



Online open-book examinations

This document summarises recent research that articulates the benefits, issues and recommended practices for open-book examinations.

Open-book examinations enable students to consult texts and other resources to answer examination questions; consequently examinations are often more rigorous and may require longer (and applied) answers.

Benefits	Potential issues	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Reduces memorisation and can promote lasting, authentic learning outcomes (Block, 2012; Teodorczuk, Fraser, & Rogers, 2018) » Do not appear to inflate student grades relative to closed-book exams (Teodorczuk et al., 2018) » May reduce examination stress (Block, 2012) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Students may waste time finding answers and take longer to answer (Teodorczuk et al., 2018) » Students may be tempted to reduce preparation for open-book exams » Open-book texts do not automatically stimulate a deep-learning approach » May reduce student satisfaction in some disciplines (Block, 2012) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consider whether open-book exams are a good fit for your discipline (Block, 2012) » Be explicit with students about the required preparation for open-book exams (Block, 2012; Teodorczuk et al., 2018)

References

- Block, R. M. (2012). A Discussion of the Effect of Open-book and Closed-book Exams on Student Achievement in an Introductory Statistics Course. *PRIMUS*, 22(3), 228-238. doi:10.1080/10511970.2011.565402
- Teodorczuk, A., Fraser, J., & Rogers, G. D. (2018). Open book exams: A potential solution to the "full curriculum"? *Medical Teacher*, 40(5), 529-530. doi:10.1080/0142159X.2017.1412412

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