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Create Assignment Categories for a Traditional Gradebook

Click **Categories** to [add](#), [import](#), [edit](#) or [delete](#) your assignment categories.

If you set your [Gradebook preferences](#) to calculate term averages by weight, you can assign weights to the categories. You can even [adjust the category weights for a term](#), without affecting your Gradebook calculations for prior terms.

Note: You must create assignment categories here if you assign weights to your categories and want to adjust the category weights by term. You can create categories with fixed weights from the [Categories](#) side-tab.

To add a category:

1. Log on to the Staff view.
2. Click the **Gradebook** tab.
3. Select the class you want to add categories to.
4. Click the **Details** side-tab.
5. On the Class Details page, click **Categories**.

Appears if you have [linked](#) class sections.

6. Click **Add**. A pop-up appears:

Appears if you do not have linked class sections.

7. If you have linked class sections, **Also add to linked sections?** is enabled by default. The new category will be applied to all sections linked with this one. If you do not want to apply this category to the linked class sections, deselect this checkbox. If you have linked sections and you [adjust weights by term](#), the new category will only be applied to the linked sections for the same term, and with the same weight.

If you do not have linked sections, **Add to all sections?** appears in the pop-up, but it is not enabled by default. You can select it to apply the new category to all your class sections. If you [adjust weights by term](#), **Add to all sections?** does not appear on the pop-up, so you cannot automatically associate the new category with your class sections.

8. At **Enter Category Code**, type a code, such as **HW**, for homework.
9. At **Enter Category Description**, type a [description for the code](#).
10. If you set your [Gradebook preferences](#) to calculate term averages by weight, type a weight at **Enter Category Weight**. Aspen will weight any grades you enter for an assignment in this category.

Example: If you create the assignment type **Homework**, and homework is 15% of the students' final grade, type **15**. Then when you enter a grade for a homework assignment, the system automatically weights that grade 15% towards the current grade for the term.

Note: Weights do not have to add up to 100. A category's weight need only be relative to other category weights.

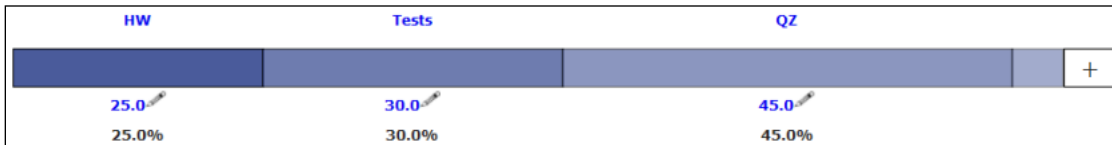
Example: You might weight tests 50%, quizzes 25% and homework 25%. You could also weight those same values as follows: tests 2, quizzes 1, homework 1.

11. Click

When you create a category, a category bar appears:

If the [Average Mode](#) is set to **Total Points**, the Category Weight/Points Possible starts out as **(0)**. But as you add assignments in this category, Aspen add up the points and displays the total points possible for the category.

12. To add another category, click **Add** or




13. Repeat steps 7–11. Aspen updates the category bar as you add categories.

You can import categories from other course sections instead of manually adding them.

Note: Whether you add or import a category, Aspen associates the category with your linked sections (if any).


To import a category:

1. Click **Import**. The Import Categories pick list appears.
2. At **Import from**, click .
3. Select the course that has the category you want to import.
4. Click **OK**.
5. The codes for the class appear. Select the code(s) you want to import.
6. Click **OK**. The category bar appears with the imported codes.

To enter or edit a category's details:

1. Click the **Category Code**. A pop-up appears.

Note: Whether you add or import a category, Aspen associates the category with your linked sections (if any).


2. Enter or edit a **Code** and **Description** for the category.
3. In the **Assignment Defaults** box, you can determine the default values for any assignment you create for this category. This can save you time when creating assignments.
4. At **Grade Scale > Name**, click  to select the grade scale you want to use when entering grades for assignments in this category.

Example: You might enter a 1, 2 or 3 for a homework assignment. Therefore, you would create a grade scale named **Homework** with the grades 1, 2 and 3 and their point values. Then, you would select that grade scale at this field.

