April 5, 2022

Brightspace Instructor Guide

Grades (Gradebook)

Saint Mary's
University

Contents

Software & Application Support Centre
Studio for Teaching and Learning

Creating and Editing the Gradebook

Create a Gradebook

As an instructor, you can determine how to set up your gradebook to best reflect your approach to evaluation, including the grading system and grade scheme that is most appropriate for your course. You can select how grades display to learners, how they update in the grade book, and how you want to deal with ungraded items. You can create grade items for projects, assignments, discussions, quizzes, etc. to include in your grade book, and even associate them with other tools (e.g. Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions).

A grade book contains your grading system, grade calculations, grade scheme, grade items, and view and display options. Grade items in your grade book represent all the work that you want to evaluate users on in a course. You can evaluate specific tasks such as assignments, tests, and participation, and you can also create grade items and associate them with course objects such as assignments and quizzes.

You must set up a grade book before you can use the Grades tool. As you plan your grade book, consider:

- Which grade items you plan to evaluate.
- Which grading system is most appropriate for your course.
- How you will allocate points or weights across grade items.
- Which grade items you want to associate with course objects. Note that only numeric grade items can be associated with course objects.
- If you want to include a milestone grade at least once during the course.
- How you want to calculate final grades.

Note: Making changes to a grade book's settings and calculation options after you begin tracking users' grades can significantly affect existing data.

The grading system determines how the grade items in your grade book contribute to users' final grades. There are three options:

- Grade items can count as a percentage of a final grade worth 100%.
- Grade items can be worth a certain amount of points that are totaled for a final grade.
- You can define a custom formula for how grade items contribute to a final grade.
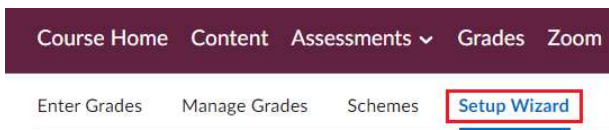
Setting up your gradebook

In the Grades tool, if a gradebook is not set up or imported for your course, you will see the **Grades Setup Wizard** page when you first navigate to the tool.

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

| Course Home | Content | Assessments ⌄ | **Grades** | Zoom | Course Tools ⌄ | Student Support ⌄ | Groups |

2. On the **Grades Setup Wizard** page

| Course Home | Content | Assessments ⌄ | Grades | Zoom |

| Enter Grades | Manage Grades | Schemes | **Setup Wizard** |

3. click **Start**.

4. Step 1: Choose your grading system. Select from the following options.

   a. Weighted - Use the weighted system if you want grade items calculated as a percentage of the final grade worth 100%.

   b. Points - Calculate the final grade by totalling the points users received on grade items.

   c. Formula - Calculate final grade using a custom formula that lets you set conditions on grade items.

5. Click Continue.

6. Step 2: Final Grade Released:

   a. Calculated Final Grade – The grade that is achieved by users on the grading formula set up in the gradebook. It cannot be adjusted without editing grade item scores.

   b. Adjusted Final Grade – Allows you to modify or adjust users' grades before releasing them.

7. Click Continue.

8. Step 3: Grade Calculations. Choose how you want to treat ungraded items:

      a. Drop ungraded items - all ungraded items will show as dropped and will not be counted in the final grade calculation.

      b. Treat ungraded items as 0 – Recommended. Items that do not have a grade inputted will be counted as zero in the final grade.

9. If you want final grades to automatically adjust after changing a grade item or calculation option, select **Automatically keep final grade updated**.

Note: If your grading scheme includes for example, best 4 out of 5 quizzes, then for this scenario, it is recommended that you select Treat Ungraded Items as Zero. Later, when setting up your gradebook Categories and Items, you will have the option to select drop X grade items.

10. Step 4: Choose Default Grade Scheme

      a. Percentage – Number grade

      b. Letter – The Saint Mary's undergrad letter scheme is set up in the system. Some programs have an alternative letter grading scheme. If you fall into this category, please following the instructions on how to create a new grading scheme.

11. Click **Continue**.

12. Step 5: Managing View Display Options: In the **Number of decimal places to display** field, enter the number of decimal places to display to users who enter grades using the grade book.

13. Click **Continue**.

14. Step 6: Student View Display Options: Select your learner view display options and then click **Continue**.

15. Step 7: **Grades Setup Summary** - review your selections and do one of the following:

      a. To make changes to your grade book setup, click **Go Back**.

      b. Click **Finish**.

Creating Grade Items and Categories

Build your grade book by creating grade items and categories.

Grade items in your gradebook represent all the work that you want to evaluate users on in a course. Grade items can exist independently in your gradebook, or you can associate numeric grade items with course objects such as discussions, quizzes, and assignments. Each grade item has an entry in the grade book, which you assign a grade to for each user. Depending on the grade item type you want to create, grade items can be graded numerically or based on a grade scheme.

Grade categories organize and group related grade items into sections in your grade book, for example, a Writing Assignments grade category to group assignment items and a Quiz grade category to group quiz items. Grade categories display in Manage Grades.

To create a grade category:

1. On the top navigation panel of your course, click **Grades**

2. Click **Manage Grades**

3. Click on the dropdown menu **New** and click **Category**.

4. In the **General** area, enter your grade item details: Name and add in an (optional) Description.

5. For a Weighted gradebook:

   a. In the **Grading** area, enter the **Weight of the Category** (ex. Quizzes are worth 20% of the final mark).

   b. Select the desired Distribution

      i. Manually assign weight to items in the category

      ii. Distribute weights by points across all items in the category

      iii. Distribute weight evenly across all items – input the number of highest or lowest items to drop for each user.

6. **Example**: If your assignments grade is based on 4 best grades out if 5 assignments, then you would select the third option and enter 1 in Number of lowest non-bonus items to drop for each user. This will drop the lowest graded item under the Assignment category.

Grading

Weight

[20] ❷

☐ Allow category grade to exceed category weight ❷

Distribution

○ Manually assign weight to items in the category
○ Distribute weights by points across all items in the category
◉ Distribute weight evenly across all items

[0]   Number of highest non-bonus items to drop for each user ❷

[1]   Number of lowest non-bonus items to drop for each user ❷

7. For a <u>Points based</u> gradebook:

   a. If you select Distribute points across all items, enter in the number of points each item will be worth. You also have the option to drop and number of lowest or highest grade items.

8. **Example:** If your assignments grade is based on 4 best grades out if 5 assignments, then you would select Distribute points across all items and enter 1 in Number of lowest non-bonus items to drop for each user. This will drop the lowest graded item under the Assignment category.

Distribution

☑ Distribute points across all items ❷
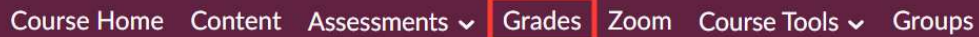
[5]   Points per item ❷

[0]   Number of highest non-bonus items to drop for each user ❷

[1]   Number of lowest non-bonus items to drop for each user ❷

9. To edit the student view, click on **Show Display Options** and select your desired settings.

10. Click **Save and Close**.

To create a grade item:

1. On the top navigation panel of your course, click **Grades**

2.

| Course Home | Content | Assessments ∨ | Grades | Zoom | Course Tools ∨ | Groups |

3. Click **Manage Grades**

4.

