Abstract: An assignment is any type of work students have to complete in their own time, outside class, in order to fulfill the course objectives. They take the form of homework papers, projects, and all academic undertaking included in portfolios. In addition, assignments are generally submitted for a grade and can serve as proof of the current level of student knowledge and of further improvement areas, which is why written versions are most popular, as writing demands careful thinking and planning, synthesis, personal input in ideas and analyses, lack of plagiarism due to teachers’ supervision, and archive storage possibilities. By definition, homework is assigned material students are required to complete outside class. It can include diverse tasks and varies depending on course type, student level, remedial/consolidation/extra work needed by learners, in order to achieve their potential. Homework differs from formal writing in length, style, and depth of investigation, details, and level of experience; the result is not a fully-developed, essay-style text, but rather a collection of written answers to specific questions, journal-type entries presenting learners’ individual responses to class topics, or short explanations of theories and methods related to the course.

Keywords: foreign language scientific writing, stages&achievement, homework&exams in engineering studies

1 Introductory definition of terms

Homework has the purpose of recording the student’s varying ideas and emotional responses to what is being taught. It differs from a learning log, whose journal-type entries are informally written in the first-person voice and target all aspects related to the course. Unlike the learning log, the homework envisages specific learning outcomes and professors should select tasks that enable students to explain in their own words a theory, methods or topics relevant to the class. Such short descriptive paragraphs require learners to understand a concept thoroughly so as to be able to explain it relying on what was internalized rather than on memorized definitions taken from textbooks. Most homework tasks are specifically outlined by course instructors, being, therefore, highly individualized.

2 Problem Formulation

Nevertheless, there are certain general rules on completing the common types of assignments:
- full written answer for each part of the question in the textbook or outlined by the course instructor
- developed sentences, sufficient in number, documenting the response with supporting arguments.
- personal viewpoints included only if they are plausible, well founded on what was learnt, clearly and coherently presented.
- full implementation of instructor’s directions
- editing and proofreading activities prior to handing in the final product, for avoiding careless mistakes.

2.1 Types of homework

Learners in all levels of academic study have to create assignment writing many times during their courses and their future careers, in the form of book reports, essays or term papers.

A very popular type of homework is a short reflective paper in which the student is asked to integrate what has been learned in class with what has been gained from the textbook and apply it to a specific topic or concept relative to the course. This will often require the student to define and explain the topic or the concept in detail.

Another one is keeping the learning log up to date, with students filling in regular entries about the class, dictated by didactic or individual needs.

Essays are the most frequent formal writing assignments, typically ranging between 3–10 pages. They present a student’s original ideas about a specific topic in a thorough way.
Research-based assignments are also a regular feature of academic studies. They require students to perform extensive investigation into the scholarly materials available on a single topic and then report on that research in a written document.

2.2 Strategies of approaching homework

In order to create effective writing assignments, students must thoroughly understand the request, which is done by reading the instructions in detail, by asking questions on problematic aspects, and by consulting the professor for clarification. Then, depending on the type of assignment required, they need to know the subjects (for an interdisciplinary approach), the topic to be covered in the essay, and they must take a position about that particular topic so as to create an effective and convincing essay. In many cases, students can turn to the Internet or to a resource manual for specific information about an assignment writing type. They look for samples of the requested text, for clues as to what content to include, for background information, for deductive/inductive specific approaches in demonstrations. After completing the draft of the writing project, review for editing and content follow. It might help if a third party could review the draft (a professional writer/editor), able to provide fresh insight, which will help the student score higher. Writing can apply to many different projects in school, such as essays, term papers, and dissertations.

However, assignment writings are not the same as assignment outlines. Professors require students to submit an outline of an essay before they actually write it, so that they can make sure that each student is on the right track. If a professor asks to see the outline, he/she is not looking for full text assignment writing, but, instead, merely focuses on the logical steps taken for the planned achievement.

3. Problem Solution

All homework and written assignments must be correlated with evaluation tasks and standards, also mirroring the assessment timelines & exam duration. There are significant differences between the types of homework students were accustomed to in high school and the formal research style which has to be incorporated in their faculty assignments during their engineering studies. Most students look for information on research papers templates only when they first receive homework in the university. Most professors give learners personal&individually adapted instructions for research papers, which will ensure the fastest progress in achieving good work by high standards. However, professors’ guidelines should not distort the international norms for writing research in foreign languages, paper formats and citation styles, for the sake of their own ego, or for the sake of poorly prepared students.

