

## FAQs/Considerations for Faculty Scheduling Final Exams on Moodle and Take Homes

### 1) If I am moving to an on-line Moodle Exam when should I schedule it?

As students might be in a position to have to write several on-line exams, having the exam take place at the same time as the originally scheduled in-person exam will likely lead to less conflicts.

### 2) How do I find out what supports/how much additional time a student might need?

All students requiring accommodations for your course should have provided you with a letter of accommodation that outlines their needs. Students have also been messaged by Student Accessibility Services to resend their letters to their instructors. Instructors can proactively reach out by:

a) messaging the entire class that any student requiring a formal accommodation that is documented on a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) should send it again to verify the accommodation

b) Faculty can reach out to Alternate Exams ([altprof@yorku.ca](mailto:altprof@yorku.ca)) to obtain a list of all students (names, student number) who requested accommodations for their exam. The subject line for these requests should look like:

SUBJECT LINE: COURSE CODE. EXAM DATE. List of Accommodated Students

This list will NOT include the accommodations for each student. Alternate Exams does not have capacity to pull this information automatically and would have to pull this information one student at a time. Potentially, this would mean that the over 2000 students registered with Alternate Exams, if each student on average had 3 exams – looking up over 6000 individual reports. It is suggested that instructors once they receive their list, create one email and BCC: all the students in the list and put themselves in the TO: line and ask that students forward their LOAs so that accommodations can be put in place.

### 3) What if I do not have a LOA from a student – how do I get it?

Students should be directed to be in touch directly either with their Accessibility Counsellor or to request their LOA online at: <https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/> . Students are currently receiving their letters within 24 hours and sometimes sooner.

### 4) What if a student says they do not have a letter because they are not registered with Accessibility Services but they require accommodations?

If the student has documentation that they require accommodations, they can make an appointment to do intake with Student Accessibility Services over the phone by emailing [sasreg@yorku.ca](mailto:sasreg@yorku.ca) . Students are being told they are registering late in the term and as a result, we might not be able to put accommodations in place for them for this exam period. We need to reach out to faculty to see what is possible. When we do not have the time to put accommodations in place, we can support a deferral or petition process if the student feels they cannot write without accommodations.

Students without documentation might be requesting academic consideration for accommodation based on non-disability related grounds. This would be at the purview of the instructor.

- 5) What if a student indicates they are not able to do an on-line or take-home exam?

The student can talk with the instructor to identify what the student feels is the barrier that the format is creating. Instructors and students should feel free to connect with the student's accessibility counsellor directly or to send an email to [sasinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:sasinfo@yorku.ca) to arrange a time to discuss and problem solve solutions.

- 6) I am moving to a Take-Home exam – when should I schedule it as due?

Ideally, the exam would be due the same day as the originally set exam so that it lessens the chance for a student to encounter conflicts. Some flexibility for students might be required.

- 7) How do I respond to students who indicate they need more time to complete a take home than the rest of the class as a result of their accommodation needs?

It is good practice to let the entire class know how long it is expected that the slowest student without accommodation might require to complete the test in addition to setting word maximums for short answer and essay based questions. For instance, it might be the expectation that a student takes 3 hours to write. When releasing the take home, say at 9am and allowing students 24-48 hours to complete allows all students to self-accommodate for any reason – the need for additional time, the need to space out their writing, childcare responsibilities, difficulty finding a quiet space to work, etc.

- 8) How do I respond if a student indicates they have a conflict with my course exam/take home and another course?

Recognizing and being open to the fact that some students might require an individualized deadline should be factored into exam planning as even with the best of intentions, there might be conflicts. All students will also be experiencing higher than normal levels of anxiety which will impact their concentration, attention, and their speed of processing. Building in more time will support all students.

## Design Considerations

To assess cumulative knowledge across the course, alternative assignments may be just as effective as a final exam. Take-home exams or open-book, timed online exams may be the form that is required to ensure grading is possible in a timely manner. When practical, other examples include essays, posters and portfolios that allow students to demonstrate they have met the course learning outcomes.

[Creating an assignment](#) or exam in Moodle may be the most practical option. Ask students to upload assignments via a Moodle [assignment](#) and mark the work [within Moodle](#).

### A. Types of exam or assignment

Instead of multiple standard questions possible in a particular time period as a closed-book exam, offer fewer, more high-level questions which require more application, analysis, evaluation, and/or original thought. Students will have more time to complete the take-home exam so higher-level questions are possible, which are meant to challenge students so they cannot simply look up the answer or consult with classmates.

### B. How will you know that students are submitting their own work?

Consider how to make questions more individualized. Essays are often take-home summative assessments because they require students' original thought. If essay questions are not appropriate for your course/discipline, or you need to assess more process or procedural type questions (problem solving etc.) which may have a right answer, and/or a particular process, consider accompanying this question with an individual reflective question that asks students to describe in their own words, what they learned from this question or the course, or to demonstrate to you their individual understanding of the process/procedural question they answered. You may also consider process questions that require students to demonstrate how they arrived at their answer.

You can require students to submit through [Turnitin](#), a text-matching software available in Moodle that can help with some academic honesty concerns.

### C. If you choose to offer a timed, open-book online exam or assignment submission

For timed, open-book, online exams a balance is needed for students in terms of time limit and open-book - the time limit may restrict how complex or high level the questions can be or need to be, but since the exam will be open-book the questions have to be designed in a way to ensure we are assessing students' knowledge (unless you are only assessing their ability to find information, which you may be).

[Moodle can randomize questions](#) in an online exam so students have "unique" exams.

D. Finally, for feasibility, consider:

Scaling back your original assessment. Assess only what has not been assessed. In what remains to be assessed, consider what must be evaluated, and what can go. Focus on your learning outcomes to make this decision. You don't need to assess ALL of your content (and never can in an exam – we make decisions about what goes on the exam, always). Your learning outcomes can guide these decisions.

Ask yourself: How many questions are really necessary? We often offer a variety of questions, with varying levels of difficulty on an exam because students have limited time and no resources to answer these questions on a timed, in-person exam. Can you consider alternative writing assignments that are shorter, but still require the student to apply critical thinking skills and communicate their original thoughts?

Duration: If electing for a timed take-home examination, it should be designed so that they can be comfortably completed within a 3-hour timeframe. Students may not be able to stay at their desk for 3 hours straight, hence the importance of providing a longer time-window for completion. **See section 7 of this document for students who need more time to complete a take home than the rest of the class as a result of their accommodation needs.**

Consider having students complete a non-timed assignment due on your final examination date, with a wide time window for completion (a minimum of 48 hours is recommended).