Enter Grades | **Manage Grades** | Schemes | Setup Wizard

5. Click on the dropdown menu **New** and click **Item**.

New ∨   More Ac

Item

Category
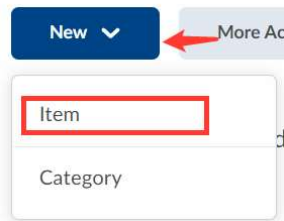
6. In this step, you have to choose the <u>Type of the Grade Item</u>. Here is a list of all the grade items:

Grade Item Type	Description
Numeric	Grade users by assigning a value out of a specified total number of points. Only Numeric grade items can be linked to a Assessment item (e.g. Quiz, Assignment, Discussion etc.)
Select Box	Grade users by assigning a grade scheme level (letter mark) that is equivalent to a percentage grade range. You cannot create select box grade items if you do not have at least one grade scheme for the course.

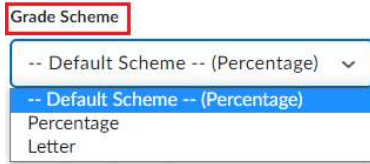|	
Pass/Fail	You can grade users using a simple pass/fail grade scheme.
Formula	Use formula grade items to automatically grade users using a custom formula based on achievements in other grade items.
Calculated	You can use a calculated grade item to display a user's cumulative achievement across multiple grade items. Unlike the calculated final grade, calculated grade items do not recognize grade category settings of the grade items they evaluate, such as exclusion or distribution options. They can belong to a category, but they cannot contribute to the calculated final grade
Text	Use text grade items to provide comments that are not counted towards users' final grades. Text grade items can belong to a category, but they do not contribute to the calculated final grade.

7. In the next steps, you will set up your grade item. In most cases, the Numeric grade item is the most used grade item type.

8. In the **General** area, enter your grade item details: **Name** the grade item and **select a category** (if applicable).

9. In the **Grading** area, Enter the **Maximum Points** (the point amount the item will be graded out of) **and Weight** (if applicable).

10. To allow users' grades to exceed the maximum points specified for the item, select the **Can Exceed** checkbox. This selection only applies to the grade item. **Can Exceed** may also need to be selected for the grade category also.

> **Note:** At this point, you can **Save and Close** the grade item setup. The following settings are all optional.

11. To make the grade item a bonus, select the **Bonus** checkbox.

12. To exclude the grade item from final grade calculation, select the **Exclude from Final Grade Calculation** checkbox.

13. From the **Grade Scheme** drop-down list, select a grading scheme for your grade item.

14. To attach a rubric to the grade item, click **Add Rubric**.

15. In the **Display Options** area, do any of the following:

    a. Under **Student View:**

        i. To allow users to see the class average on the item, select the **Display class average to users** checkbox.
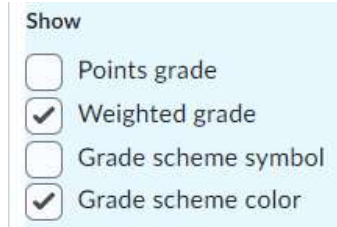
        ii. To allow users to see a graph showing how grades are distributed between different percentiles, select the **Display grade distribution to users** checkbox.

        iii. To allow graded users to view grade information for this item differently from other items in the grade book, select the **Override display options for this item** checkbox

    b. Under **Show**, select the following that apply. This will determine what students see:

        i. **Points grade**
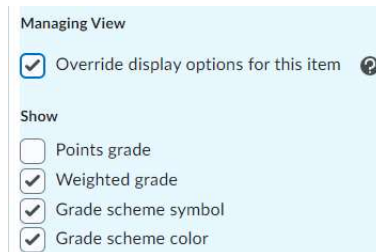
        ii. **Weighted grade**

   iii. **Grade scheme symbol**,

   iv. **Grade scheme color**.

c. Under **Managing View** (your view):

   i. To view grade information for this item differently from other items in your grade book, select the **Override display options for this item** check box.

d. Under **Show**, select all that apply. This will determine what you see:

   i. **Points grade**

   ii. **Weighted Grade**

   iii. **Grade scheme symbol**

   iv. **Grade scheme color**.

16. Click **Save and Close**.

Grade Item Types

Create text grade items

Use text grade items to provide comments that are not counted towards users' final grades. Text grade items cannot belong to a category and they do not contribute to the calculated final grade. Note that you cannot

associate text grade items with course objects such as discussions, quizzes, and assignments. Only numeric grade items can be associated with course objects.

To create text grade items
1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **New** button, click **Item**.

3. Click **Text**.

4. In the **General** area, enter your grade item details.

5. To attach a rubric to the grade item, in the **Grading** area, click **Add Rubric**.

6. In the **Display Options** area, select how you want the Managing View for the grade item to appear.

7. Click **Save and Close**.

Create select box grade items

Grade users by assigning a grade scheme level that is equivalent to a percentage grade range. You cannot create select box grade items if you do not have at least one grade scheme for the course. Note that you cannot associate calculated grade items with course objects such as discussions,

quizzes, and assignments. Only numeric grade items can be associated with course objects.

To create select box grade items

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **New** button, click **Item**.

3. Click **Select box**.

Selectbox
Grade users by selecting the grade scheme level that best matches their achievement. E.g. "Very Good" or "B+"

4. In the **General** area, enter your grade item details.

5. In the **Grading** area, enter the maximum points and weight for the grade item.

Grading

Maximum Points *

10

Weight *

10

6. Do any of the following:

7. If you want the grade item to be a bonus, select the **Bonus** check box.

8. From the **Grade Scheme** drop-down list, select a grading scheme for your grade item.

Bonus

Grade Scheme

Letter

9. To attach a rubric to the grade item, click **Add Rubric**.

10. In the **Display Options** area, select how you want the Learner View and Managing View for the grade item to appear.

11. Click **Save and Close**.

Create pass/fail grade items

You can grade users using a simple pass/fail grade scheme. Note that you cannot associate calculated grade items with course objects such as discussions, quizzes, and assignments. Only numeric grade items can be associated with course objects.

To create pass/fail grade items
1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **New** button, click **Item**.

3. Click **Pass/Fail**.

Pass/Fail
Grade users using a simple pass/fail grade scheme.
E.g. "Pass" or "Fail"

4. In the **General** area, enter your grade item details.

5. In the **Grading** area, enter the Maximum Points and Weight for the grade item.

Grading

Maximum Points *

10

Weight *

10

6. Do any of the following:

7. If you want the grade item to be a bonus, select the **Bonus** check box.

8. From the **Grade Scheme** drop-down list, select a grading scheme for your grade item.

9. To attach a rubric to the grade item, click **Add Rubric**.

10. In the **Display Options** area, select how you want the Learner View and Managing View for the grade item to appear.

11. Click **Save and Close**.

Create numeric grade items

Grade users by assigning a value out of a specified total number of points. Numeric grade items are the only type of grade item that you can associate with course objects such as discussions, quizzes, and assignments.

To create numeric grade items
1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **New** button, click **Item**.

3. Click **Numeric**.

New Item

Choose a Grade Item Type

📄 Numeric
   Grade users by assigning a value out of a specified total number of points.
   E.g. 8/10

4. In the **General** area, enter your grade item details.

5. In the **Grading** area, enter the maximum points and weight for the grade item.

Grading

Maximum Points *

10

Weight *

10

6. Do any of the following:

7. If you want users' grades to be able to exceed the maximum points specified for the item, select the **Can Exceed** check box.

