# **Outlining Plans to Replace Exam(s) with New Assessments**

**GOAL:** Identify challenges with exams, why you would like to change to a different assessment approach, and how the new assessment will align with your course learning outcomes.



## 

## STEP 1: Reasons for considering a new assessment approach

Why are you considering replacing your exam with a different approach? Add ideas to the box below. See **Handout 1**: **Principles of Effective and Inclusive Assessment.**

* What challenges, concerns, or issues with exams are you hoping to address or solve?
* What goals or aspirations do you have for a new assessment (e.g., additional skills you’d like students to practice or learn, alleviating stress, workload, or anxiety, redistributing the weighting of assessments, balancing the distribution of assessments across the semester, etc.)?

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## STEP 2: Exam details

Outline the assessment details for the exam(s) you would like to replace. Add a column for each exam you are replacing. For example, if you are replacing a final exam, add details in the “Exam/Test 1” column. If you are replacing a mid-term and a final exam, use one column for each exam.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **[Exam/Test 1]** | **[Exam/Test 2]** |
| Due date |  |  |
| Time given to complete the exam |  |  |
| Weighting for final grade |  |  |
| Course learning outcomes assessed (exam may assess multiple outcomes) |  |  |

## STEP 3: Identifying the course learning outcomes to be assessed by the new assessment

Select which of your course learning outcomes need to, or should, be assessed by the new assessment. For each of the “course learning outcomes assessed” in the above table, ask yourself the following questions:

**Is this learning outcome assessed by other course assessment(s) that I plan to keep?**

YES!

NO!

**Is the outcome fully assessed by other assessments in the course?** (e.g., if the outcome states that students should be able to “synthesize,” do other assessments allow students to demonstrate this level of understanding?)

NO!

YES!

Do you need an additional assessment for this outcome? If no, do not add outcome to table below.

Would adding a new assessment assess the outcome **in a more effective or holistic way** or offer a better way for students to demonstrate their learning?

**Add outcome to table**

NO!

YES!

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course Learning Outcomes to be Assessed by New Assessment(s)** | **Would the new assessment be a:**   1. FINAL assessment of the **entire** learning outcome 2. FINAL assessment of **part** of the learning outcome 3. PARTIAL assessment of the learning outcome (e.g., Outcome states that students will “synthesize.” This assessment will ask students to compare and contrast, which is a step towards being able to synthesize). | **What is the level of understanding of the learning outcomes? –** see [Bloom’s Taxonomy](https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/) | **Where else is this learning outcome assessed?** |
| [course learning outcome 1] |  |  |  |
| [course learning outcome 2] |  |  |  |
| [course learning outcome 3] |  |  |  |

Note: your new assessment can assess one learning outcome or multiple learning outcomes

**Add to the table:**

* Looking at all your other course learning outcomes, are there any other outcomes that you’d like this new assessment to assess?
* Are you considering adding new course learning outcomes, or revising existing course learning outcomes, that would be aligned with this new assessment?
* Do you want to assess any other knowledge, skills, or attitudes through this assessment that are not part of your course learning outcomes (e.g., writing skills, oral communication, creativity, use of technology, collaboration or teamwork)? Do you want to add any of these skills to your course learning outcomes?

# **Selecting a New Assessment and Identifying Implications**

## 

**GOAL:** Explore potential assessment types and the implications of a new assessment on your course.



## STEP 1: What general approach will you take to replacing your exam(s)?

Based on the course learning outcome(s) for the new assessment (**Worksheet 1**: Outlining plans to replace exams with new assessments) and your review of the principles of effective and inclusive assessment design (**Handout 1**), what approach will you take to replacing your exam(s)?

* **Alternative type of exam** (e.g., take home or open book exam, oral exam or interview, collaborative exams, [two-stage exams](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/two-stage-exams))
* **Alternative single assessment** (e.g., portfolio, presentation, performance, case study, podcast)
* **Multiple assessments of the same type** (e.g., weekly or bi-weekly quizzes, discussion board contributions, reaction or reflection papers)
* **Multiple assessments of different types** (e.g., quizzes + case study, presentation + self-assessment)

## STEP 2: Identify the implications of a new assessment on your course

Consult **Handout 2** to explore alternative assessment types that align with the level of understanding of the learning outcomes you will assess with your new assessment. Select an alternative assessment option for consideration and use this checklist to identify the implications. Answer YES, NO, or ? for each question. Repeat for each alternative you are considering.

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| **Will this assessment…** | [Alternative Assessment] | **Additional Considerations** |
| 1. effectively assess relevant **course learning outcomes?** |  | If NO, can other assessments assess the outcomes? Do outcomes need modification? |
| 1. **introduce new skills, knowledge, or values** that are not currently taught or assessed in the course? (e.g., technology skills, teamwork, creativity, oral communication, applying content to global events) |  | If YES, how will these be supported and scaffolded? Will these skills be graded? Should these skills be part of the course learning outcomes? |
| 1. **increase student** **workload** compared to the exam? (use [Student Workload Calculator](https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/tools/estimator2/) and [Time on Task](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/online-courses/time-task) to estimate) |  | If YES, and overall workload is an issue, what will you remove? |
| 1. **increase grading/feedback workload** compared to the exam? |  | If YES, how will workload be rebalanced or managed? Can other forms of feedback be used? |
| 1. be **weighted** similarly to the exam? |  | If NO, how will weightings be redistributed? |
| 1. impact the **distribution or timing** of other assessments? (e.g., if the assessment has multiple components, will the timing conflict with other course assessments and activities?) |  | If YES, how will you change the assessment distribution or offer flexibility with timing or deadlines? |
| 1. impact **synchronous in-person or virtual class time**?(e.g., is synchronous time needed for students to complete or share the assessment, receive feedback, collaborate with peers) |  | If YES, how will you change your synchronous time to support students with this assessment? See Handout 2 – Engagement, Delivery and Submission Modes |

