

Key Assignment Guide & FAQ

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What is a Key Assignment?

Key Assignments are designated course assignments selected by program leadership to assess specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). These assignments serve as primary measures of student achievement and provide important assessment data used to support continuous program improvement and meet accreditation requirements, including those established by SACSCOC and other accrediting agencies.

Key Assignments are preconfigured in Canvas with rubrics aligned to the appropriate Student Learning Outcomes. At the beginning of each term, instructors should verify that the Key Assignment is present in their course and that the required outcome(s) appear on the assignment rubric. Canvas uses these outcome-aligned rubrics to collect and report student learning assessment data.

How to Verify Your Key Assignment

Step 1: Determine whether your course includes a Key Assignment

Review the [Courses with Key Assignments Smartsheet](#) to identify whether your course contains a designated Key Assignment. If your course is listed, proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: Locate the Key Assignment in Canvas

In your Canvas course, select **Assignments** from the Course Navigation menu. Locate the designated Key Assignment. Key Assignments are identified by a **(KA)** or **(QEP)** designation in the assignment title.

Step 3: Verify the rubric and outcome alignment

Open the Key Assignment and review the attached rubric. Scroll to the bottom of the rubric to confirm that the required Student Learning Outcome(s) are present. Outcomes linked to Canvas rubrics appear in **blue text**. See the example below.

PowerPoint and factsheet satisfies adherence to current APA format and style, proper conventions and organization, and is visually appealing and engaging. Core value of Respect is addressed in the presentation	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Unsatisfactory	
	PowerPoint and factsheet is expertly designed, graphically stunning, and offers a guided journey through the material. Core value of respect is clearly addressed.	A general PowerPoint and factsheet with graphics and text with a general journey through the material. Core value of respect is generally addressed.	A basic PowerPoint and factsheet, somewhat boring and text driven. Core value of respect is lacking.	PowerPoint and factsheet are incomplete, lack organization, and is not visually appealing or engaging. Core value of respect is not evident.	-- /25 pts
	25 to >22 pts	22 to >19 pts	19 to >17 pts	17 to >0 pts	

Comment

ESOL MT.1 ESOL MT.1 view longer description Threshold: 3 pts	Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Unsatisfactory	-- /4 pts
	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pts	

Step 4: Report missing items

If a Key Assignment or its associated rubric is missing from your course, submit a **Course Support Ticket** using the link in the Instructor Resources module. Include the course number, section, and a brief description of what is missing.

Using the Rubric During Assessment

For Assignment Submissions

When grading a Key Assignment in **SpeedGrader**, score the rubric as you would for any other assignment. Outcome-linked criteria are typically located at the bottom of the rubric and appear in **blue text**.

Be sure to score all outcome criteria before selecting Submit Assessment. See example below.

Use of Canvas Features	Exemplary Effectively uses Canvas tools (descriptions, formatting, links, etc.) to enhance learning 8 to >6.4 pts	Proficient Uses Canvas tools with some effectiveness 6.4 to >4 pts	Developing Limited or basic use of Canvas features 4 to >1.6 pts	Needs Improvement Little to no use of Canvas tools beyond minimum 1.6 to >0 pts	No Evidence 0 pts	Criterion Score 8 /8 pts
Publishing & Functionality	Exemplary All items and module are published and function correctly in Student View 6 to >4.8 pts	Proficient Most items published; minor functionality issues 4.8 to >3 pts	Developing Some items unpublished or not working properly 3 to >1.2 pts	Needs Improvement Module not published or major functionality issues 1.2 to >0 pts	No Evidence 0 pts	Criterion Score 6 /6 pts
Effort & Attention to Detail	Exemplary Demonstrates strong effort, creativity, and attention to detail 6 to >4.8 pts	Proficient Shows consistent effort with minor gaps 4.8 to >3 pts	Developing Basic effort with limited detail 3 to >1.2 pts	Needs Improvement Minimal effort or incomplete work 1.2 to >0 pts	No Evidence 0 pts	Criterion Score 4.8 /6 pts
Critical Thinking 1.1 Critical Thinking 1.1 view longer description Threshold: 3 pts	Exceeds Mastery 4 pts	Mastery 3 pts	Near Mastery 2 pts	Below Mastery 1 pts	No Evidence 0 pts	Criterion Score -/4 pts

✓ Complete

Cancel

Submit Assessment

For Tests and Quizzes

Although student responses are scored automatically or manually within the quiz, instructors must also complete the associated outcome-aligned rubric for assessment reporting purposes.

After students complete the Key Assignment test or quiz, open **SpeedGrader** and access the attached rubric for each student. Based on the student's performance on the assessment, score the applicable outcome criterion (or criteria) on the rubric. Once all outcome scores have been entered, select Submit Assessment. See example below.

Assessment

Grade out of 10

Status

Rubric & Feedback

View Mode

Quiz 1 (KA) Rubric

Criteria	Ratings					Points
Critical Thinking 1.1	Exceeds Mastery	Mastery	Near Mastery	Below Mastery	No Evidence	
Critical Thinking 1.1						
view longer description						
Threshold: 3 pts						

Verify Student Mastery of Learning Outcomes

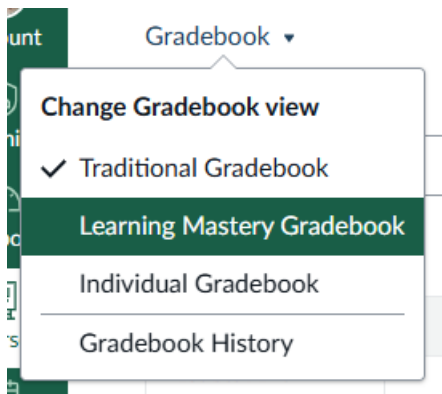
Canvas allows instructors to view student performance on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) through the **Learning Mastery Gradebook**.