8. If you want the grade item to be a bonus, select the **Bonus** check box.

Can Exceed

☐ ❔

Bonus

☐ ❔
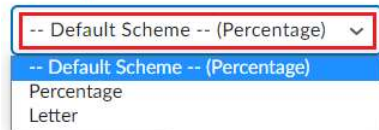
9. From the **Grade Scheme** drop-down list, select a grading scheme for your grade item.

Grade Scheme

-- Default Scheme -- (Percentage) ⌄
-- Default Scheme -- (Percentage)
Percentage
Letter

10. To attach a rubric to the grade item, click **Add Rubric**.

11. In the **Display Options** area, select how you want the Learner View and Managing View for the grade item to appear.

12. Click **Save and Close**.

About bonus grade items

Bonus grade items are not included in the maximum points for a category or final grade. They are added on top of the calculated grade.

Bonus grade items cannot make users' grades exceed the maximum points specified, unless the Can Exceed option is selected.

Note: Bonus grade items do not display to students with the grade scheme information like other grade items, no matter what display options you set. Because bonus grades are only added to final grades after all other calculations, students can only view the numeric points, and potentially the weight achieved, for a bonus grade, but no other grade scheme information, as the actual weight or points of the bonus grade item may not be consistent with the rest of the grade scheme.

Hide grade items

To hide grade items:

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the context menu of a grade item, select **Hide from Users**.
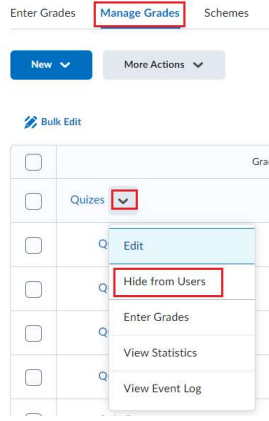
Note: You can also edit a grade item, access the **Restrictions** tab, and select the **Hide from Users** checkbox.
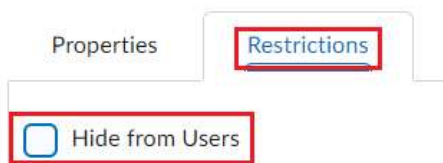
To make hidden grade items visible:

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the context menu of a grade item, select **Make Visible to Users**.
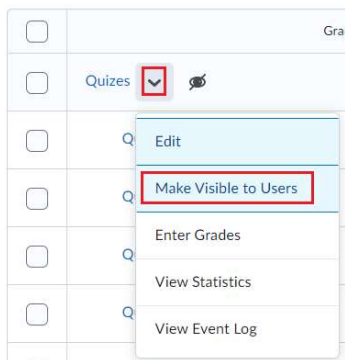
Note: You can also edit a grade item, access the **Restrictions** tab, and deselect the **Hide from Users** checkbox.

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To bulk hide or display grade items:

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, select the checkbox for any item you want to change the visibility of.

3. Click **More Actions** and select **Make Visible to Users** or **Hide from Users**.
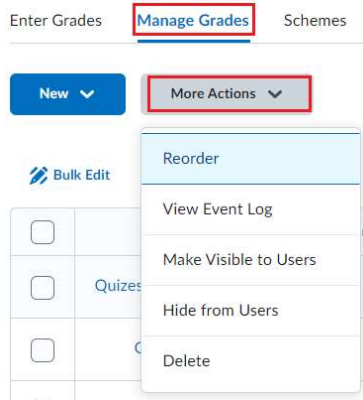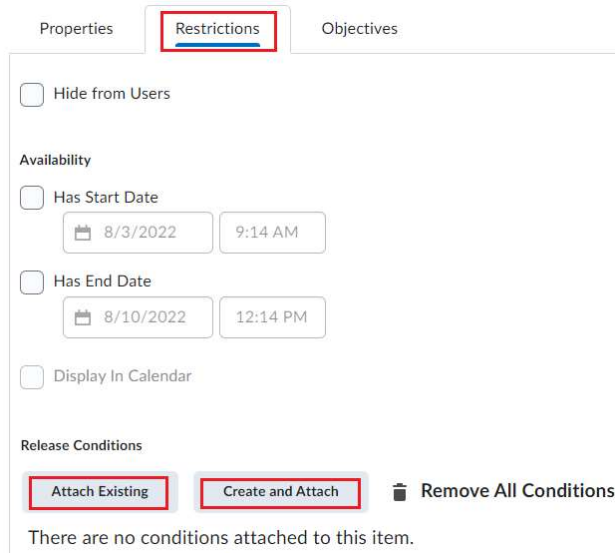
Set release conditions for grades

Release conditions allow you to associate grade items and grade book categories with other items in Brightspace Learning Environment. For example, you can require that users meet some other criteria, such as completing a quiz or completing an assignment, before a specific grade item appears in their grade book.

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.
2. On the **Manage Grades** page, click on the grade item you want to set release conditions for.
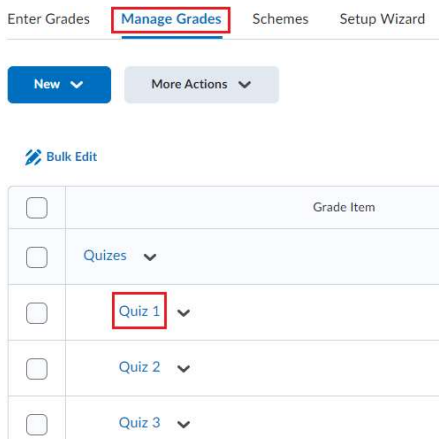
3. In the **Restrictions** tab, in the **Release Conditions** area, do one of the following:
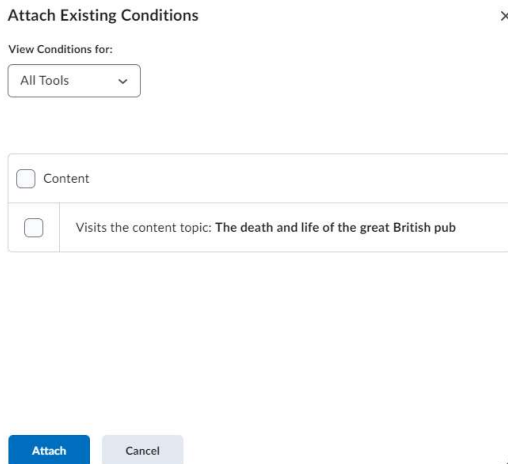
4. Click **Attach Existing**, then select the check box for any condition you want to attach. Click **Attach**.

5. Click **Create and Attach**, then select a **Condition Type** from the drop-down list. Complete any additional **Condition Details** that appear and click **Create**.

Create a New Release Condition   ✕

Release this item when the following condition is met:

Condition Type

| Completed quiz attempt   ⌄ |

Condition Details

Quiz

| -- Select Quiz --   ⌄ |

[Create]   [Cancel]

6. From the drop-down list, select if **All conditions must be met** or **Any condition must be met** to access the grade item or category.
7. Click **Save and Close**.

Delete grade items or categories

Note the following:

Selecting a category does not select the grade items that reside in it. If you delete a category, the grade items associated with it become independent grade items.

