

MARKING TAKE-HOME EXAMS EFFICIENTLY

With the 2020-2021 Semester 2 exam period about to begin, course teams around the University will be planning how to carry out the marking in the most efficient and effective way. This document highlights some useful guidance that is available.

- Practical guides about how to use the marking tools in Turnitin and Blackboard Assignment are available [on the LTA website](#). While they are focused on marking coursework online, the guides provide advice relevant to many of the tasks involved in marking take-home exams.
- As take-home exams are a novel form of assessment for most of us, we may have different ideas about the standard of work we expect. If there are multiple people marking the same exam paper, it will be important for them to calibrate their expectations. Some guidance is provided in this guide to [making your exam work as a take-home assessment](#).
- There are some things to bear in mind whatever kind of exam you are marking: for example, don't mark hundreds of scripts without taking a break, and be aware of how your standards can change over the course of marking a set of scripts. Some general advice is provided on pages 39-40 of '[In At The Deep End](#)', an introduction to teaching at Heriot-Watt.
- Different subjects/programmes/courses will have different approaches to exam marking; whether, for instance, papers are shared between markers (with a single person marking all of one particular question), or whether individuals are responsible for marking whole papers. The marking approach should be decided well in advance of the marking, to allow for any marking allocation and calibration exercises to be done, and any processes to be established. In particular, the process for collating and communicating results and feedback should be agreed in advance, ensuring this aligns with any programme or School-specific expectations.
- It is good practice for students to be provided with feedback on their exam performance, in the form of generic (whole-class) feedback. While this is always useful, with traditional offline exams the value of generic feedback to students is often limited by students' inability to remember what they actually did in the exam. With take-home exams, students will automatically have a saved copy of their script, and generic feedback is likely to be even more useful than normal. You can find some ideas in the guide to '[Streamlining feedback on summative tasks](#)'.
- For those of us used to reading students' scripts on paper, reading the take-home exam scripts online may be an additional challenge. You can find a few different options in this guide to [reading student submissions online](#).



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