Another factor impacting on successful homework writing for engineering is the student’s own writing experience and proficiency in the native tongue, as most such skills are transferable to the foreign language writing. Research paper samples could be shown and commented in seminars, so that learners might get relevant data on specific modalities to manage and present information, as well as on which categories of information should be included in their assignments. Research papers are not just about research or writing abilities; they are also about adjusting the amount&quality of selected information to the topic&approach chosen for the demonstration, and to the required&suitable format. Therefore, students need to get acquainted with the several variables influencing well-devised research papers. There are many different types of academic writing and requirements and students should learn to differentiate them, so as to be able to write in the proper format without confusing templates & details.
3.1 Seminar Papers

They record the key meaning and the main stages in the discussions on a particular subject, occurring in a small group of students & teacher(s). The components of a seminar paper are: the title, the author’s name, university, department, the abstract, the text, and references for the data used.

The title must not be creative or unique, but relevant, rigorous & concise. It states the topic in the smallest number of words possible. The abstract enumerates the most important ideas & facts in the composition, and should be independent & sufficient for illustrating the text message in approximately 200 words. Its format is as it follows:

- statement of the problem being studied
- method to be used in investigating it
- main results
- conclusions deriving from the results.
- never includes information absent from the paper
- no tables, references, or figures
- past tense used in describing all procedures

The text follows the abstract, being divided into sections, each with its own heading. The first one introduces the topic and reviews its background, providing an outline of the content. The composition must be fully supported by references from a variety of different sources which include books, lecture notes, journals, magazines, websites, and more. All researched data must be formulated in the learner’s own words. The conclusion summarizes the previous sections and discusses ideas to be derived from the already presented researched information. All cited sources must be properly referenced in the bibliography placed at the end of the paper, so that any reader can easily find those pieces of information if they so desire. Tables and figures must each have a number and a clear caption enabling the reader to understand the information being shared, without scanning the main text. The main text, in its turn, should contain references to any tables or figures.

3.2 Term Papers

A term paper is meant to reflect expertise in an area after a term of study. The learner must first realize what this formal template entails. Next comes the choice of methods to implement in order to draft the effective term paper. Actually, such homework is very common for all levels of study, including high school&college. Generally, professors have personal drafting requirements for each term paper, regarding the length, the format, and the specific topic the learner must dwell on. Nevertheless, there are many cases of term papers where students are allowed to suggest topics, which are further refined through research. Title selection depends on suitability to the subject, level of acquired knowledge, lab facilities, experiment methodology, group-work opportunities, and relevance for the future career. What follows is an in-depth search for acquiring the necessary data and envisaging the best presentation modalities. Once the research stage has been completed, the learner should be able to draw conclusions, and use them to develop a purpose for the term paper. Next the student develops a thesis statement, based on the research and purpose of the paper, which will be the basis for the term paper outline. This outline contains the road map and the structure of the assignment. After it has been completed, work can begin on the first draft. Most term papers require multiple drafts before the final version is submitted to the professor for a grade.

A term paper and an essay are two very different types of academic documents, but students confuse them, none the less. A term paper materializes long research that a student usually works on for an entire semester, while an essay requires work for a short interval of time. On the other hand, essays represent a point of view while term papers tend to be objective.

Typically, a term paper is a text of ten pages, intending to represent mastery of a topic after a long investigation. It demonstrates understanding of both the topic and the general area of the subject, therefore hinting at the relevance of that topic in the broad context of the field. Term papers are based on research and develop their theses by pointing to the relevant scholarly opinions advancing them. Essays may also include research, but focus more on writer’s opinions and on personal interpretations of the topic. The academic level of the produced text is implicit,
and the number of external sources to incorporate is clearly specified. Term papers are time-consuming and require significant and concerted efforts.

### 3.3 Mid-Term Exams

Mid-term exams are common and useful, forcing students to assimilate and internalize the knowledge they have been presented with up to the middle of the course, thereby providing them with a strong foundation for approaching the remaining course material, which often is more complex.

A mid-term exam is different from a final exam only in that it is worth less in the course grade scheme. Otherwise, mid-terms and finals both require the student to demonstrate deep learning and advanced synthesis of the information presented in the course up to a certain point.

Though some professors give mid-terms consisting in multiple choice or short answer tests, many others still prefer essay exams, since an essay requires a student to not simply render facts, but to demonstrate the ability of applying what was learned in practical and creative ways.

Some exams include mixed tasks: multiple choice, short answers, and a full-length essay.

