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**UUM**  
Universiti Utara Malaysia

# GUIDELINES FOR OPEN-BOOK /CLOSED-BOOK FINAL PROJECT



**Academic Excellence Development Unit (AEDU)**  
Department of Academic Affairs, UUM



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## 01

## INTRODUCTION

“When the cook tastes the soup, that’s **formative assessment** and when the customer tastes the soup, that’s **summative assessment**.”

With the current pandemic situation, one of the important questions instructors often asked is “how to orient students to the new way of learning and assessment?” As adapting to change is not easy to some learners, instructors need to reflect on their teaching and assessment practices to ensure students benefit the most. Instructors have been benefitting from the existing notions of formative and summative assessments to ensure meaningful learning and effective engagement of the course content and assessment with respective degree programmes. In this guideline, we would like to reiterate briefly the two concepts as they are often related to the modes of assessment to which instructors choose or have chosen for their courses.

Formative assessment, also known as “assessment FOR learning” is an ongoing process and has the purpose of making students’ learning improve while the summative assessment, on the other hand, also known as “assessment OF learning”, is often given at the end of the session as an outcome or product of learning to measure learners’ performance. Paul Black (2002) provides a simple analogy to describe the two:



In the Handbook of Teachers by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (2004), formative assessment is also known as an ongoing assessment/continuous assessment or progress monitoring. Additionally, Trumbull and Lash (2013, p. 4) exhibited some dimensions on which formative assessment may vary (see also Bennett, 2011). Therefore, formative assessment can be used as a feedback in classroom and/or be graded. This is also supported by Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning at Yale University (2020) when discussing formative and summative assessments. The variation of formative assessment described by Trumbull and Lash is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Dimensions of Formative Assessment (Trumbull & Lash, 2013)

DIMENSIONS OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
1	Informal vs. formal
2	Immediate feedback vs. delayed feedback
3	Curriculum embedded vs. stand-alone
4	Spontaneous vs. planned
5	Individual vs. group
6	Verbal vs. nonverbal
7	Oral vs. written
8	Graded/scored vs. ungraded/unscored
9	Open-ended response vs. closed/constrained response
10	Teacher initiated/controlled vs. student initiated/controlled
11	Teacher and student(s) vs. peers
12	Process oriented vs. task/product oriented
13	Brief vs. extended
14	Scaffolded (teacher supported) vs. independently performed

As indicated in Table 1, dimension 1 (Informal vs. formal), dimension 2 (Immediate feedback vs. delayed feedback), dimension 8 (Graded/scored vs. ungraded/unscored) and dimension 13 (Brief vs. extended) are some important variations in formative assessment that we would like to delineate. First, the assessment may be conducted informally during the synchronous and asynchronous class sessions or may be conducted in a formal form of short quizzes and/or mid-semester exam. Instructors may provide immediate feedback to the students during the class sessions, especially when the tasks are not graded or included their feedback along with the carry marks should the tasks contribute to the course grade. While some instructors opt to conduct given assessment component once during the course (brief), others may offer to choose the best from several assessments conducted (extended).

