

IUE DISTANCE EDUCATION ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION MANUAL

This assessment and evaluation manual has been prepared to guide the instructors in this rather fast transition to distance education. This manual will be updated with the most recent information and the most recent version will be accessible on the EKOEGITIM-TLC website at <https://www.ieu.edu.tr/tlc/en>.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. When determining/adapting assessment methods, the course learning outcomes should be taken into consideration and the most appropriate assessment method for a particular learning outcome(s) should be selected. The total workload resulting from the assessments in the course and all the other courses students take should be taken into account. In this process, it is recommended to choose methods that require student cooperation and/or student-instructor interaction as much as possible. It will be helpful if all instructors who teach the same course determine and agree on the assessment method and criteria together to ensure the reliability of the grading.
2. In case a measurement and assessment method that has not been previously encountered by students is preferred, extra care must be taken in student orientation and conducting a demo is recommended.
3. Adequate information should be obtained on how to design and apply the new assessment method to be implemented on the Blackboard learning management system. For this purpose, videos of the training sessions offered by the TLC can be watched from the link below.
<https://ieu.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/48811/cl/outline>
4. A clear and detailed guideline containing information about the assessment (purpose, time provided, rules and restrictions, number of submission attempts, requested type [text, audio, picture, video], requested format [pptx/pdf/mp4, etc.] and other details) should be shared with the students along with the assessment. While sharing this information, it will be useful to remind students of the principles of "academic integrity" on issues such as cheating and plagiarism.
5. Providing a variety of assessment methods will enable a more fair assessment for students who have difficulty in a particular area. In addition, students should be given the right to express their special situations and alternatives should be provided for those students.

EXAMS IN THE LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Question Types

Different types of questions such as multiple choice or multiple answer questions can be used to assess lower-level cognitive skills in exams to be conducted on Blackboard. Open-ended questions that allows the instructor to assess higher-level cognitive skills can also be included in the same exam. Information on these question types and how to use them can be found in the training video or manual available from the following links:

<https://ie.u.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/48811/cl/outline>

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys

1. In multiple choice questions:
 - i. The question stem must be clear and understandable.
 - ii. The options (answer choices) should be of about the same length. The length of the options should be close to each other.
 - iii. Options such as "All of the above" or "None of the above" should be avoided.
 - iv. Using negative expressions in the stem of the question (i.e. "Which of the following is not included in...") should be avoided, and if used, the negative word should be given in bold or underlined.
 - v. The number of options does not necessarily have to be 4. If the questions and options are prepared carefully, 3-option questions will have high validity and reliability as much as 4 or 5-option questions.
 - vi. Options can be randomized and presented to each student in a different order.
2. If the exam question requires the student to prepare and upload a file (text, picture, video), the "File Response" question type can be used. During the exam, students may be asked to take a photograph of completed mathematical operations and upload this photograph as a file. Similarly, students can be asked to upload a video in which they demonstrated a skill or a text they prepared.
3. In the grading of open-ended questions, it is recommended to tabulate the criteria using a tool called a rubric. The use of this rubric (and sharing it with students) both facilitates the objective and practical grading of assignments and enables a more fair and transparent assessment. Information on how to create rubrics can be found in the training video or manual in these links:
<https://ie.u.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/48811/cl/outline>
<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade/Rubrics>
4. Open-book exam is a method that can be used to assess a higher order cognitive skill where students are allowed access to books, articles and online content. While designing this type of exam, it should be kept in mind that the student should be given time to research and compile their findings after seeing the question(s). If more than one question is asked, easy questions about basic concepts should be asked first. It would be useful to

explain to students that the fact that the exam is open-book does not mean that they do not have to master the content of the course.

Exam Design (Exam Settings)

General information about exam settings can be found in the training video or manual available from the following links:

https://ieu.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/4881_1/cl/outline

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys

1. Exam questions can be randomized during the exam session to show them in a different order to each student, thereby increasing the safety of the exam. However, this option is not suitable for exams that consist of questions that should progress in a specific order or that should follow each other in scope.
2. It is necessary to exercise caution when determining how and when students can receive feedback about the results of the exam. If multiple submission attempts are to be given to each student to complete the exam, or if they are not expected to complete the exam at the same time, the feedback should not be made available to the student as soon as the exam is over.
3. Time restrictions may be applied in exams. This way, students are given a certain amount of time to complete the exam. The exam is to remain accessible in the learning management system within the preset time frame, it can be set to automatically terminate when time expires, or it can be marked as late when students go over the allowed time. However, when deciding on these settings, the fact that there may be internet connection problems should be taken into consideration. During the exam, the instructor should follow the exam submissions of the students on the Grade Center, be accessible by email/phone, and if necessary, give the students another attempt to submit the exam. These settings can be made on the Grade Center. Detailed information on Grade Center management can be found in the training video or manual available from the following links:
https://ieu.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/4881_1/cl/outline
<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade>
4. The exam can be set in such a way that the student can only see a single question on the screen at a time or see all the questions at once. If the questions are displayed one at a time, backtracking can be prohibited if desired. This will prevent changing the answer to a question that has already been submitted.
5. Each prepared exam must be reviewed before it is deployed. As a precaution for any possible technical problem, the exam must be tested before the actual deployment. It should be taken into consideration that some students may not have access to a computer in the current conditions, so access to the exam from mobile devices (via mobile application and browser) should be tried while testing the exam. Similarly, it is necessary to test how the exam looks in the different browsers that can be used by students on their computers.

