Creating Online Assessments

Types of Assessments

In Blackboard, you can create online **tests** and **surveys**.

The two work exactly the same EXCEPT…

❑ SURVEYS are <u>anonymous</u> and are <u>not graded</u>.
   In the gradebook, the instructor can see who has *completed* the survey, but cannot see the particular answers a person submitted. The instructor can only see the responses for the entire group, not for an individual. Also, there are no point values assigned to questions and there is no overall grade recorded.

❑ On TESTS, each item must be assigned a correct answer and a point value.
   When students take an online test and submit their answers, Blackboard grades the objective test items and records a score in the gradebook along with details of each student's answers.

Types of Questions

There are seven types of questions you can use on tests and surveys:
1. Multiple Choice
2. True False
3. Fill in the Blank (beware!)
4. Multiple Answer
5. Ordering
6. Matching
7. Short Answer/Essay (not automatically graded)

Overview of Creating Assessments

There are two basic steps involved in assessment creation. They are:

A. Create the assessment and add questions to it

B. "Deploy" the assessment (that is, create a link to it in your course that students can click to take the test)

How to create a test and add questions to it

Step 1: From the Control Panel, choose *Test Manager.*

Step 2: Click the **Add Test** button.

Step 3: Type in a <u>name</u>, <u>description</u>, and <u>instructions</u>. Then click **Submit**.

> The **description** should include info that students need to know BEFORE they start taking the test. For example: what material is covered in the test, the approximate time it should take to complete the test, whether students can use books or notes, etc.
>
> **Instructions** tell the students what to do once they start taking the test. For example: "Answer each question to the best of your ability. You will have 30 minutes to complete the test"

Step 4: Click on Creation Settings to set some options for your test:

Usually, these are the only options you need to set

Step 5: Add questions to your test. To add a question:
   a. Select a question type from the "Add question" drop down menu and click **GO**
   b. Enter the question text
   c. Enter the answer options
   d. Mark the correct answer
   e. Enter feedback (optional)
   f. Click **Submit**

> These steps vary slightly, depending upon the question type.
>
> For more info see "Tips for entering questions into Bb" on page 3.

Repeat steps a - f above to add additional questions to the test.

Step 6: When you have finished adding questions (or want to take a break), just click **OK** in the lower right corner of the screen.

NOTE: You can return to *Test Manager* at any time and click **Modify** to continue building the test.

Tips for entering questions into Blackboard

Question type	Notes
True / False	Pretty straightforward!
Multiple choice	You can offer as many (or as few) choices as you want. Only 1 correct answer.
Multiple answer	- Same as multiple choice, but there can be more than 1 correct answer. - Student must choose ALL of the correct answers in order to get ANY credit for the question.
Matching	- In the "question" text box, instructors should type **instructions** such as "Match each quotation with the appropriate play." - Can have more answer items than question items - List question items and answer items in the order you want them to appear - Bb will number the question items and put letters beside the answer choices for you (A, B, C, ...) - Bb gives partial credit for items matched if all items not matched correctly
Ordering	- In the "question" text box, the instructor should type **instructions** such as "Place these quotes in the order they appear in the play MacBeth." - In the "Answers" area, list each item in the correct order. You will mix them up later. - Partial credit given for items ordered correctly
Fill-in-the-blank	- Be careful! Student must type EXACTLY the text you provided as the answer, or Bb will mark it incorrect. - You may provide more than 1 possible answer (ex: NY, New York, N.Y., etc.)
Essay / short answer	- This is only question type that Bb won't automatically grade for you. - Recommended to use this instead of fill-in-the-blank.

How to "deploy" tests

To "deploy" a test means to create a link to it somewhere in your course. To begin taking the test, students click on the link you create. You can make the link invisible when you no longer want students to be able to take the test.

1. First, create and save the test under **Control Panel** / **Test Manager**. Check the test thoroughly to make sure that all of the correct answers are selected and correct points are assigned.

2. In the Control Panel, go to the Content Area where you want the test link to appear. If you want, you can make a folder to put the test in.

3. Click on the **Test** icon in the "Add" toolbar to create a link to the test.

4. Select a test from the list and click Submit.

    Note: Only tests that have not been deployed elsewhere in the course will show up in the list of available tests.

5. You will receive a message that says: *"The test was successfully added."* The test is now "deployed", **however, the test is NOT YET visible to students!!** Click OK anyway.

