

ECTS: Workload and Assessment Considerations

Assessment workload is typically based on how much time an average student invests in order to achieve a module's learning outcomes at threshold level. A module or course with 10 ECTS credits should have approximately twice the workload of a course with 5 ECTS.

This resource aims to increase awareness of the relationship between the teaching, learning, and assessment workload and how these align with the ECTS value of a module.

At Trinity:

- Module sizes are limited to 5 and 10 ECTS, with 20 ECTS reserved for the capstone module only.
- Assessment load should be commensurate with ECTS size.

Student workload:

- 5 ECTS module = 125 hours of 'typical' student input
- 10 ECTS module = 250 hours of workload for a 10 ECTS module.

This workload estimation includes **all** teaching, learning (inc. self-study), practical lab work, continuous assessment, preparation for summative assessment, and the time taken to complete the assessment. It is important that assessment preparation should be factored into this workload allocation, although obviously this is not an exact science. Think of the 'typical student' as much as is feasible. When designing assessment for 5 and 10 ECTS sized-modules, please do take the estimation of preparation time for task into account in light of workload and mapping already conducted:

1. In a situation in which a student is writing a c.1500 word essay under normative conditions, the 'physical' time to complete the essay in an exam situation might be 1 hour, but how long would the 'typical' Trinity student take to prepare for this essay? 10 hours? → **11 hours in total for the assessment**
2. Where a student is e.g. giving a 15 minute presentation in person, would a preparation time of e.g. 5 – 6 hours be reasonable? → **6 hours in total for the assessment**
3. In an exam requiring extensive calculations, the 'physical' time to complete this work under exam conditions might be 3 hours. How long would be reasonable self-learning to complete this successfully, perhaps 25-30 hours of preparation? → **28 – 33 hours in total for the assessment.**

For greater information on parity of assessment sizing, please review the [TEP Resource on student workload](#).

This document is not a statement of formal university policy, but a teaching and learning resource written from a pedagogical perspective. It is not intended to be prescriptive.

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