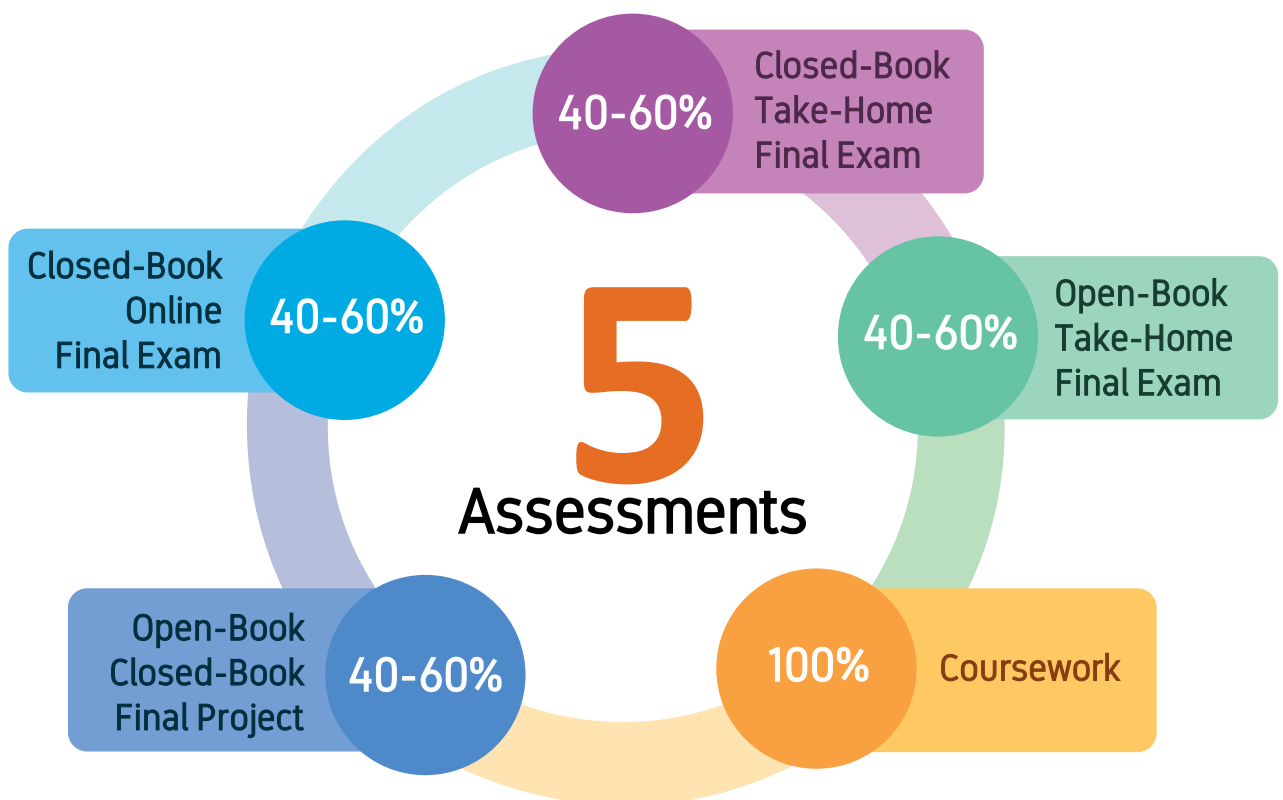


Figure 1: Online and Take-home Assessments

We believe that the brief discussion on the two notions of assessment may help instructors to decide and plan the most suitable assessment components that they will conduct online or remotely. In this guideline, we will discuss five different assessment options in terms of implementation processes; as well as important steps that should be taken to ensure validity and reliability of students' scores, and fairness. Figure 1 represents the five assessment options. Specifically, in each section, the description of each type of assessment will be explained using a flow-chart and a checklist. The assessment is related to the context of UUM per se and should be viewed as an internal document.

## 04 Introduction

In section 2.1, the Online Final Exam will be explained and then followed by an elaboration on the Take-home Final Exam (can be either Open-book or Closed-book) in sections 2.2 and 2.3. These two types are considered as summative assessment and they usually carry between 40-60% of the final exam scores. The Online Final Exam is to be conducted synchronously while the Take-home Final Exam may be conducted synchronously or asynchronously. Section 2.4 provides description for the open-book and/or closed-book final projects. Section 2.5 will provide guidelines for instructors who opted for 100% coursework for their course assessment. Within these last two sections (i.e., Sections 2.4 and 2.5), learners are expected to do their work as take-home assignments which may be done either individually or as a group work. The final project may replace the category of Final Exam (40-60%) while in the 100% coursework category, no final exam will be involved in the course. We provide some samples of coursework in the appendices.



Open-Book |  
Closed-Book | **Final**  
**Project** | 40-60%



# 2.4

## Open-Book | Closed-Book Final Project | 40-60%

The open or closed book final project is the penultimate product. It replaced in totality the original final examination component. It is conducted to evaluate students' learning, knowledge, proficiency, or achievement at the completion of a course. It is highly weighted and thus it is very important that the assessment aligns with course learning outcomes. The whole course delivery and other formative assessment can be the building blocks to the final project assessment.





# EXAMPLES / FORMAT

The final project can take many forms. Below are a few types of assessment that can be used:

## ASSESSMENT (FINAL PROJECT)



### Performance Task

Students are asked to complete a task that will test a specific set of skills and/or abilities and determine what the students know and are able to do at the end of a course.



### Written Product

Students are asked to write an original selection. There are many forms that instructors can use to get students to write. Students may also be asked to create a piece of persuasive writing or a reflection about their learning experience.



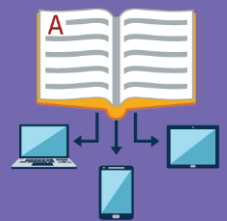
### Oral Product

Students are asked to prepare an oral piece of work.