You cannot delete grade items that are associated with another course object, such as a quiz, discussion topic, or assignment. To delete the item you must first remove the association. Click the Information icon for a grade item with an association to view details about where the item is used.

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.
2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **More Actions** button, select **Delete**.
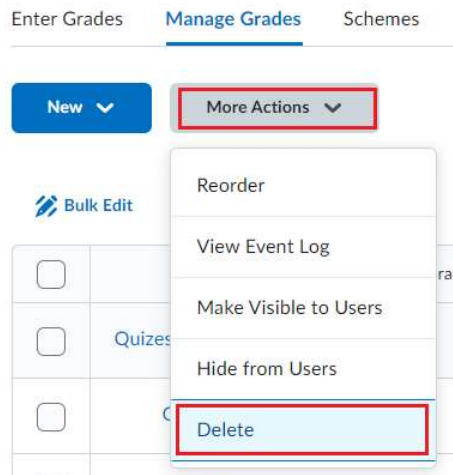
3. Select the check box for each grade item or category want to delete.
4. Click **Delete**.

Restore a deleted grade item

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.
2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **More Actions** button, select **Event Log**.

3. Beside the appropriate grade item select **Restore**.
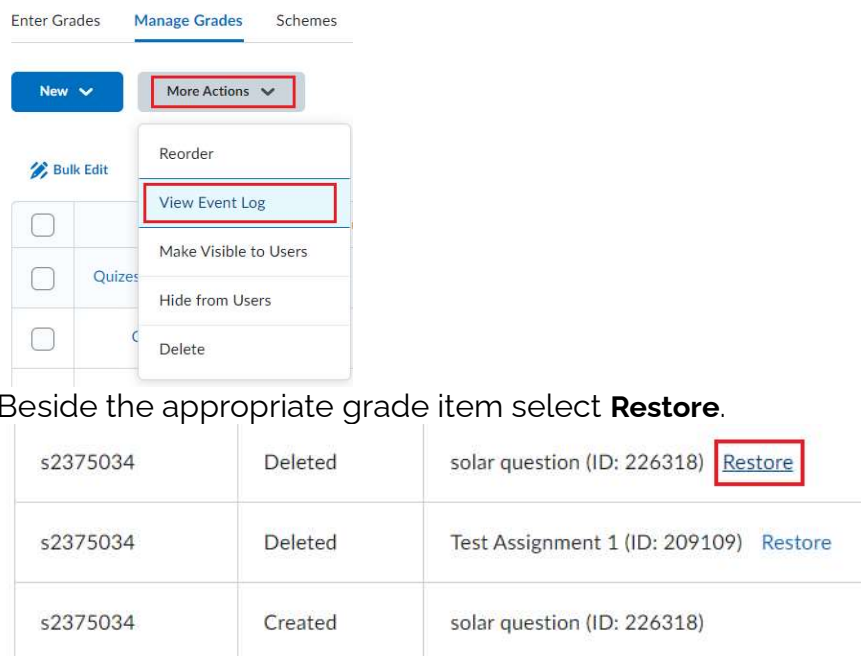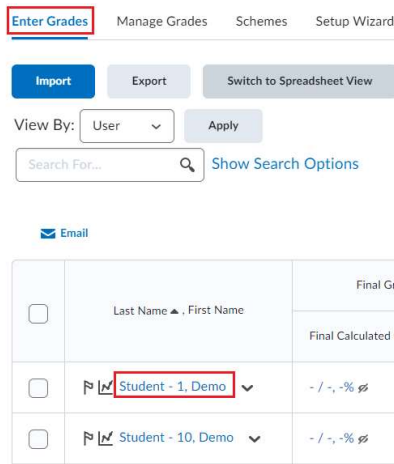
Note: Formula and Calculated grade items cannot be restored.

Managing grades and grade items
Enter grades
To enter grades:
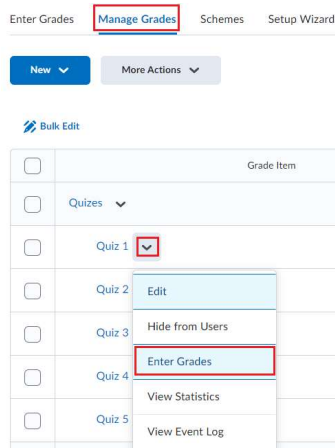
1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Enter Grades** page, do one of the following:

   a. To manually enter grades for an individual user, click the user name.

   b. To manually enter grades for a grade item, from the context menu of the grade item, click **Enter Grades**.

   c. To manually enter grades for a category, from the context menu of the grade item, click **Enter Grades**.
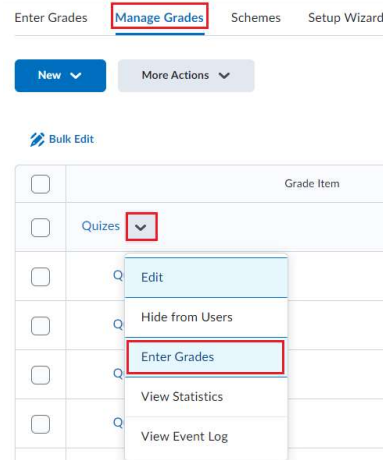
3. Enter your grades.

4. Click **Save and Close**.

Add feedback in bulk

You can add generic feedback on learners' grades in bulk. You can also sort the **Feedback** column in the Gradebook and quickly determine which learners require feedback.

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the context menu of the grade item, click **Enter Grades**.
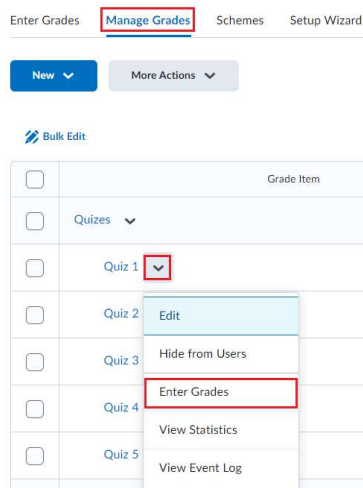
3. To sort the **Feedback** column, do the following:

4. Under **Users**, click **Show Search Options**.

5. Under **Feedback**, select the check box, and from the drop-down list, select **Users without feedback**.

6. Click **Apply**.

7. From the list of users, select the users for whom you want to provide feedback, and click **Add Feedback**.

8. Enter the generic feedback and click **Save**.
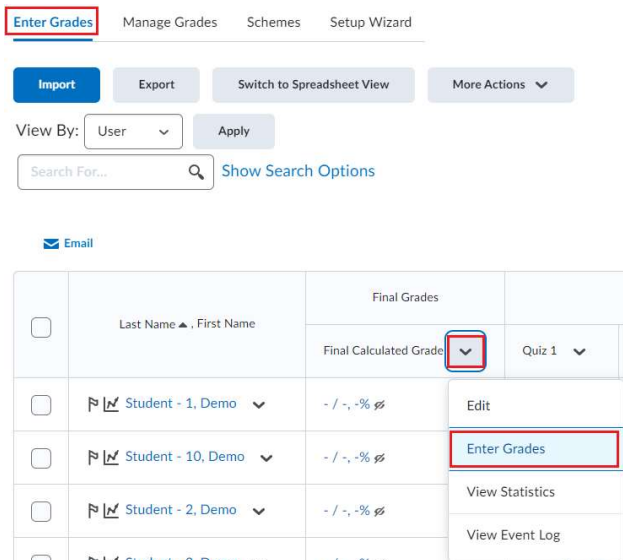
Note: Use replacement strings in your bulk feedback to personalize the feedback.
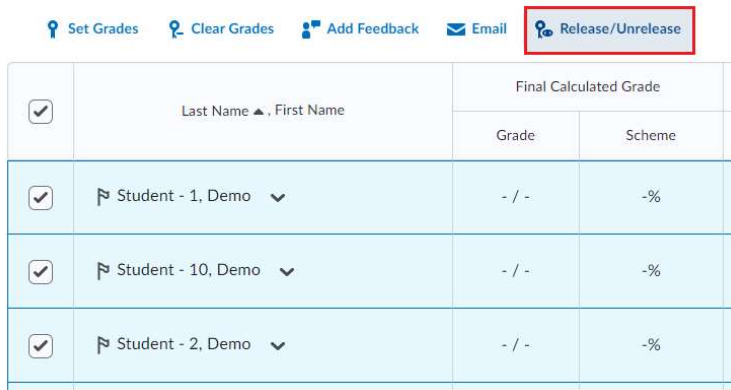
Release final grades
To release final grades

If you did not select the Automatically release final grade option when you set up your grade book, you can release final grades to learners manually.

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Enter Grades** page, from the **Final Calculated Grade** or **Final Adjusted Grade** context menu, click **Enter Grades**.

3. To release grades for all users, on the **Final Grades** page, from the **Final Grades** context menu, click **Release All**.

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4. To release final grades for a specific user, do one of the following:

    a. Select the check box by the user name and click the **Release/Unrelease** link.

    b. Select the check box in the **Release Final Calculated Grade** or **Release Adjusted Final Grade** column.

5. Click **Save**.

The 👁 Final grade is released icon displays in the Final Calculated Grade or Final Adjusted Grade column for any user who has their final grade released. The ⌀ Final grade is not released icon displays in the Final Calculated Grade or Final Adjusted Grade column for any user who does not have their final grade released.

The date and time a grade is released or unreleased is displayed in a learner's **Grades Event Log**.

Enter an adjusted final grade

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **Final Adjusted Grade** context menu, click **Enter Grades**.

3. In the **Final Adjusted Grade** column, enter a grade for every user you want to give an adjusted grade to.

4. If you want to release a grade for a user, select their **Release Final Adjusted Grade** check box.

5. Click **Save**.

Calculate final grades for a single user

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Enter Grades** page, click on a user's name.

3. If you see the "Out of date!" message displaying by the **Final Calculate Grade**, click the **Recalculate the Final Calculated Grade** icon. Click **Calculate**.

4. Enter a **Final Adjusted Grade** in the fields provided or click the **Transfer Final Calculated Grade to Final Adjusted Grade** icon.

5. Select the **Release** check box.

6. Click **Save**.

Importing grades

You can enter grades in another application and import them into Brightspace Learning Environment using a CSV, TSV or TXT file. You can also create new grade items through an import file by adding a column to the file. Any grades you import for discussion grade items and assignment grade items are also synchronized back to Discussions and Assignments as published feedback.

The import file must follow a standard format; use the Grades sample import file as a reference point. D2L recommends that you set up your grade book in Brightspace Learning Environment even if you want to enter grades in a CSV, TSV or TXT file.

Note the following:

If you enter a grade value that is greater than the value for the grade item, the grade is capped at the value unless you selected the Can Exceed option when setting up the grade item.

Do not import other options, such as a user's first name, email, or weighted grade.

To improve performance when importing grades for large classes, only import grade items that have changed and import by group or section when possible.

Field	Description	Example
Username	A unique name for identifying a user in Learning Environment. You must provide a Username or Org Defined ID (or both).	Frank.Catcher
Org Defined ID	A unique number for identifying a user in Learning Environment. You must provide a Username or Org Defined ID (or both).	20067930
Points Grade	Numeric and Pass/Fail grade items should be labeled the grade item name followed by "Points Grade". Users'	44

	grades should be the Points Grade they received. E.g., 44 points out of a possible 50 points.	
Grade Symbol	Select box grade items should be labeled the grade item name followed by "Grade Symbol". Users' grades should be a pre-existing grade scheme symbol. E.g., "Very Good", "Merit", or "3.5".	Very Good
Text Grade	Text grade items should be labeled the grade item name followed by "Text Grade". Users' grades can be any text value. Text grade items do not count towards users' final grades.	Perfect Attendance!
Adjusted Final Grade Numerator	The total points a user achieved in a course. You can enter a user's percentage grade (without the % sign) if you enter the denominator as 100. E.g., 84 points out of 100 points or 230 points out of 285 points.	84
Adjusted Final Grade Denominator	The total possible points available in a course. Enter 100 if you want to record users' percentage grades. E.g., _ / 100 points available or _ / 285 points available.	100
End-of-Line Indicator	The last column must be labeled "End-of-Line Indicator" so the system knows when the next set of data begins. The end of each users' line should be indicated with the pound key "#".	#

Import grade items:

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Enter Grades** page, click **Import**.
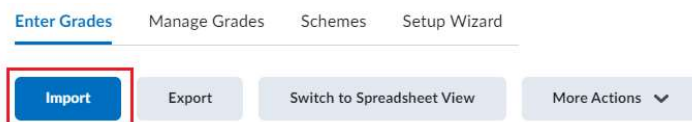
3. Click **Choose File**.

4. Locate the file you want to import and click **Open**.

5. Select **Create new grade item when an unrecognized item is referenced** if you want to be able to create new grade items from the import file.

Item Creation

☑ Create new grade item when an unrecognized item is referenced

[Continue] [Cancel]

6. Click **Continue**.

7. If you are creating new grade items:

   a. Select the **Create New Grade Item** check box beside each of the items you want to create.

   b. Select a grade item **Type**.

   c. Click **Continue**.

   d. Fill in the grade items' properties.

   e. Click **Continue**.

8. View error and warning messages associated with the import and click **Continue**.

9. Set grade visibility options for learners

10. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

11. Click **Settings**.

12. In the **Org Unit Display Options** tab, set your **Learner View Display Options**.

13. Click **Save**.

You can also edit grade visibility options for individual grade items using the **Edit Item** page by setting **Display Options**.

Note: Bonus grade items do not display to learners with the grade scheme information like other grade items, no matter what display options you set. Bonus grades are calculated differently than other grade items and only added to final grades after all other calculations. Therefore, learners can only

view the numeric points, and potentially the weight achieved, for a bonus grade, but no other grade scheme information.

Export grades
To export grades:

D2L recommends that you set up your grade book in Brightspace Learning Environment even if you want to enter grades in a CSV or TXT file. You can then use the **Export Grades** option to create an appropriately structured file.

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Enter Grades** page, click **Export**.

3. In the **Export Options** area, do the following:

4. From the **Export Grade Items For** drop-down list, select who you want to export grade items for.
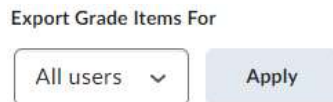
5. Select the **Key Field** you want to use to identify users.
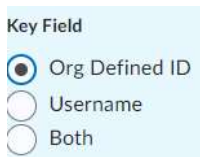
6. From the **Sort By** drop-down list, select the sorting order of the fields that appear in the exported file.