6. You now see 2 menu items:

    o   Modify the test

    o   Modify the test options

    > Select **Modify the test options** to make test visible to students

7. To make the test link visible to students, you have 2 options:

    o   To make the test to available to students RIGHT NOW, you must click on YES beside the question "Do you want to make the link visible?"

    o   To schedule the test to be available at a FUTURE date/time, answer YES to the above question, and select the date/time when you want it to be visible to students (under "Display after").

    NOTE: There are two ways to make the test link become *invisible* to students:

    o   You can return to this area later and manually change the question "Do you want to make the link visible?" to NO

    o   OR, you can specify under "Display until" the date/time you want the link to the test to disappear. The link will automatically become invisible to students at that date/time.

8. Select other options under "Test Availability"

    ❑   *Allow multiple attempts*

    Recommended only for practice or self-evaluation tests.

If you check the "allow multiple attempts" box, students will be able to take the test as many times as they want. In the gradebook, the instructor will only see the results of the student's LATEST attempt, and there will be no record of how many times the student took the test.

❑ *Force Completion*

If you select this option, students will NOT be able to leave the test screen and come back in later. In other words, once they start the test, they will have to finish it and submit it "in one sitting", without leaving the test screen.

❑ *Set time limit*

Time limits can be used as a deterrent against cheating. (With a time limit, students have less time to check their books or notes.)

If this box is checked and a time limit is specified, a clock will begin running in the lower left corner when the student starts the test. When 1 minute is left, the student will see a warning. **The student will NOT be kicked out of the test when time expires!** The student can continue taking test. HOWEVER, the student's total time on the test will be reported to the instructor. (Some instructors deduct points for each minute the student exceeds the time limit.)

❑ *Set password*

Rarely used. If you check this box, you create must a password. Then, to access the test, students must type in that password (which you have provided to them, somehow). Can be useful for make-up tests, which only certain students are allowed to take.

9. Select options under "Test Feedback"

TIP: A good deterrent against cheating is to select show **"Score only"** (to eliminate the possibility of students sharing correct answers with others who haven't yet taken the test). Then, after all students have completed the test, you can return here and MODIFY the option to show **"correct answers"** and/or **"detailed results"**.

10. Select test presentation options

TIPS for selecting presentation options:

❑ *Prohibit backtracking* is only applicable if you select to present questions "one at a time".

❑ If you do NOT select force completion, students can exit the test (and exit Blackboard, visit other sites, disconnect from the Web, etc.) and return later to finish it.

BUT if test is <u>timed</u>, this will show up in the time that is reported to instructor---this time calculation will be total number of hours and minutes that elapsed between the time student started test and time they submitted it.

11. After selecting your options, click SUBMIT and the link to the test is created.

Making changes AFTER deploying a test

After you have deployed a test, you can make changes to it. For example, you may need to change (or make a correction to) the test questions or you may want to change the test options.

IMPORTANT: If students have already taken the test, there are some changes that you CANNOT make to the <u>test questions</u>.

Below is the warning message you will see if you try to modify a test that some students have already taken:

WARNING!

You are about to modify an assessment that students have already taken. **Only textual changes to existing fields are allowed, for example to correct a typo or reword a confusing question.** Note that after you make textual changes, existing assessment attempts (tests that students have already taken) will show the new text, not the original text.

Do not change the number of points for a question.
Do not add or remove questions.
Do not add or remove answers or feedback.
Do not change settings.
Do not change attached files.

If you need to make any changes other than textual changes, you should create a new assessment. Any changes other than textual changes to existing fields will invalidate existing assessment attempts and could corrupt the entire assessment and its Gradebook entries.

How to make changes to test questions:

1. Go to Control Panel and click on Test Manager. You will see a list of all tests you have created.

2. Click the Modify button to the right of the test you wish to change.   If the test has already been deployed and students have already taken it, you will see the warning message above. Heed it! If no students have taken it, you can change anything you want.

How to make changes to test options:

You can make any changes you want to test options at any time (even if students have already taken the test!). For example, you can change the time limit on the test, the type of feedback students see after they submit the test, etc. Or, you can make the link to the test no longer visible to students.

