test of knowledge of/understanding of/ability to apply material in this course;

2. has a decent balance of bookwork to problem solving;

3. can be done by a competent person in not more than 45 minutes (I aim for half an hour – the exam is two hours to do two questions, but I don't see the benefit in putting people under time pressure);

4. is not too subjective – it has to be possible to judge reliably how many marks to give;

5. is marked out of 25.