Note: District grade scales are available for you to use for all assignments. [Create grade scales only if you have a personal grading scheme that is not defined by a district grade scale.](#)

5. At the **Entry Mode** drop-down, select **Both**, **Numeric Only** or **Letter Only** to determine the grade values you can enter for any assignments in this category.
6. Type the **Total** (maximum) **points**.
7. Type any **Extra credit points** a student can earn for an assignment.
8. Select the **Score cannot be dropped** checkbox if you do not want the system to drop any lowest scores from this category.
9. Select a **Visibility Type** for this assignment category:
 - **Private:** Assignments do not appear in the Student or Family portals.
 - **Public:** Assignments and grades appear in portals.
 - **Public-no grades:** Assignments appear in portals, but without grades.
10. Click **Save**.

Notes:

- The information you specify on the category details pop-up applies to all terms.
- You can edit the **Category Weight** by clicking . However, doing so may impact scored assignments in your Gradebook.

Adjusting Category Weights by Term


If you calculate term averages by weight (and not by total points), you can change the weight for your categories by term. This will not affect your Gradebook scores from previous posted terms.

Example: During Term 1, you weight the Homework category (**HW**) more heavily than Class Participation (**CP**). However, during Term 2 you assign several class group projects and want Class Participation to have more weight than Homework. You can change the weights for **CP** and **HW** for Term 2, without affecting your Term 1 grade calculations.

Warning: Adjusting a category's weight will affect scored assignments in your Gradebook for the term(s) you select.

Note: Even if enabled in your [Gradebook preferences](#), **Semester Cumulative Average** and/or **Cumulative Average** will not always be available when adjusting weights by term.

To add or adjust category weights by term:

1. Click **Adjust Weights by Term**. Category bars with your categories appear for each grading term in the school year.
2. Do one of the following:
 - To adjust the category weight for a term, click  next to the Category Weight, and enter a different weight. The category weights for the other terms do not change.

Important: Adjusting a category's weight will affect scored assignments in your Gradebook for the term(s) you edit.

- To add a weighted category for one term, click on the category bar for that term, and enter the [category's details](#).

Note: The new category will appear in the category bar for each grading term. However, the weight you assigned only appears in the term you added it to. For the other terms, the weight is set to zero (0). If needed, you can click the category weight for a term to edit it.

- To add a category for all terms, click **Add to all Terms**, and enter the [category's details](#). The category and weight appear in the category bar for all grading terms. You can adjust the weight for a term as needed.
- To import a category for all terms, click **Import to all Terms**. [Enter the fields](#) on the Import Categories pick list.

Note: You can [edit a category's details](#) by clicking on the Category Code and editing the fields on the pop-up. The information you edit on the pop-up is applied to all terms.

To delete a category:

You can delete a category that you have created and saved.

Warning: If you delete a category that has graded assignments, you will delete all of the category's assignments and assignment scores from your Gradebook.

1. Click the **Category Code**.
2. On the pop-up, click **Delete**.
3. Do one of the following:
 - If the category is not linked to graded assignments, a pop-up confirms you want to delete this category. Click **OK**.
 - If the category is linked to graded assignments, a warning notifies you of this. If you click **OK**, Aspen checks to see what will be deleted, and displays these details in a pop-up. Click **Continue** or **Cancel**.

Notes: Administrators can [lock a grade term](#) after it ends. Assignments that are associated with a locked grade term are locked. Categories that are associated with locked assignments are affected as described below.

If you adjust your category weights by term, you cannot do the following when a grade term is locked:

- Edit the category weight
- Edit the category code or description of a category associated with a locked assignment
- Add a category to the locked term
- Delete a category that is associated with a locked assignment.

If you do not adjust your category weights by term, you cannot:

- Edit the category code and description for categories associated with locked assignments
- Delete categories associated with locked grade terms
- Edit a field of the category using Modify List.

You will be able to edit the assignment default fields in the category details. If the assignment default fields have Mass Update enabled in the Data Dictionary, you will be able to update these fields using the advanced **Force Save** option in Mass Update.

Was this content helpful?