



CENTRE FOR TEACHING, LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Effective Practices for Instructors

Creating and Delivering Tests in Connect

Developed by *Connect* Team,

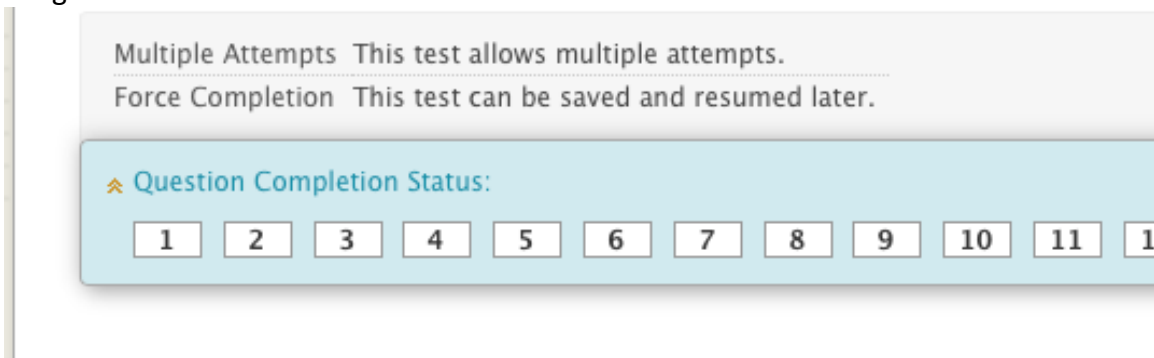
- **Uncheck the Force Completion option.** While this option sounds like a good idea in principle, it can cause numerous problems for students and instructors as it removes the ability for students to recover from a technical failure such as a browser crash, navigating to a new URL in the tab where the test is open or a short loss of wireless connectivity.
- **Instead of using Force Completion,** there are a number of options you can use to protect the integrity of your test:
 - randomize the order that answers are presented within your questions,
 - randomize the order your questions are presented within the test
 - use
 - use time limits and a short availability time with the auto-submit option to help students focus on the test and limit their access time. If using this option, recognize that student connectivity speed may vary so you may want to provide a short additional time to account for slow connections.
- **Provide Feedback.** When developing your test questions, take the opportunity to provide feedback for both correct and incorrect answers. That way, if you are using your tests to enhance and reinforce student learning, i.e., using your assessment for learning, you can provide students with the feedback. On the other hand, if you are using your tests to assess student learning, you can opt to not show the feedback.
- **Provide An Opportunity to Practice.** Consider providing your students a 'dry run' to explore the test interface - an opportunity to take a no-stakes test that uses the same settings you have opted to use in their later, graded tests before you deliver your first graded test. This will allow your students to become familiar with the test interface prior to the first graded test and can help reduce test anxiety. In addition, this should surface any potential issues.
- **Provide Clear Instructions About Test Set-Up.** Ensure that you provide clear instructions to students about how you have set up the test. For example, if you allow for multiple attempts you may want to tell students how these attempts will be graded. Students are much more likely to view instructions from their instructor than they are to view the generic test information generated by *Connect*.

- **Provide Information About Test Feedback.** Ensure that you provide information to students about the feedback they can expect once they have completed the test. For example, will students see their score, their score only after all tests have been graded, or will they get more complete feedback that includes the correct answers and any feedback provided for each answer? Remember that selecting the “Score” option in the Test Options only controls the display of scores achieved for individual questions. The option to display the student’s score on the test is controlled in the Grade Centre.
- **Investigate Options for Question Presentation.** Investigate both the technical and pedagogical reasons for question presentation options, i.e., one at a time vs all questions in one window. For example, if you have a significant number of questions that include media or if you have a long test and you know your students may have limited bandwidth when working on the test, you may want to consider delivering your questions one at a time and allowing backtracking unless the integrity of your test requires no backtracking. If you choose the ‘no backtracking’ option, you should make it is clear to students before they start the test that once they save the answer and move to the next question, they cannot return that question.
- **Consider Options for Offering Long Essay-Type Questions.** Long essay-type questions may be offered more effectively using the assignment tool. Offering these types of questions in a test raises potential grading issues and increases the possibility that your students may be timed-out by their ISP or Connect if there is no test activity because they are using MSWord or another program to write their answers.
- **Consider Impact of Stringent Time Limits.** Realize that stringent time limits on test availability can create problems if a student’s connectivity is slow or interrupted. You may want to allow a short additional time to account for slow connections.
- **Provide Students with Best Practices.** Provide your students with a list of best practices for taking tests (some suggestions can be found below).
- **Let Students Know Your Policies for Test Issues.** Decide on and let students know your policies for dealing with issues that can arise during a test.

Effective Practices for Students Taking Tests in Connect

- **Use a Laptop or Desktop Computer.** Do not take a test on an iPad, iPhone, Android phone/tablet, or other mobile device—use a laptop or desktop computer.
- **Ensure That Your Computer Is Prepared For The Test.** You should ensure that your computer is free of spyware and malware, and that you are using a compatible browser such as Firefox or Google Chrome. Your computer should be up-to-date with the latest patches since automatic updates can interrupt your test.

- **Turn Off Browser Toolbars.** To ensure success while taking your test, turn off browser toolbars such as Yahoo, Google and MSN.
- **Ensure You Have Power.** If using a laptop, ensure that it has enough battery power to last for the duration of the test or plug your laptop into a power outlet.
- **Ensure You Have Strong Wireless Connection.** If taking your test using a wireless connection, ensure that you have a strong connection to the network – four bars for Windows and 3 bands for a Mac.
- **Minimize Interruptions While Taking A Test/Assessment.** Close other applications such as email notifications, chat, IM or social networking sites (Facebook) before taking the test.
- **Start Fresh.** Before taking a test, restart your browser and log into Connect. Some students have found that restarting their computer before taking a test is an effective practice.
- **Click Only Once To Launch The Test.** Double clicking the link may launch the test twice.
- **Ensure you read and understand the instructions for the test.** For tests that are set to Force Completion, for example, if you accidentally shut down your browser, experience even a short loss of wireless connectivity, or open a new URL from the tab in which the test is open, the test it will be submitted even if you have not finished it.kalev
- **Use Navigation Within Connect.** Once you have launched the test, ensure that you only use the navigation within Connect, i.e., do not use the browser back button, reload the test, use the browser delete button or resize the test window. If you are only able to answer one question at a time (questions present themselves on separate pages), make sure you only single-click the **Next** button to move forward
- **Check Your Progress.** You can check on your progress within the test by expanding the 'Completion Status' link at the top of your test, just below the test instructions. See image below



- **Check That Your Answers Are Being Auto-Saved.** Connect will auto-save your answers but it is a good idea to check that this is happening as you go through the test. Also, even if the test is set to auto-submit, it's a good idea to click Submit at the conclusion of the test so that you'll receive a submission confirmation.

- **Pay Attention to Warning Messages.** Take screenshots of any warning messages you receive. Do not ignore them! Complete instructions on how to take a screenshot at <http://www.take-a-screenshot.org/>
- **Know Your Instructor's Policies.** Ensure that you are familiar with your instructor's policies around assessments and that you know ahead of time what to do if you experience difficulty during the assessment.