Sort By

[-- Default --]

-- Default --
Org Defined ID, Username, Last Name, First Name
Org Defined ID, Username, First Name, Last Name
Username, Org Defined ID, Last Name, First Name
Username, Org Defined ID, First Name, Last Name
Last Name, First Name, Org Defined ID, Username
Last Name, First Name, Username, Org Defined ID
First Name, Last Name, Org Defined ID, Username
First Name, Last Name, Username, Org Defined ID

7. Select the **Grade Values** and **User Details** you want to export.

Grade Values
- ☑ Points grade
- ☐ Weighted grade ❓
- ☐ Grade Scheme ❓

User Details
- ☑ Last Name
- ☑ First Name
- ☑ Email
- ☑ Group Membership

8. In the **Choose Grades to Export** area, select the grade items you want to export.

9. Click **Export to CSV** or **Export to Excel**. A pop-up window appears. Click on the file link to download it.

[Export to CSV] [Export To Excel] [Cancel]

Note: If a student is enrolled in multiple groups within a Group Category, or multiple sections within a course, those enrollments are exported as a comma-separated list within a cell.

Best practices for entering grades

▪ **When creating a grade item, ensure that the Max. Points field for the item is not set to null or zero**
The Max. Points field can be found in the Grading section of the Create a new grade item page (or the edit page for existing grade items) under the Properties tab.

▪ **When sorting grade categories and items, ensure they are sorted in the appropriate order**

The best way to ensure grade items are sorted correctly is to create the categories and items in the order that they will be marked. Brightspace Learning Environment automatically sorts the categories and grade items in the order that they are created.

If you want to see the order of your grade items, from the **Course Homepage**, go to **Grades**. Select **Manage Grades**.

▪ **When creating a grade item, make sure that you are not creating duplicate entries in the grade book**
Duplicate grade items can occur for a variety of reasons, such as from multiple course package imports or from users. Duplicates have the same title and often have no associated activity.

▪ Gradebooks that exceed 200+ grade items feature Sort Order text fields beside the grade items on the Reorder Grade Items and Categories page. The order of the grade items can be changed by entering a positive integer in the fields. Items with the same sort order number, such as two grade items being marked "1," retain their current sort order, relative to each other.

▪ The Sort Order drop-down menu still appears for Gradebooks with fewer than 200 grade items.

Synchronize your grade book with other tools

Your grade book synchronizes automatically with the published scores and feedback that you enter for grade items in Assignments, Discussions and Quizzes. All scores and feedback on grade items that you directly enter in Assignments, Discussions and Quizzes in your grade book synchronize directly with the associated tools and appear automatically as published grade items that are visible to learners.

Entering grades into your grade book using the import via CSV, import via Excel, or using the Brightspace API methods for grade items in Assignments and Discussions also appear automatically as published feedback in the tools.

Synchronize with Assignments

- Scores and feedback that you enter and publish for grade items directly in Assignments automatically synchronize with Grades and

appear in your grade book. Any scores and feedback that you retract from publication are removed from the grade book automatically.

- Scores and feedback that you enter and keep as drafts do not synchronize back to Grades until they are published.

Synchronize with Discussions

- Scores and feedback that you enter and publish for grade items directly in Discussions automatically synchronize with Grades and appear in your grade book. Any scores and feedback that you retract from publication are removed from the grade book automatically.

- Scores and feedback that you enter and keep as drafts do not synchronize back to Grades until they are published.

Synchronize with Quizzes

The grades you enter directly in Quizzes automatically synchronize with Grades and appear in your grade book. The scores and feedback for quizzes grade items that you enter directly in your grade book synchronize automatically with Quizzes and overwrite any calculated score for the quiz.

- Overall scores and feedback that you enter and publish for grade items directly in Quizzes automatically synchronize with Grades and appear in your grade book. Any scores and feedback that you retract from publication are removed from the grade book automatically.

- Overall scores and feedback that you enter and keep as drafts do not synchronize back to Grades until they are published.

- Scores and feedback that you enter for quiz attempts in Quizzes only synchronize with Grades if you have selected the **Allow Automatic Export to Grades** option for the quiz. If you have not enabled **Allow Automatic Export to Grades** then the quiz attempt score and feedback will not synchronize to your grade book until you click **Export to Grades** and you publish the attempt score and feedback.

Grading Scenarios
Scenario 1: Final calculated grade using Points system

You offer a number of online training courses that use similar content, but adjust the course content depending on your users' interests and skill levels. You set up specific courses by importing course content from a master course. You do not want to change the weight of each grade item to make

every course grade book balance, so you use the points system and keep each grade item's maximum points the same. You grade basic tasks out of 5, intermediate tasks out of 10, and advanced tasks out of 15. You give users who receive at least 70% on all grade items 10 bonus points. You allow users to exceed the maximum points for a grade item, but not the final grade. Because you often allow some users to skip advanced tasks, you drop ungraded items from the final grade calculation.

You set up grade items with the following properties:

	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Bonus
Maximum Points	5	5	10	10	15	15	10
Can Exceed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Bonus	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

You assign the following grades for the user Frank Catcher:

	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Bonus
Maximum Points	6	8	9	8	15	--	10

You release the calculated final grade to Frank. It is calculated as follows:

Grade item	Calculation
Project 1	= 6/5*100 = 120%
Project 2	= 8/5*100 = 160%
Project 3	= 9/10*100 = 90%

Grade item	Calculation
Project 4	= 8/10*100 = 80%
Project 5	= 15/15*100 = 100%
Project 6	= Dropped Note: Dropped grade items are not included in calculations; grades are calculated as if the item does not exist.
Bonus	= 10/10*100 = 100% Note: Bonus points are added on top of the final grade.
Calculated Final Grade	= (6+8+9+8+15)/(5+5+10+10+15)*100+10 = 46/45*100+10 = 112.22% = 100%

Scenario 2: Final calculated grade using Weighted system

You are teaching an introductory science course in which users are graded on four labs, their participation in discussion topics, and a final examination. You allow users to drop their lowest grade on a lab. You also provide bonus grades to users who act as moderators for discussion topics. If a user does not submit a lab, you leave it ungraded and treat ungraded items as a grade of 0.

You set up grade items and a Labs category with the following properties:

	Labs	Lab 1	Lab 2	Lab 3	Lab 4	Discussions	Moderator	Exam
Category	Labs	Labs	Labs	Labs	Labs	None	None	None
Maximum points	n/a	10	10	10	10	10	5	100
Weight	50% (for entire Labs category)							
		25%	25%	25%	25%			
Bonus	n/a	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Drop lowest	1							

You assign the following grades for the user Frank Catcher:

	Labs	Lab 1	Lab 2	Lab 3	Lab 4	Discussions	Moderator	Exam
Frank Catcher	n/a	0	8	0	7	8	3	71

You release the calculated final grade to Frank. It is calculated as follows:

Grade item	Calculation
Lab 1	= Dropped Note: Dropped grade items are not included in calculations; grades are calculated as if the item does not exist.
Lab 2	= 8/10*25/(25+25+25)*100 = 26.67% towards the category = 26.67*.5

Grade item	Calculation
	= 13.33% towards the final grade Note: Lab 1 is worth 33.33% of the Labs category even though it is assigned a weight of 25%. This is because the lowest lab grade is dropped and there are only three labs contributing to the category.
Lab 3	= 0/10*25/(25+25+25)*100 = 0% towards the category = 0*.5 = 0% towards the final grade See the note for Lab 1.
Lab 4	= 7/10*25/(25+25+25)*100 = 23.33% towards the category = 23.33*.5 = 11.67% towards the final grade See the note for Lab 1.
Discussions	= 8/10*10 = 8% towards the final grade
Moderator	= 3/5*5 = 3% on top of the final grade Note: Bonus items are added to the final grade after other calculations. Do not include a bonus item's weight in your total when balancing your grade book.
Exam	= 71/100*40

Grade item	Calculation
	= 28.4% towards the final grade
Calculated Final Grade	= 13.33+11.67+8+3+28.4 = 64.4%

Managing event logs in grade book

About event logs

Event logs maintain a record of changes made in the Grades tool. The logs can be useful when auditing a grade book, managing updates made by teaching assistants, and discussing grades with learners.