## STEP 3: List potential challenges with the new assessment type

Select an assessment type to use in your course. Based on your answers in Step 2, list the potential challenges with that assessment type for each general area and your thoughts about potential solutions.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **General Area** | **Specific Challenges or Issues (if any)** | **Potential Solutions** | **Resources** |
| 1. **Assessment of course learning outcomes** |  |  | See [Sample Assessment Strategies for Different Learning Outcomes](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/teaching-remotely/remote-assessments/shifting-your-assessments-remote-environment) section  [Aligning Assessments to Learning Outcomes](https://researchcentres.wlu.ca/teaching-and-learning/planning/aligning-assessments-with-outcomes.html) |
| 1. **Introduction of new skills, knowledge, or values that are not currently taught or assessed** |  |  |  |
| 1. **Student workload** |  |  | [Student Workload Calculator](https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/tools/estimator2/) and [Time on Task](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/online-courses/time-task) |
| 1. **Instructor/TA grading and feedback workload** |  |  | See the [Potential Strategies to Address High Grading and Feedback Workload](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/system/files/Handout%202%20Common%20Challenges%20and%20Potential%20Solutions%20for%20Balancing%20Assessments.pdf) section on page 2 |
| 1. **Assessment weighting** |  |  | Consider aligning weighting with [estimated student workload](https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/tools/estimator2/) |
| 1. **Assessment distribution or timing** |  |  | [Common Challenges and Potential Solutions for Balancing Assessments](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/system/files/Handout%202%20Common%20Challenges%20and%20Potential%20Solutions%20for%20Balancing%20Assessments.pdf)  [Finding a Balance between Low and High Stakes Assessments](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/system/files/Handout%201%20Finding%20the%20Balance%20between%20Low%20and%20High%20Stakes%20Assessments.pdf) |
| 1. **Use of synchronous time** |  |  | [Delivery and Engagement Modes Advantages and Disadvantages](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/system/files/Handout%202%20Delivery%20and%20Engagement%20Modes%20%281%29.pdf) |
| **Other** |  |  |  |

# **New Assessment Details**

**GOAL:** Plan the details and logistics for each new assessment and identify what support and resources you need to finalize your assessment plans.



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| **Assessment Name** |  |
| **Course learning outcomes assessed** |  |
| **Weighting for final grade** |  |
| **Individual or collaborative** |  |
| **In what mode will students complete or submit the assessment?\*** (e.g., synchronous in-person, synchronous virtual, asynchronous, or combination – see Handout 2) |  |
| **Timing and deadlines**  (deadlines for each component) |  |
| **Expected student workload\*\*** (estimated time to complete) |  |
| **Inclusivity and accessibility considerations** (see Handout 1) |  |
| **Required resources or technology for students and instructor** |  |
| **Evaluation and feedback method(s)**  How (e.g., written, video, audio, rubric) and from whom (peers, instructor, self)? |  |
| **Additional Notes** (e.g., logistics, opportunities for student choice, flexibility, potential challenges based on Worksheet 2, [academic integrity considerations](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/teaching-learning-resources/assessment-student-learning/encouraging-academic-integrity-assessment)) |  |

\*Refer to our [Delivery and Engagement Modes for Each Course Element](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/system/files/Handout%202%20Delivery%20and%20Engagement%20Modes%20%281%29.pdf) handout

\*\*For estimates of workload, see the [Student Workload Calculator](https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/tools/estimator2/) and [Time on Task](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/online-courses/time-task)

Use the **Assessment Checklist** (Handout 3) as a reference as you finalize your assessment and the [Transparent Assignment Template](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/Provost-Faculty-TransparentAssgntTemplate-2016.pdf) and [Checklist](https://tilthighered.com/assets/pdffiles/Draft%20Checklist.pdf) to share details of your assessment with students.

# **Planning my Next Steps**

Consider the following questions as you move forward with your assessment planning.

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| **What questions do I still have? What do I still need to learn?** (e.g., about your course, your teaching space, your students) |
| **What decisions do I still need to make to finalize my assessment plans?** |
| **What would I like more feedback on?** (stop by one of our [drop-in sessions](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/summerprogramming#Open%20Virtual%20Drop-In%20Sessions) throughout the summer!) |
| **What resources do I need to implement the assessment type I’ve chosen?** Consider your physical space, technology, TAs or course support, etc. |

Register for other[OTL Summer 2021 Programming sessions](https://otl.uoguelph.ca/summerprogramming) for additional opportunities to connect with colleagues, share your ideas, gather peer feedback, and get support for your course planning.