



Online take-home examinations

This document summarises recent research that articulates the benefits, issues and recommended practices for online take-home examinations.

Take-home examinations are a task that is announced to students at a pre-determined point of the semester. Students are given a set time limit (24 hrs to a number of days) to research, write and submit their answer via the LMS assessment portal.

Benefits	Potential issues	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Can facilitate authentic, lasting learning and achievement of particular knowledge and skills (Bengtsson, 2019; Johnson, Green, Galbraith, & Anelli, 2015) » Provides a more realistic task timeframe for busy students (Dagilyte & Coe, 2019; Johnson et al., 2015) » No requirement for proctoring (Bengtsson, 2019) » Can be used to test teamwork (Bengtsson, 2019; Johnson et al., 2015) » Often less stressful for students (Bengtsson, 2019) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Greater risk of cheating (Bengtsson, 2019; Dagilyte & Coe, 2019; Johnson et al., 2015) » Writing and marking time is longer; students spend time searching for answers (Bengtsson, 2019) » May require rubric development and longer marking time » May not be preferred by students who do well in closed-book exams (Johnson et al., 2015) » Greater pressure to ensure exam spacing » Impact on diverse students in terms of accessibility and learning support (Dagilyte & Coe, 2019) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Use rigorous open-ended questions to elicit higher order thinking » Provide support for academic and research skills required for exam (Johnson et al., 2015) » Contextualise questions, require references to course materials, and student justification of responses to minimize contract cheating (Dagilyte & Coe, 2019) » Use Turnitin for student submissions » Random scramble or allocation of exam questions » Narrow-timeframe for completion » Introduce an honour code and make clear the impact of cheating (Bengtsson, 2019)

References

- Bengtsson, L. (2019). Take-Home Exams in Higher Education: A Systematic Review. *Education Sciences*, 9(4), 267. Retrieved from
- Dagilyte, E., & Coe, P. (2019). Take-home exams: Developing professionalism via assessment. In A. Bone & P. Maharg (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on the scholarship of assessment and learning in law* (Vol. 1: England, pp. 109-138). Canberra: ANU Press.
- Johnson, C. M., Green, K. A., Galbraith, B., & Anelli, C. M. (2015). Assessing and refining group take-home exams as authentic, effective learning experiences. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 44(5), 61-71. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2376/5608>

USQ is working to ensure consistent University-wide responses to your important questions about online learning and online assessment. If there is unintentional conflicting information between what you hear here and through other sources, please follow the advice of your Head of School.