**PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT IN ONLINE OR** [**BLENDED**](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/module/blended-learning) **COURSES**

The strategies listed here are for [online assessments](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/online-assessment-in-higher-education). If you are interested in student assessment in general, you might want to refer to [this guide](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/guiding-principles-assessment-of-students-learning).

**Prepare:**

* Revisit best practices:

When [designing assessments](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/five-principles-for-meaningful-online-assessment) in an [online course](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/guiding-principles-blended-online-course-design), think about focusing on the learning, balancing structure with flexibility, providing clear instructions and quality feedback.

* Have a backup plan:

Have a plan in mind in case the technology is not working. If the learning management system is down when quizzes or assignments are due, you might extend the deadline or have students email assignments to you. Plan for unexpected interruptions.

**Communicate:**

Communication is key in student assessment. These strategies will help you to keep the lines of communication open and clear.

* Be transparent:

For blended and online courses, it is critical that you let students know assignment parameters, expectations, and how you will grade assignments well in advance. [This template](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/transparent-assignment-instructions-template) can get you started.

* Submit assignments:

Let students know to submit their assignments through the learning management system rather than emailing them to you. The LMS will keep the assignments organized.

* Provide feedback:

It is critical to provide students with [feedback](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/module/designing-online-assessments/grading-feedback) on their learning in online courses. [Video feedback (veedback)](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/enriching-student-experience-with-veedbacks) can be highly effective.

* Convey a late assignment policy:

Let students know what the policy is regarding late assignments. Please note that your faculty or department may have policies that you are obligated to follow.

* Discuss academic integrity:

[This resource](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/what-to-know-about-academic-integrity-when-designing-assessments-online) includes comprehensive information about academic integrity in online environments. Read about [foundational principles for academic integrity](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/principles-for-approaching-academic-integrity-in-the-online-environment) here. Specific strategies for academic integrity and D2L can be found [here](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/academic-integrity-and-D2L).

**Practice:**

* Time management: Have someone such as a teaching assistant pilot the quizzes ahead of time to reveal any issues with quiz settings and whether the quiz is the right length
* Quizzes: Create [practice quizzes](https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/category/d2l/quizzes-surveys/) in the learning management system so that students can do a trial run with the tool.
* Technology: If students are doing synchronous presentations, allow them the opportunity to practice using the tool beforehand, such as sharing slides and creating surveys. The instructor does not have to be present at the practice sessions. Set up a [Zoom session](https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/getting-started-with-zoom/) for groups of students and allow them to manage their own sessions.

**Alternative Assessments:**

 Consider [alternative assessments](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/alternative-online-assessments) such as online student presentations or open book exams.

Online [discussion boards](https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/category/d2l/discussions/setting-up-discussions/):

* Communicate your [expectations](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/module/developing-online-courses/learning-activities) around online discussion boards and how they will be graded.
* Details that students need to know include word limits, number of original posts and replies, due dates, how the discussions will be [graded](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/online-discussion-board-guidelines), and when students will receive feedback.

Online student presentations:

* [Online student presentations](https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-with-technology-articles/maximize-class-time-moving-student-presentations-online/) can be an effective way for students to demonstrate their learning and can be done individually or in groups. They can also be done synchronously or as [recorded presentations](https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/blog/2020/03/online-student-presentations/).
* Provide students with detailed information about the assignment. Make sure they have the opportunity to practice prior to the presentation, and let them know what to do in the event of technology disruption. Provide resources on [how to do an online presentation](https://www.yorku.ca/scld/remote-learning/learning-remotely/giving-online-presentations/) to mitigate student anxiety.

Open book exams:

* [This resource](https://www.yorku.ca/teachingcommons/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2021/03/Open-Book-Exam-Toolkit.pdf) walks you through the process of creating open book exams.