

How to design a group assignment

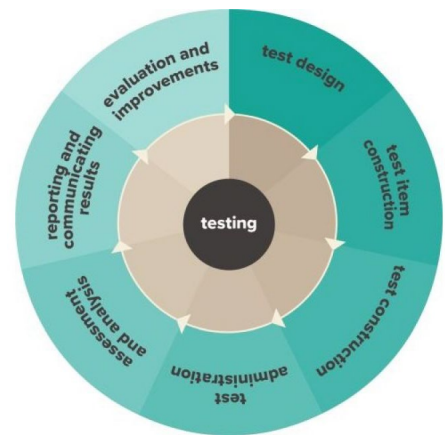
CELT, 2020

0. Read the [UT Framework for remote assessment](#)

1. Test design

Make an overview linking the learning objectives and the questions, so that you can be sure that the test covers the learning objectives to be tested. For example in a test matrix – See CELT toolbox:

<https://www.utwente.nl/en/examination/toolbox-testdesign/designing-test>



2. Test construction:

a. Task design

- i. Design a task which poses a real challenge and which consists of different parts that depend on each other. Be realistic, can it be done online? E.g. make a drawing by hand, literally build a tool with real materials.
- ii. Clarify the expected results as much as possible, both for the tasks as a whole and for subtasks.
- iii. Consider introducing a competitive element between groups (not within groups).
- iv. Read this page for more in depth information on making assignments <https://www.utwente.nl/en/examination/toolbox-testdesign/Assignments/>

b. Group composition

- i. Limit group size to a maximum of 6 unless good supervision is available.
- ii. Think of a way students can work technically and about how to do online groupwork? Form mixed-ability groups, with a clear mechanism for recognising individual contributions.
- iii. Make the groups yourself, as the students have no direct contact on that moment. Make a list with the groups and post it online.

c. Supervision and feedback

- i. Provide students with regular feedback and use a part of the final rubric. Make a list of when they have to hand in something and when a conversation will take place. Be very specific. Publish the list(s) you are going to use for the feedback.
- ii. Incorporate formative assessment of the group process and individual functioning within the group.
- iii. Stimulate social cohesion in the group. Ask students to do a small assignment where they have to work together e.g. make a drawing of 1 house on the online whiteboard and let them reflect on the way they worked together and the want to work together in the future.

d. Marking

- i. Make sure you have a good assessment model, with criteria which fit the learning objectives.
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/assessment/index.html?tab=assessment-criteria>
- ii. All in all, it is recommended to combine a joint group mark with some mechanism for individual differentiation of marks on the basis of both task and process.
 1. Individual exam: Students carry out a project as a group. Then take an individual written or oral exam in which they answer questions on the project e.g. use a tool like Socrative or Shakespeak. This are reflective questions and they can reveal a lot about each individual's role.
 2. Group exam: This is a session in which a project group answers questions about their work. The whole group present, but students are assessed on their individual performance in answering questions e.g. use Big Blue Button in Canvas.
 3. Individual additional task: Have individuals complete a task which is related to the group work. For example let them write a summary of the report.
- iii. How to separate the individual assessment from the group work
 1. Assess individual subtasks, e.g. a report with chapters by different authors.
 2. Assess individual contributions to the group work, this is a possibility when there are no clearly recognisable subtasks.
 3. Peer assessment, students give feedback on the individual contribution to the group (anonymous?). Students do not determine the final grade but their judgment is one of the factors that take into account when determining the final grade. Be careful if you as a teacher are able to use this feedback, unless you've seen the students work (online).
 4. Self-assessment, e.g. comparing their own self-assessment with the scores they received from their fellow students.
- iv. Determining the final mark
 1. Make a formula indicating the weight of all parts e.g. 30% + 30% + 40% or 50% + 50%.
 2. Adjustment method: Give everyone the group mark and then adjust it in the basis of individual performance (peer-assessment and/ or self-assessment). Be careful if you as a teacher are able to use this feedback, unless you've seen the students work (online).

3. Analyse, Evaluate and improve

Veen, E. (2017). *How to assess students through assignments, a guide to creating assignments and rubrics in higher education*. Communicatiereeks.