- User Grade event logs record all of the changes made to a particular user's grades.

- Grade Item event logs record changes to grades on a single grade item.

- Final Grade event logs record changes to users' final grades.

- Manage Grades event logs record changes made to the properties or restrictions of a specific grade item.

- Restoring Grade Item event logs record the date and time a grade item is created or removed, and the user who performs the action.

Access the event log for a user

1. On the **Enter Grades** page, click the name of the user you want to access the event log for.
2. From the context menu of the user's name, select **Event Log**.

Access the event log for an individual grade item

1. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the context menu of the grade item you want to access the event log for, select **Enter Grades**.
2. From the context menu of the grade item's name, select **Event Log**.

Access the event log for a user's final grades

1. On the **Enter Grades** page, from the context menu of the Final Calculated Grade or Final Adjusted Grade item, select **Enter Grades**.
2. In the **Event Log** column for the desired user, select the **Event Log** icon.

Access the event log for changes to a grade item's properties or restrictions

- On the **Manage Grades** page, from the context menu of the category or grade item you want to view, select **Event Log**.

Access the event log for restoring grade items

1. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **More Actions** button select **Event Log.**
2. If you want to restore Numeric, Select box, Pass/Fail, or Text grade items that were removed, beside the item's name, click **Restore**.

Appendix: Grading systems

Selecting a grading system is the first step in setting up your grade book.

Weighted

The weighted system calculates grade items as a percentage of a final grade worth 100%. The maximum points you assign to individual grade items can be any value, but their contribution towards the category they belong to and the final grade is the percentage value (weight) assigned to them.

Grade items in a category count as a percentage of that category, not of the final grade. Therefore, grade items in a category should combine to a weight of 100%.

For example, if you have a category worth 10% of the final grade with two equally weighted grade items, the weight of each grade item is 50%, (its contribution to the category), not 5% (its contribution to the final grade).

Since it's a category's weight and not an individual grade item's weight that counts toward the final grade, the final grade is inaccurate until all the items in the category are graded. If you want to release final grades to users before all the items are graded, you can drop ungraded items from the calculation

until the end of the course when you want all grade items to be considered. Otherwise, the final grades might be misleading.

If your grade items do not add up to 100%, you will receive a warning message. You can ignore this message if you choose; a balanced grade book is not required. If the weights assigned to grade items do not sum to 100%, the tool adjusts the weight of each item. For example, if you have three grade items with a weight of 25% each, each item is actually calculated as 33%. This is true for categories and the final grade.

Points

Use the points system when you want the maximum points assigned to a grade item to be equal to its contribution to the final grade. Final grades are calculated by adding a user's score on all grade items together and dividing by the sum of the maximum points values. The sum of the maximum points values for all grade items does not need to equal 100.

With the points system you do not specify a category's weight or total points. It is the maximum points assigned to an individual grade item that counts toward the final grade.

Make sure the maximum points assigned to grade items reflect how much you want them to be worth. For example, don't grade each of your 20 homework assignments out of 50 points and then your final exam out of 80 points.

Another option in the point system is to exclude an item from the final grade calculation. This enables you to evaluate a grade category, numeric grade item, select box grade item, or pass/fail grade item without including the grade in users' calculated or adjusted final grades. The **New/Edit Item** page and the **New/Edit Category** page both include an **Exclude from Final Grade Calculation** check box.

You can achieve similar functionality in the weighted system by setting the grade item or category's weight to 0%.
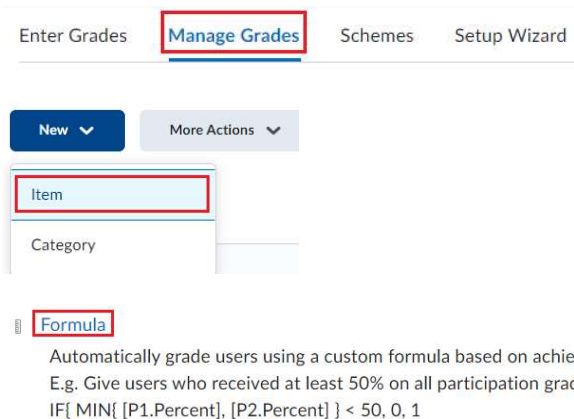
Formula

Use the formula system when you want to calculate final grades using a custom formula that allows for conditions. The formula system is based on the points system but allows you to set conditions around grade items to determine the final grade. For example, you could require that users receive at least 50% on their midterm and final exam to pass a course.

The formula system might not be available at your organization. If you do not have this option, you can release the adjusted final grade and calculate your custom formula manually, or you can contact your site administration about getting access to this functionality.

To create formula grade items

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Manage Grades** page, from the **New** button, click **Item > Formula**.

3. In the **General** area, enter your grade item details.

4. In the **Grading** area, enter the **Maximum Points** for the grade item. Then, do any of the following:

   a. To define the formula for your grade item, click the **Edit Using the Formula Editor** link. In the **Formula Editor** window, enter your formula and click **Insert**.

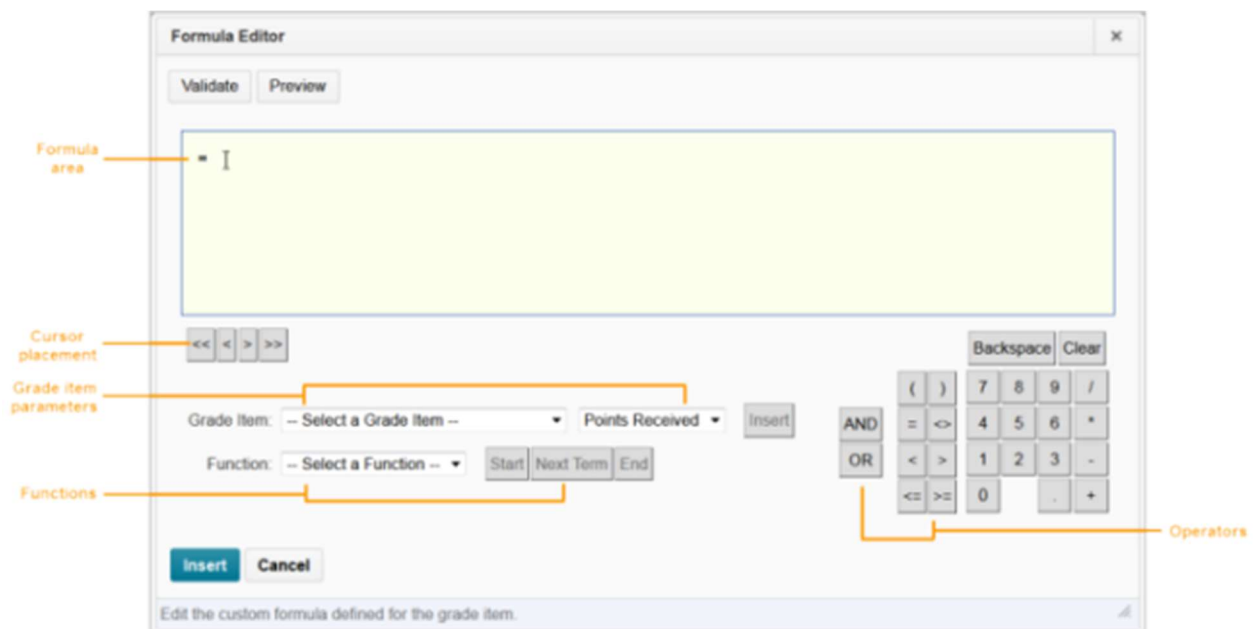   b. If you want users' grades to be able to exceed the maximum points specified for the item, select the **Can Exceed** check box.

