

ASSESSMENT AND COURSE POLICY & PROCEDURE CHANGES

FAQ for Educators (Instructors, Coordinators, TAs)

1. Do instructors need to redesign all assessments?

No. Instructors are not expected to redesign all assessments. In some cases, instructors may need to clarify:

- what an assessment is intended to demonstrate,
- what matters most in performing well, and
- how student work will be evaluated.

If existing assessments already do this, there may be no changes required. Where adjustments or redesign would be helpful, support is available from the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching & Learning ([GMCTL](#)). This includes redesign for reasons outside the Assessment Policy and Procedures, like GenAI or Academic Integrity.

2. What has changed with syllabus requirements?

Most syllabus elements remain unchanged for courses. There is increased emphasis on clarity.

Syllabi should clearly describe:

- intended course learning outcomes or competencies,
- how each assessment connects to those outcomes,
- how grades are determined,
- expectations related to academic integrity and AI use, and
- exam format, timing, and delivery, where applicable.

A [Syllabus Checklist](#) is available as a support tool to assist instructors in confirming required elements.

A competency-based syllabi guide or example are also available by contacting the GMCTL. Your college also may have additional guidance or templates.

3. Can participation and/or attendance still be assessed?

Yes, with an important distinction.

- Assessing attendance alone (presence without criteria) is discouraged.
- Assessing student engagement (such as contributions, preparation, or problem-solving) is appropriate, and a good alternative to assessing attendance.

When participation is assessed, it is important that expectations and criteria be clearly communicated to students.

4. Are instructors being directed how to assess?

No. Instructors retain academic freedom over assessment design.

The policy establishes expectations for fairness, clarity, and defensibility and suggests best practices, but does not prescribe assessment methods. Instructors determine assessment approaches appropriate to their discipline and course context, in alignment with college and/or departmental practices and procedures.

5. What does “transparent assessment” mean in practice?

In practice, transparent assessment means that students can readily understand:

- what an assessment is asking them to demonstrate,
- which criteria matter most, and
- how their work will be evaluated.

This may be supported through rubrics, criteria lists, examples, or clearly written assignment descriptions. No single format is required.

6. How do AI and academic integrity expectations apply?

Instructors are expected to clearly communicate what tools or supports (including AI) are permitted for each assessment. Expectations may:

- differ across assessments,
- evolve over a course, and
- be explained briefly within assignment instructions.

Designing assessments with integrity in mind is often more effective. Relying on invigilation techniques alone is less successful, and AI detection tools are not currently accurate or permitted. Support by GMCTL is available for instructors who wish to explore assessment design strategies.

7. What is changing with scheduled exams?

Key points include:

- a two-hour exam length pilot beginning in Fall 2026, with the **default as 3 hours**. In 2027, the default becomes 2,
- clear identification when a longer exam is required, and
- explicit communication of device requirements, proctoring, and in-person expectations within the syllabus, **where applicable**.

These changes clarify expectations to students and provide choice to educators, rather than limit exam design.

8. What happens if students appeal grades?

The grade appeal process remains unchanged.

Clear criteria, documentation, and communication support greater defensibility of assessments, fair resolution of concerns, and may help reduce appeals.

9. Where can instructors access support?

Support is available through:

- college-specific guidance,
- templates, checklists, and exemplars, and
- professional development opportunities or 1-to-1 consultations through the GMCTL.

More information/helpful resources (optional)

- College-specific guidance and timelines
- Teaching.usask.ca - [assessment information & online resources](#)
 - Course-based Assessment syllabus checklist (effective Fall 2027)
 - USask Assessment Principles
 - USask Assessment Champions

These FAQs are intended to support understanding and implementation of the new Assessment Policy and Procedures. They are audience-specific and focus on practical implications rather than policy interpretation. Additional guidance and support will continue to be available as implementation progresses.