Toronto Metropolitan University
Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching

Rethinking Your Final Course Assessments

The following strategies can help you convert your course assessments to an online or alternate format.

For more information, send questions to teachingcentre@ryerson.ca.

1. Decide which assessments are essential to your course outcomes.

- Identify the essential knowledge, skills, and values that still need to be assessed.
- Review your assessments:
  - Can you adapt assessments to be administered online via available technologies?
  - If not, consider:
    - Combine or reduce remaining assessments to measure essential learning
    - Revise the form of assessment to simplify delivery and grading

2. Change your assessment scheme to meet your revised goals

- **Pick assessment methods familiar to you and your students:** Rely on tools that are familiar to you and your students when possible, and roll out new tools only when absolutely necessary.
- **Change the format of assessments to one that students can submit remotely:**
  - **Alternative assessments** might include things like replacing an invigilated multiple choice final exam with open book short answer questions on essential information.
  - **Provide equivalent options** that take into account the different technologies available to students off campus, such as allowing students to submit either a video recorded on their phone or the written script of a presentation.

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3. Make your assessments accessible

- **State expectations, but allow extensions** for students who have difficulties meeting deadlines. Be as flexible as possible. Be ready to handle requests for extensions or accommodations equitably.
- **Keep things accessible and mobile friendly:** In the event of a full campus closure, *Note:* many students may only have a mobile device available, and may have limited access to reliable, affordable, and high-speed Internet.
- **Consider saving files in two formats**, the original format and an accessible, mobile-friendly format such as PDF.
- **Take into account how much bandwidth is required** by technologies like streaming video and if students have the network and computing resources to access them.

4. Options for adapting your final assessments

Current assessment format	What is being tested?	Alternatives to consider
Multiple Choice Questions	• Knowledge • Facts • Concepts • Recall • Definition • Identification	• Take Home Exams
	• Analysis • Synthesis • Problem solving	• Take Home Exams • Problem solving take home assignment - students work at home and submit the assignment online
Short answer questions	• Knowledge • Concepts • Facts • Recall	• Take Home Exams • Problem solving take home assignment - students work at home and submit the assignment online • Short written assignment/essay

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	• Definition • Identification • Analysis • Synthesis • Problem solving	
Essay responses on exams	• Writing • Analysis • Critique	• Take Home Exams • Short written assignment/essay
Labs	• Procedural knowledge • Critical thinking • Hypothesis testing • Evaluation of evidence	Ask students to: • Design a lab for a specific purpose • Describe how they would carry out a particular test. What equipment, controls, precautions must be considered? • Explain how they would test a hypothesis • Provide possible reasons for particular outcomes
Direct Observation or Practical Demonstration	• Procedural • Knowledge • Analysis • Critical Thinking	• Record a demonstration of procedure (e.g., on a phone, tablet, or computer) along with a description of key steps and/or cautions and share with students • Provide an online clip of a procedure for student analysis.
Performance or Procedure	• Procedural knowledge • Aesthetic skills • Communication skills • Analysis	Ask students to: • Record a performance or procedure using their phones, tablets, or computers • Critique a performance or procedure. Identify steps, identify problems with procedure.
Problem Sets	• Analysis	• Assign and photograph handwritten responses

Scenario-based (see also Critiques)	• Critical Thinking • Observation • Analysis • Application of knowledge	Ask students to review a scenario for key information/factors or for actions to be taken: • An experiment has been conducted with the following control and the results are surprising. What might account for your observations? • You are working with a patient/client/child and [the following thing] happens, how would you respond? • Review a video, image, or text and answer questions, provide an analysis, reflect on, or make connections between course concepts

Critiques / Creative work	• Analysis
	• Application of knowledge
		• Set up pairs or triads for students to email work to each other and provide feedback using a rubric. Provide peer readers with specific descriptive questions to answer, such as “What is the biggest unresolved question in this work?” or “What are the biggest strengths of this piece?“
		• Ask students to
		  ○ Critique a visual
		  ○ Identify multiple examples of a visual for analysis

Presentation	• Knowledge • Oral Communication • Organization	Ask students to: • Record presentations using phones or computers • Deliver presentation live using Google Meet or Zoom • Submit a written script or detailed outline of the presentation. • Submit slides with speaker notes
Group presentation	• Knowledge • Teamwork • Interpersonal Communication	Ask students to: • Use online tools such as Zoom or Google Meet to coordinate a presentation. One group member can share their screen while the other members take turns speaking. • Each contributor records their contribution using simple technology • Offer self- or peer-assessment options using a simple Google Form • Generate a digital poster to be shared on D2L
Peer or Self	• Critical Thinking	• Provide Google Form along with information or criteria for assessment

assessment	• Analysis • Reflection	• Reflective writing submitted via D2L or Google
Portfolio	• Visual information (artwork, 3D projects) • Written work	Ask students to: • Photograph physical pieces with their phones and create a digital version of the portfolio. • Annotate their work and process for each piece and include a brief introductory statement about the work as a whole.