

## Examination types/methods of assessment (large groups) – guidance for SL and Program committee.

This guide is aimed primarily at the Programme coordinators and Education committee, who share responsibility with the board of studies for prioritising and organising the assessments for a given course of study.

Increased intake at TEK over the past few years means there are now more students, which in turn has increased group sizes. The forms of examination/methods of assessment we have used up to now are perhaps no longer suitable for these large groups for financial reasons and due to the amount of time they take. Furthermore, relevant examination/assessment practice is also developing not only as the amount of digitalisation increases, but also in line with general developments.

In DSMI, evaluation of the students' work forms an integrated part of the SDU's principles of 'Active learning and activating teaching' (cf. DSMI section 3.3), and is used to support the student's active learning. Reducing the amount of resources consumed during examinations/assessments must, of course, not be at the expense of the exam and the principles of DSMI.

The purpose of the examination/assessment is to provide quality assurance for the students' learning, while also having a large determining effect on the students' learning outcomes.

Assessment is carried out on an ongoing basis and/or via a final examination:

- Ongoing assessment, done to activate and give the student feedback, including Counting Activities, forms a part of the final mark.
- A final exam at the end of the semester, resulting in a final mark for the student. Elements of the ongoing evaluation process can be included in the final mark (exam).

The aforementioned methods of assessment often get combined, so careful consideration should be given to whether ongoing assessment can replace the final examination in its entirety in selected disciplines. The use of ongoing assessment need not necessarily mean that less time is consumed overall; instead it means that the time is consumed in the semester rather than during the exam period.

It is important for every course of study that decision-making as to when and how examination will take place be done proactively. Given that the examination/assessment is a reason for the students to learn, and provides quality assurance for this, it is important that the programme evaluates and prioritises how much and how examination/assessment takes place across the different semesters and modules/subjects.

For this reason, we divide the examination/assessment work up into two levels:

1. Programme level – prioritisation of examination/assessment and choice of examination type/method of assessment
2. Module/subject level – choice of examination method.

Once the process of overall prioritisation of examinations/assessments and choice of examination type/method of assessment has been prepared at programme level, a decision needs to be made on the method of assessment for the individual parts of the programme. It is of course important to bear in mind that the method of assessment chosen must support the students' learning in the best way possible.

## Strategic choice of examination types/methods of assessment at programme level.

An overall evaluation of a programme's use of exam/assessment methods will be conducted by the education committee, with the UK as the facilitator responsible.

This process involves the following steps:

- 1) Mapping current examination types/methods of assessment on the programme.
- 2) Evaluation of current examination types/methods of assessment against the background of examination/assessment guidelines (the Examination order and DSMI) and the VUE tool.
- 3) Elimination of unnecessary examination/assessments.

From 1) Mapping current examination types/methods.

The process starts by creating a full overview of the use of examination types/methods of assessment on the programme. This overview forms the basis of the subsequent evaluation of the use of examination types/methods of assessment. It can be a good idea to create this overview in a timetable; see appendix 1 for a template for this timetable, as well as examples of the level of detail used.

From 2) Evaluation of current examination types/methods.

Once the overview of the current examination types/methods of assessment has been created, an assessment of whether the examination is too uniform, too expensive, excessive or insufficient, etc., can take place. In this kind of overview, the forms of examination/methods of assessment used should be evaluated from a financial perspective (digitalisation, time consumption, internal/external grading etc.) and with regard to Accept. SDUUP has developed the tool VUE for this very purpose. Link: <http://sduup.sdu.dk/vue>. See Appendix 1 for examples evaluating the examination types/methods of assessment.

Furthermore, the guidelines in the Examination Order and DSMI create the following framework for the examinations/assessments, which must be observed as follows:

- There are two modules per semester as a starting point, i.e. two marks are also awarded per semester. This number can be increased if a proposal for such is approved by the study board. According to DSMI, a max. of ten marks can be awarded during the first four semesters.
- Use of internal/external marking. One-third of all the programme's ECTS must be marked externally.
- Grading. At least two-thirds of all the examinations/assessments on a programme must be awarded marks on a 7-point grading scale (see guidance for setting up programme regulations at <http://sdunet.dk/Enheder/Fakulteter/Teknik/StudieadministrativInfo/Studieordninger/Vejledning-og-skabelon.aspx>).
- Use of peers. Peers may be used in examinations/assessments when only the final mark is being qualified and awarded by a university teacher. Some components of a report may, for example, be assessed by peers, meaning that university teachers need not spend too long on these.
- Group examination. Group examinations are a suitable option if only the marking is individual and it is being assessed based on individual performance.

Finally, a decision must also be made regarding where Counting Activities will be used and what proportion of these figures will count towards the overall assessment.

From 3) Elimination of unnecessary examination/assessments and reduction or redistribution of time-consuming examinations/assessments.

Under points 1 and 2, it is likely a few issues will have been detected in the overview created, and the evaluation that was conducted. The programme will now make the necessary adjustments, using the analysis as the basis for this. In some cases, e.g. if there are too many oral examinations or the examinations are too expensive, reducing the number of unnecessary examinations would be one option. As such, consideration should be given to whether and how the number of examinations can be reduced, so that it does not have any major impact on the quality of the learning and the examination. This strategic downsizing may be applied to the number of examinations, their duration, their content, their format, the amount of time consumed etc.

The following points may provide inspiration during this process:

- Prioritisation of examinations
  - Are all the disciplines core subjects, i.e. core competences, and have to be evaluated carefully? Or can we motivate the students to learn non-core subjects, i.e. supporting competences, without examinations?
  - Can a core discipline be spread across several semesters, as column for this subject, with just one final overall examination for this entire column's discipline?
  - Can a semester/module/subject be entirely devoid of exams? Can exams be replaced with Peer Feedback in selected disciplines or parts of these?
- Duplicated assessment
  - Avoid duplicating the assessment of the same learning objectives (e.g. marking both the written product and the oral examination).
  - Avoid unnecessarily repetitive examinations or duplicate assessment of the same discipline (e.g. can mathematical competences be tested directly in an applied example during an electronics exam). It may be possible to test some disciplines via the semester project.
- Examination types/methods of assessment suitable for the class size – here, large groups are being factored in.
  - Use methods of assessment that are easy to mark (e.g. multiple choice formats and tests that are marked automatically on, for example, Bb).
  - Avoid heavy-going methods of assessments across many subjects (e.g. a prevalence of project exams). Do larger written reports have to be submitted every semester? Could the reporting instead take the form of a laboratory report, a paper, a management report/executive summary or similar in some semesters?
  - Consider the need for many character-building examinations in the first year and in general.
  - Use the students (self/peer assessment) for feedback as an alternative replacing certain parts of the examination.
  - Examinations should be both on an interim basis and a final examination basis.
- Sample test
  - Examinations only in selected elements from a larger portfolio of learning products or from a larger product
  - Examinations only in some of that semester's disciplines (e.g. BYG draws lots and only examines 3 out of the 4 disciplines in the 2nd semester. The lots are to be drawn the day before or on the day of the examination itself, to avoid selective learning by the students over the course of the semester).

Once the examination types/methods of assessment have been established at programme level based on the aforementioned strategic choices, the course descriptions will be adjusted to reflect the approval by the study board. Once these have been approved, the individual examinations will be evaluated and organised at university teacher level (see document 'Examination types/methods of assessment – guidance for university teachers').