ASSIGNMENTS IN THE LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Assignments are assessment tools that can be used to assess higher-order skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Information about how to create and grade assignments on Blackboard can be found in the training videos or manuals available from the following links:

https://ie.u.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/4881_1/cl/outline

<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Assignments>

1. Assignments can be designed as individual submissions or as group submissions. In the latter way, students are encouraged to communicate with each other.
2. The principles of plagiarism and academic integrity should be emphasized. Plagiarism detection can be accomplished using a tool called SafeAssign on Blackboard. Informing students about the availability of this tool will increase their awareness.
3. It is recommended to use the rubric tool in assignments, which allows assessment criteria to be created in a table. The use of rubric (and sharing it with students) created with the rubric tool both facilitates the objective and practical grading of assignments and enables a more fair and transparent assessment. In addition, it is possible to reuse this rubric for different assignments in the same term or in the following terms.
4. Students can submit their assignment by uploading a file in different formats (text, picture, audio or video recording). Students may be asked to give an oral presentation within the scope of the assessment, and submit it by recording an audio/video. They could be asked to upload a video showing that they exhibit a skill. As with written assignments, clear guidelines should be provided and the assessment criteria should be shared with the students.
5. Providing timely, meaningful and constructive feedback to students while evaluating assignments will make the assignment a more effective learning tool.
6. Assignments can be done in an essay format, where students write their essay by synthesizing the information obtained from various sources and adding their own perspective. In this format, the student is expected to structure the writing. In the introduction part, brief information about the main topic is given, and which ideas will be presented in the essay and the purpose and scope of the essay are briefly stated. The body/main section is where ideas are expressed and explained in paragraphs, and supported with examples and references if necessary. The conclusion part is the section where a very brief summary of the essay is presented and the writer's own opinion is also included. Students should be reminded to look for resources, archive the resources they find and make use of and cite them appropriately. Before starting the essay, it is useful for the student to

prepare a general outline and to start writing only after determining the outline of the study.

7. A case study can be conducted and submitted as an assignment. After the necessary information is presented to the students in the assignment instructions, the students will be asked to prepare and upload a text.

DISCUSSION FORUMS IN THE LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Especially in distance education, discussion forums are one of the most effective ways to enable and facilitate interaction between instructor and students and among students. Discussion forums can also be used as an assessment tool. For more information about discussion forums, you can refer to the guide available from the link below.

<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact/Discussions>

1. If the discussion forum is considered as an assessment tool, the instructor is advised to start with a rather informal unassessed forum so that the students become familiar with the platform.
2. Instructors' timely feedback, encouragement and guidance are essential in the discussion forums. Especially at the beginning, as it is the instructor who will keep this forum dynamic.
3. In order to increase the effectiveness of the forum and to encourage students' active participation, the following steps are recommended:
 - i. Use positive and constructive expressions: Encourage your students by referring to the student' post: "Thanks for your post / Thank you for sharing your opinions. I really liked the way you..."
 - ii. Comment: Mention what you agree / disagree with on the student's post.
 - iii. Ask a question: Ask a specific question about a particular part of the student's post.
 - iv. You can also refer to the posts of other students: You can encourage the student to interact with an another student and enrich the forum by sharing a statement like "Kemal has an opinion on this issue, how do you interpret this?"
4. If the discussion forum is considered as an assessment method, it is recommended to align the discussion forum tasks and topics with the learning outcomes, to prepare a rubric, and to assess according to the rubric.

ADVANCED PRACTICES IN LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

1. Course learning outcomes can be input into Blackboard and all the assignments, assessments and content in the course can be aligned with the learning outcomes. By doing so, system reports on the achievement of these outcomes can be obtained both at the student and class level. These reports can also be used for Bologna course evaluation process.
2. Question pools can be created on Blackboard. If there are large number of test questions per learning outcome, instructors can prepare multiple versions of the same exam. Exams can be generated by randomly pulling different questions from the pool for each learning outcome. Thus, the security of the exam can be increased to some extent.
3. Question pools and rubrics prepared on Blackboard can be used for the same course in the following academic terms through exporting-importing.
4. Item analysis reports of the exams can be obtained through Blackboard. The questions that are found to have a low discrimination level, too difficult or too easy, can be revised by the instructor and then a test consisting of better quality questions can be deployed in case of re-use by examining these reports.
5. Instructors can have information about students' engagement with the course from the Learning Analytics reports available on Blackboard, reach out to those students who are not much engaged with the course and provide support to these students individually for retention purposes.