# Brightspace Gradebook Setup

The Brightspace Gradebook is a tool that stores and organizes student grades and calculates final marks based on the marking scheme established by instructors. Setting up a well-organized and balanced gradebook before the semester begins is essential and allows for ease of editing throughout the semester if adjustments are required.

To locate the gradebook, open the Assessments dropdown menu and select Grades. If a gradebook has not previously been established in the course, the Grades Setup Wizard will need to be run to establish settings that will work best for your course. Instructions on how to use the Grades Setup Wizard can be found here: https://edtechtruro.edublogs.org/2018/07/13/grades-setup-wizard/.

Once the settings are in place, grade categories can then be set up and filled with grade items. Go to the manage grades tab.
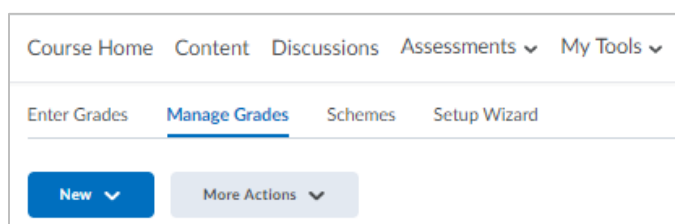
For this example, the following Marking Scheme will be used:

Category	Quantity	Individual Weight	Total
Assignments	5	5%	25%
Quizzes	6	4%	24%
Discussion	4	3x3%, 1x2%	11%
Group Project	1	10%	10%
Final Exam	1	30%	30%
			100%

Each assessment type should be set up with its own category for organizational purposes and ease of editing. A more in-depth review of categories can be found here: https://edtechtruro.edublogs.org/2020/08/28/weighted-vs-points-grading-and-grade-categories/. Click the "New" button and select "Category". Name the category appropriately and add a short name or description if desired. Short names and descriptions cannot be seen by students and are for your own organizational purposes.

In the Grading Section, set the weight of the category and the distribution type. The image below shows the setup for the assignments category from the table above. The total weight is 25%, and that 25% is to be evenly distributed across all grade items in the category (5 equally weighted assignments). This option also allows for a certain number of items to be dropped. For example, if you wanted your students to complete five assignments, but only keep their four highest marks, you could put a 1 beside "Number of lowest non-bonus items to drop for each user". In the image below, no items are to be dropped so both numbers are left as zero.

 For Categories with uneven breakdowns, like the discussions category in our example, select "Manually assign weight to items in the category."

Tip: Although it is not essential to create a category if the category will only contain one grade item (such as Group Project & Final Exam), it is recommended in case of future changes to the gradebook.

Click "Save and New" and repeat the above steps for the remaining categories. When finished, click "Save and Close". Your Grade Book Categories should now be complete and look something like this:

To populate your categories with grade items, click "New" and select "Item".

You will be given several options for Grade Item Types – Numeric is the most common. Give the grade item a name and choose the appropriate category from the drop down. In the example shown below, the points can be edited, but not the weight since the category it belongs to has been set to evenly distribute the weight. As more items are added, the weight of each item will adjust automatically so all items are the same weight. This makes editing these categories throughout the semester very easy. If you decide to add/remove an assignment, you can simply delete it without having to recalculate individual assignment weights.

If a category has been set to a manual distribution, instructors must be careful to ensure the weights of all items in the category sum to 100%. **Remember that the weight assigned to grade items is the percent of the category they are worth, not the percent of the overall grade.**

For the sample marking scheme provided, discussions are worth 11% of overall grade, with three discussions being worth 3% and one worth 2%. The following shows how to calculate what weight to assign to each grade item:

- For the 3 discussions worth 3%:
    - One discussion is worth 3/11 of the category, so to calculate the weight out of 100, $\frac{3}{11} \times 100 = 27.3$
- For the discussion worth 2%
    - One discussion is worth 2/11 of the category, so to calculate the weight out of 100, $\frac{2}{11} \times 100 = 18.1$
- If the math has been done correctly, all weights should add to 100
    - 27.3 + 27.3 + 27.3 + 18.1 = 100

Note: These calculations tend to yield numbers with many decimal places. For an even total of 100, you may need to adjust the rounding of some numbers. These changes are small enough to have no major impact on final grades.

Once the grade item is finished, click "Save and New", and repeat this process for each grade item.

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