To access the Learning Master Gradebook:

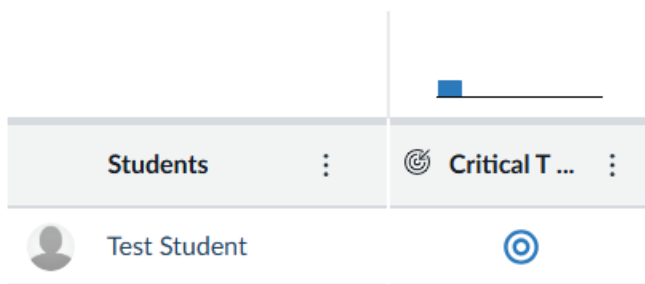
Step 1: Select **Grades** from the Course Navigation menu.

Step 2: Click the **Gradebook** dropdown menu.

Step 3: Select the **Learning Mastery Gradebook**.

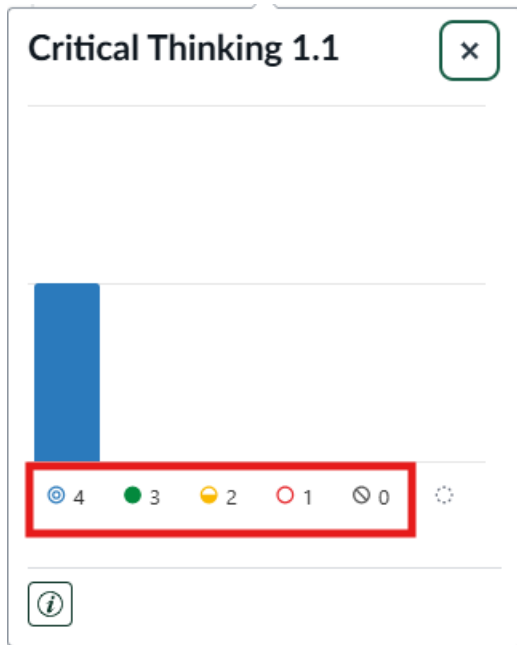


The Learning Mastery Gradebook displays student achievement on outcome-aligned assessments in a searchable, color-coded view. This allows you to quickly identify students' levels of mastery for each Student Learning Outcome in your course.



To view additional details for an outcome, hover over the chart above the **Outcome Name** and click the expansion arrow. A summary will display the following:

- The number of students who scored at each performance level
- A color key explaining the mastery levels displayed in the chart.



To return to the standard gradebook, click the **Learning Mastery Gradebook** dropdown menu and select Traditional Gradebook.

Learning Mastery Gradebook ▾

Student Names

Q Search Students

1 student, Showing

15 ▾

Change Gradebook view

Traditional Gradebook

✓ Learning Mastery Gradebook

Individual Gradebook

Gradebook History

Note: Outcome mastery data is only available for assignments that include outcome-aligned rubrics and have been scored using those rubrics in SpeedGrader. If outcome data is missing, verify that all rubric assessments have been completed and submitted.

FAQs

What should I verify at the beginning of the term?

Confirm that:

- The Key Assignment is present in your course.
- The assignment includes an attached rubric.
- The required Student Learning Outcome(s) appear on the rubric.
- Outcome-linked criteria are displayed in **blue text**.

Why are some rubric criteria displayed in blue text?

Blue text indicates that the criterion is linked to a Canvas Outcome. These outcome-linked criteria are used to collect and report Student Learning Outcome (SLO) assessment data.

What if I do not see the outcome listed on the rubric?

If the required outcome is missing, submit a **Course Support Ticket** using the link in the Instructor Resources module. Include the course number, section, assignment name, and a description of the issue.

What if a Key Assignment is missing from my course?

Submit a **Course Support Ticket** and provide details about the missing assignment. Support staff will review the course and restore the necessary assessment components.

Do I need to use the rubric when grading?

Yes. Outcome assessment data is collected through the rubric. To ensure accurate reporting, instructors should score all outcome-linked criteria and select **Submit Assessment** when grading.

Why do I need to score a rubric for a test or quiz?

While a test or quiz may generate a score automatically, the associated SLO assessment is collected through the outcome-aligned rubric. After reviewing student performance, complete the rubric in SpeedGrader and submit the assessment.

What happens if I forget to complete the rubric?

The student's work will still receive a grade, but the associated SLO assessment data may not be captured for program assessment reporting.

Can I edit the outcome criteria on the rubric?

No. Outcome-linked criteria are standardized to ensure consistency in assessment and reporting across course sections. If you believe a rubric needs to be updated, contact your department Chair/Director and the Assessment Office.

Do I need to assess every student using the rubric?

Yes. To ensure complete and accurate assessment data, all students who complete the Key Assignment should be evaluated using the outcome-aligned rubric.