c. From the **Grade Scheme** drop-down list, select a grading scheme for your grade item.

d. To attach a rubric to the grade item, click **Add Rubric**.

5. In the **Display Options** area, select how you want the Learner View and Managing View for the grade item to appear.

6. To associate a learning objective with the grade item, click the **Objectives** tab, and then **Associate Learning Objectives**.

7. Click **Save and Close**.

About formula grade items

Use the Formula Editor to define a formula that calculates a grade item's value based on other grade items. When you create a formula, you specify which grade items you want included in the formula and the relationships between them. An example of a simple formula is one that calculates the sum of a number of grade items. A more complicated formula is one that drops the minimum or maximum value from a set of grade items.

Component	Description
Formula area	The formula area is where the formula text displays. The equals sign (=) at the start of the formula cannot be deleted. A cursor shows your position in the formula.
Cursor placement	Use the cursor placement icons to move the cursor forwards and backwards in the formula. You can also move the cursor by clicking on the new location with your mouse. There are four options: ▪ **<<** - Move cursor to start of formula ▪ **<** - Move cursor back one element ▪ **>** - Move cursor forward one element ▪ **>>** - Move cursor to end of formula
Grade item parameters	To view what grade items you can insert as a parameter in your formula, use the **Grade Item** drop-down list. You can insert Numeric, Pass/Fail, Selectbox, and Formulatype grade items. You cannot reference the formula grade item you are defining or a final grade. To view the values associated with the grade item you want to use in the formula, use the **Grade Item Value** drop-down list. There are three options: ▪ **Points Received** - The grade the user achieved. For example, 7 (out of 10 points). ▪ **Max Points** - The maximum points available for the grade item. For example, 10 points. ▪ **Percent** -The percent grade the user achieved. For example, 70%. When using the weighted system, category and grade item weights are ignored in formula calculations. Dropped grade items and bonus grade items are calculated the same as other grade items.
Functions	The **Function** drop-down list contains a list of functions that you can use in your calculation formula: ▪ **MAX** - Calculates the maximum (largest) value in a set of values. ▪ **MIN** - Calculates the minimum (smallest) value in a set of values. ▪ **SUM** -Calculates the sum (total) of a set of values. ▪ **AVG** - Calculates the average for a set of values by adding all the values and dividing by the total number of values.

Component	Description
	▪ **IF** - Operates as a Boolean statement that returns either the value set as true or as false. You must define the condition (Boolean statement), true (then) value, and false (else) value. ▪ **NOT** - Operates as a Boolean statement that returns the value set as true if the condition is false and as false if the condition is true. You can embed functions within functions. The Start, Next Term, and Endoptions are used to define elements of a function: ▪ **Start** - Starts the function selected in the **Function** drop-down list with an opening bracket ((). ▪ **Next Term** - Inserts a comma to separate grade items or parts of a Boolean statement. ▪ **End** - Ends the function with a closing bracket ()).
Operators	Operators are usually used in conjunction with at least one grade item.

Formula Editor validation errors

The following are errors you might encounter while using the Formula Editor.

Error	Description	Examples
Unexpected [token_type] For example, Unexpected operator	The formula contains a function component in an unexpected location	= 5=/1 = (5+1)2
Unbalanced parentheses	The formula contains an opening or closing bracket without a corresponding bracket	= 5+1)
Missing end of function	The formula contains an unclosed function	= SUM{[Item1.Points], [Item2.Points]
Unexpected function end	The formula contains a closing bracket for a function that does not relate to a function	= [Item1.Points]/2}

Error	Description	Examples
Invalid number of operator parameters	The formula contains an invalid number of operator parameters	= [Item1.Points] +
Invalid number of function parameters	The formula contains an invalid number of function parameters	= SUM{} = IF{[Item1.Points]<2,5}
Numeric value expected	A Boolean statement or operator was entered in place of a numeric value	= IF{5<2,1 OR 1,4} = SUM{1 = 2,3,4}
Boolean value expected	A Boolean statement was not entered for a condition	= IF {MIN{4,5},100,0} = NOT{4}
Invalid terminal	The formula contains an incorrectly used terminal	= [Item1.Points] + 3.2.5

Grading schemes

A grade scheme enables you to organize users' performances on grade items into levels of achievement. A grade scheme can include any number of achievement levels. Each achievement level has its own range of acceptable grades and a symbol, such as a numeric value, letter, or text description, to represent it. You can create your own grade schemes or use schemes set up by your organization.

Grade scheme	Example
Letter	F, D, C, B, A, A+
Numeric	2.0, 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0
Text	Below Expectations, Meets Expectations, Exceeds Expectations

Create a grade scheme

To create a grade scheme:

1. On the navbar, click **Grades**.

2. On the **Schemes** page, click **New Scheme**.

3. In the **General** area, enter the scheme **Name**.

4. In the **Ranges** area, enter your scheme details. If you do not assign a value in the **Assigned Value %** field, the **Start %** is used as the default.

5. To add more levels to your scheme, click **Add Ranges**.

6. Click **Save and Close**.

About grade scheme ranges and assigned grade value

A Grade scheme range is used when an activity uses a numerical grade item. If the assessed number falls within the defined range, the learner sees the associated grade scheme and color where applicable. For example, in a Quiz, a learner receives 72%. The Grade range for a B is 70-80%; therefore, the learner sees a B wherever they can see grade schemes.

An Assigned Grade value is used when an activity uses a Selectbox grade item. When selecting a scheme range from the selectbox grade item dropdown, the **Assigned value** percentage is recorded in the gradebook and the learner sees that value where applicable. For example, in an Assignment for 20 points, a learner receives a B. The Assigned Value for the B scheme range is 75%. In the gradebook, the learner sees 15/20 points and/or 75% as the numerical equivalent of a B.

Further Support

If you need further support with Brightspace, please contact the **Software and Application Support Centre** at sas@smu.ca.

Regular hours: Monday – Friday, 9AM – 5PM.
Summer session hours: Monday – Friday, 9AM – 4:30PM.