1. Go to the Control Panel and click on the Content Area where you deployed the test.

2. Beside the link to the test, click on Modify.

3. Click on Modify Test Options.

4. Make any changes, then click SUBMIT.

How Tests Interface with the Gradebook

- When you deploy a test (or survey), a column is automatically created in your gradebook in Blackboard.

- When students take and submit a test in Blackboard, their grades (as well as their responses to each question) are recorded in the gradebook.

  Note: If a test contains short answer questions, the student's score will be recorded as an exclamation point (!) in the gradebook. This symbol indicates that there are items in the test that must be graded manually by the instructor.

- Students can see their grades by going to *Student Tools* and selecting *View Grades*.

A **legend** in the lower left corner of the gradebook screen explains the meaning of symbols that you may see in the gradebook:

🔒 In Progress
- No Information
! Needs Grading
? Grading Error
✓ Completed
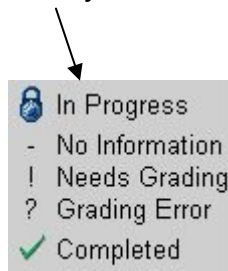
The padlock symbol 🔒 indicates that the student is in the process of taking the test.

A hyphen (-) means that the student has not taken the test.

An exclamation (**!**) indicates that the test contains short answer items that have not yet been graded by the instructor.

A checkmark ✓ means that the student has completed a survey.

How to view details about a student's test

To see more info about a student's test result, just *click on the student's grade in the gradebook*. The information displayed includes…

- The date the student submitted the test
- Student's score on the test (which you can override, if you want)
- Class average

You can *click on the VIEW button* to see more detailed info, including…

- The answer the student selected for each question
- Points awarded for each question (which you can override, if you want)
- Time student took to take the test (IF the test was timed)

How to grade short answer items

If your test includes short answer/essay items, you must grade those manually.
Here's one way to do this…

1. Click on the student's score for the test in the gradebook.

2. Click on VIEW. This will show you the student's answers for each question.

3. Scroll down to a short answer question.

4. Read the student's answer, and decide how many points you want to award.

5. Enter the points in the blank to the right of the question.

6. After you have entered points for all short answer questions, scroll to the bottom and click SUBMIT. You will see the student's total score for the test in the gradebook. The student will now be able to see his/her score under *Student Tools / View Grades*.

How to "clear attempt" (allow student back into test)

Background:

When the "force completion" setting is used, if the student leaves the test (on purpose or because of a technical problem) and then tries to re-enter the test to complete it, he will receive a message that he has already taken the test and he will not be allowed back into the test.

If for some reason a student needs to access a test a second time, the instructor can CLEAR the student's first attempt. This ERASES the grade AND any detail from the prior attempt. After the first attempt is cleared, the student will be able to enter the test.

To CLEAR a student's attempt
(so that he can re-take a test):

1. Click on the student's grade in the gradebook.

2. Click on VIEW.

3. Click CLEAR ATTEMPT

Remember, "clearing attempt" ERASES the grade AND any detail from the prior attempt. So, **check first** to see if any answers were saved.

PLEASE NOTE - Before clearing an attempt, check to see if any of the student's answers were saved:

If the test was set to display questions "one at a time", then the student's answers on the questions he completed before exiting the test were SAVED.

If the test was set to display questions "all at once", then the students answers were saved ONLY IF he clicked the SAVE button at the bottom of the screen (beside SUBMIT).

How to access statistics about tests (class average, item analysis)

To see statistical information about a test:

1. Click on the title of the test (the column heading)

2. Click **Item Detail** to see overall statistics, such as class average, standard deviation, high and low scores, etc.

3. Click **Assessment Attempt Details** to see item analysis information.

How to add a column to the gradebook

As stated earlier, when you deploy a test in Blackboard, a column is created for that test in the gradebook.

Instructors may also add their own columns to the gradebook, to record scores for work done outside of Blackboard (for example: papers, projects, oral reports, participation, etc).   Students can then view these grades under *Student Tools / View Grades.*

To add a column to the gradebook:

1. Click on **Add Item** (in upper left corner)

2. Fill in the requested info (be sure to include "points possible")

3. Click SUBMIT

To enter students' grades into a column that you have created:

1. Click on the title of the gradebook item (the column heading)

2. Click on **Item Grade List**

3. Enter the students' grades into the blanks provided.

    TIP: You can press the TAB key to move from one blank to the next.

4. Click SUBMIT