### Physical Product

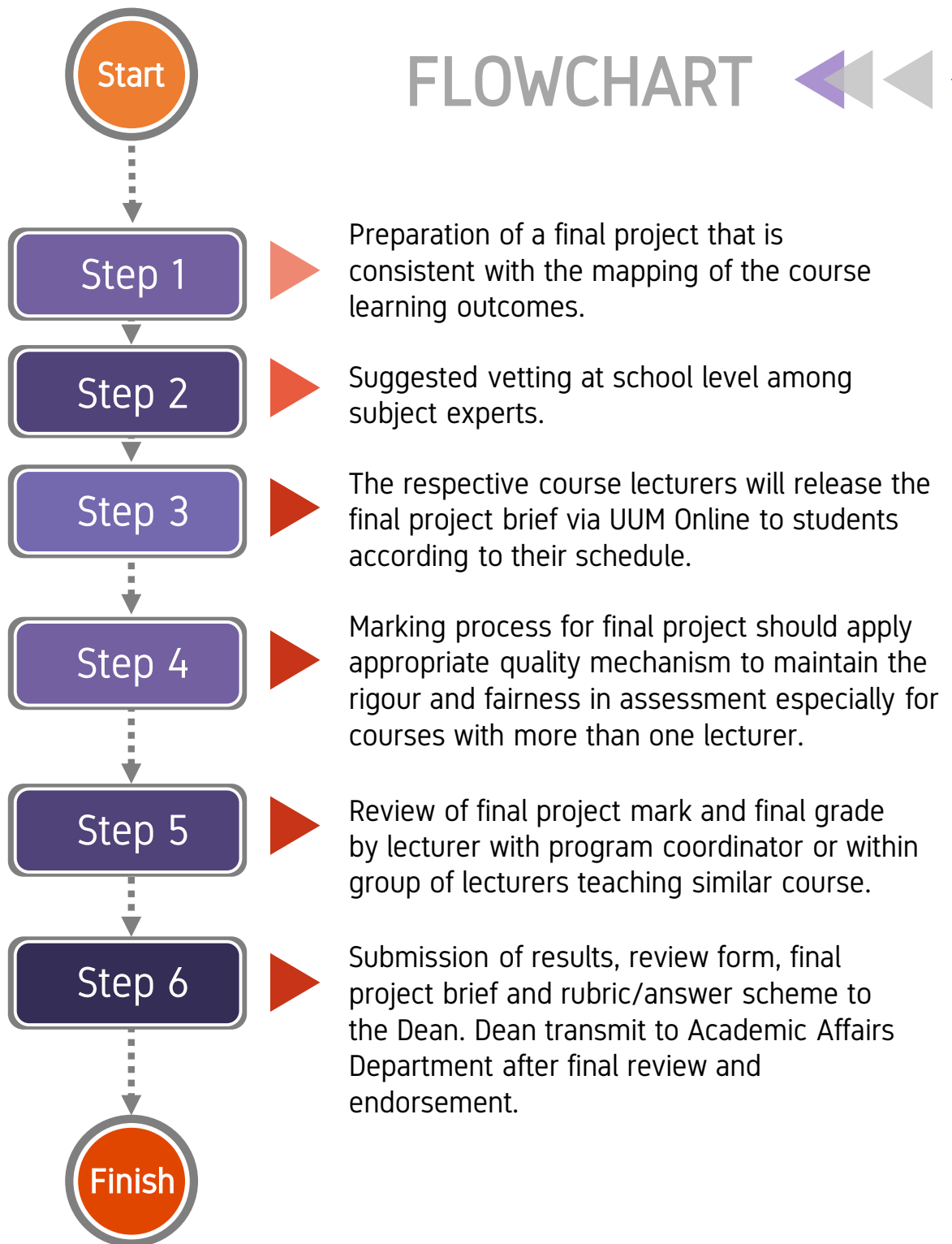
Students are asked to prepare a prototype or actual product or run a business plan.



### Soft/Online Product

Students are asked to produce a database or applications or virtual sites.

## FLOWCHART





Checklist ▶▶

## 10 Open-Book Closed-Book Final Project

Presented here is a possible checklist that could be used to design an Open-book/Closed-book Final Project:

Guidelines		Yes	No, Needed Revision	No, Not Applicable
1	Is the final project aligned with the CLOs and the competency/ability being assessed?			
2	Could the competency/ability be better assessed with a different kind of coursework?			
4	Is the task posed, or output expected clearly defined to the learners?			
5	Is the instruction worded and structured in such a way that it will be clear to the learners what they are expected to do?			
6	Is the final project task presented to the learners reasonable given the Covid-19 situation (no direct human interaction and no fieldwork required)?			
7	If access to reference materials is deemed appropriate, does the final project specify the types of materials that may and may not be consulted (e.g., resources, reports, and reference materials) and the expectation that all materials must be cited accordingly?			
8	Has adequate safeguards be put in place to consider possibility of colluding and cheating (novelty, HOTS, plagiarism check, honour code)?			

*Adapted from The Personnel Psychology Center (2015)*

Prepared by

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