

INDICATIVE TAXONOMY OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

This taxonomy is based on the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) [guidance](#). It was discussed by University Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee in March, May and July 2017. It is intended to be indicative and to be a resource for departments in describing their assessments.

Assessment type. For publication to prospective students	Assessment detail. For internal publication to staff and students	Definition
Examination	Closed-book written examination (<i>duration to be specified</i>)	A written examination occurring during the University's official examination period, at the end of a period of learning, to assess whether students have achieved <i>all or most of</i> the intended learning outcomes of a unit (or group of units, or part of a programme). Students are expected to answer a question or set of questions relating to a particular area of study under timed conditions and without reference materials. Closed-book examinations may be "seen" where the student is aware in advance of the question(s) they are expected to answer, or "unseen", where the questions are only revealed on the day.
	Open-book written examination (<i>duration to be specified</i>)	A written examination occurring during the University's official examination period, at the end of a period of learning, to assess whether students have achieved <i>all or most of</i> the intended learning outcomes of a unit (or group of units, or part of a programme). Students are expected to answer a question or set of questions relating to a particular area of study under timed conditions and with access to reference materials. Open-book examinations may be "seen" where the student is aware in advance of the question(s) they are expected to answer, or "unseen", where the questions are only revealed on the day.
	Multiple choice questions (<i>duration to be specified</i>)	Students are provided with a set of questions and multiple answers and asked to select the correct answer. MCQ tests are generally undertaken under timed conditions using a computer. MCQ tests may be seen or unseen, and open- or closed-book.
Coursework	In-class test (<i>duration to be specified</i>)	A timed test taken outside the University's assessment period, in a normal classroom, during a timetabled session. Some conditions may be similar to those of a formal examination. In-class tests may be seen or unseen, and open- or closed-book.
	Essay (<i>max word count to be specified</i>)	A written exercise on a particular topic that has a deadline attached but which is not carried out under timed conditions.

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	Report <i>(max word count to be specified)</i> <i>(group or individual assessment to be specified)</i>	A description, summary or other account of an experience or activity. There are many different kinds of report - often students are required to produce a report after participating in a practical activity such as fieldwork, laboratory work, work experience or placement. Reports typically have a prescribed format.
	Dissertation <i>(max word count to be specified)</i> (see also Project output)	An extended piece of written work, often the write-up of a final-year project. A dissertation is a substantial piece of writing deriving from research that a student has undertaken. Dissertations are the result of a student's independent work, carried out under the guidance of a supervisor. Different subject disciplines may follow different conventions in relation to the production of dissertations. (Note that other outputs from projects are listed separately.)
	Portfolio <i>(max word count to be specified)</i>	A collection of work that relates to a given topic or theme, which has been produced over a period of time. Typically, a portfolio contains a number of pieces of work, usually connected by a topic or theme. Students are usually required to organise the collection of examples and the portfolio often includes some reflective accounts (diaries/logs).
	Oral assessment and presentation <i>(group or individual assessment to be specified)</i>	A conversation or oral presentation on a given topic, including an individual contribution to a seminar. Examples of oral assessments and presentations might include conversations, discussions, role play, debates, presentations, and individual contributions to seminars.
	Viva Voce	An individual oral presentation and question and answer session. Is normally associated with the assessment of a dissertation or project
	Project output (other than dissertation) <i>(group or individual assessment to be specified)</i>	Output from project work, often of a practical nature, other than a dissertation or written report. Students are assessed on the output of a period of project work (other than in the form of a dissertation or written report). Examples are diverse and may include a new product, model, or a poster.
	Set exercises <i>(group or individual assessment to be specified)</i>	Questions or tasks designed to assess the application of knowledge, analytical, problem-solving, or evaluative skills. Examples might include data interpretation, data-analysis exercises, and problem-based or problem-solving exercises.
	Reflective Assessment <i>(max word count, where applicable, to be specified)</i> <i>(group or individual assessment to be specified)</i>	Any reflective assessment that focuses on critical analysis of the learning, and/or development that has taken place over a period of time, or following a specified event. Typical examples may include learning journals and/or diaries, blogs, audio/video reflections, personal development planning, placement or work-based learning synthesis, reflective essays.

Assessment type. For publication to prospective students	Assessment detail. For internal publication to staff and students	Definition
Practical	Practical <i>(see also Report for material produced following practical work)</i>	Assessment of a student's practical skills or competence. A practical skills assessment focuses on whether, and/or how well, a student performs a specific practical skill or technique (or competency). Examples include clinical skills (including OSCEs), laboratory techniques, identification of or commentary on sketches, surveying skills, language translation, or listening comprehension. This might also include a placement supervisor's assessment of a student's competence.

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