Therefore, students must be prepared to write in their exams, and to write under the pressure of limited time, which requires both knowledge and practice in displaying it. Practising timed writing with possible tasks in the exam is a pre-requisite for high grades.

Learners can often anticipate the general areas of knowledge that the exam will test by looking over the notes and identifying the areas that the teacher particularly emphasized, the key concepts considered as most important.

Students should compile a list of possible topics an essay question might require, and then practice writing essays in such general areas.

To practice timed writing, students need to know how much of their exam will be devoted to essays and how long the exam lasts. Professors are forthcoming with such information. Once students know the exact time they will have for each question, they can practice writing within that time restriction.

Mid-term exams are scheduled to last an hour and a half and comprise three essay questions maximum. As a consequence, learners should practise writing thirty-minute essays. To best budget the time, several minutes should be given to planning and outlining, the majority to the draft, and few minutes for final proofreading.

### 3.4 Final Exams

A final exam is the last assessment in a course of academic study. It is a comprehensive assessment, covering aspects from the entire course and featuring many writing components: short answer questions, (the student responds to open-ended questions in a paragraph or group of paragraphs), or a set of essays.

The essay in final exams is a brief text presenting the writer’s own informed thoughts on a specific topic. Essays are common in finals because they require integration of various types of knowledge in one synthesized text, showing thoughtful consideration & original thinking.

It is accomplished in a brief interval of time, hence it is shorter than homework essays, and is more informative than insightful.

The plan of the essay relies on reading the prompt many times, as it is imperative to know exactly what it requires in order to respond to all its components.

The next step is a concise outline, because a final exam will not allow time for a detailed plan; however, a general idea of the points the writer wishes to address and the evidence that will be presented will assist in the composition of a fully-developed essay.

The student should present his/her thesis, which should be in direct response to the question prompt, in the first paragraph. The thesis should identify the writer’s position on the topic and briefly describe the three or four points to be made in defending that position.

The body of the essay follows the plan outlined
in the thesis by devoting a paragraph to each of the three or four points mentioned in the thesis statement. Each paragraph should begin with a topic sentence that defines the point being made, and then proceed to present examples of that point.

The conclusion is a summary of the body of the paper, also commenting on how the point and evidence presented in the essay support the position the writer has taken.

Finally, the student should reserve a few minutes for proof-reading the essay to correct grammar or style errors.

**A-level exam papers** are used for assessment procedures, and, in order to pass a given subject, the student must receive a high grade. Typically, high school&college students in the UK are assigned such papers by their instructors.

The test material employs the use of different writing methods. Learners who master writing techniques for dissertation&research papers often excel at composing examination papers according to all the requirements.

In preparation for A-level exams, students practise information search. This comprehensive and challenging evaluation process may involve article finding or essay writing.

By using both online and offline libraries, students uncover relevant sources of information which provide a foundation of evidence to support the purpose of the exam paper.

The student selects the topic (best known and fitting the course). Next, a three-segment approach to composing the A-level exam paper is implemented (Introduction-Body-Conclusion). While writing the paper, learners must use proper citation and referencing.

Most A-level exam papers follow APA guidelines, while others use Harvard or MLA formats, depending on the school criteria or subjects studied.

The final step in writing a quality A-level exam paper is editing&proofreading the content and style, thus leading to the composition of coherent, well-organized, and grammatically correct papers.

**AS Level Coursework** requires learners to complete a research proposal, indicating the topic and the design for a future research study, not the actual research, which is reserved to upper level students.

It generally allows the student to select the actual topic as long as it falls within the overall subject matter of the degree.

Often, the proposal is considered to be the first three chapters of a dissertation or thesis, including the introduction, the literature review, and the methodology, together with the annotated bibliography.

It indicates the type of study that will be undertaken, why it is worth doing it, how it could be conducted, and what potential problems might arise.

Each university has specific guidelines on completing this paper. Work begins near the end of the second term of study and certain faculties require that students should be guided through the proposal elaboration as part of a formal course, while others ask learners to accomplish it as part of an independent study project. Either way, the undergraduate receives consistent guidance since it is the only preparation for further compositions as part of upper-level coursework.

Professors view the annotated bibliography as the key component of the paper and require that students should do it first, to be sure of a solid understanding of the ways in which the reference material fits into the proposal.

The **ACT essay** is a *position* essay, requiring students to assume a viewpoint on the topic and write convincingly about its merits, using evidence and reasoning.

This is the essay section of the ACT college entrance exam and asks students to write a well-developed essay in thirty minutes. High school teachers encourage their learners to go through many stages before submitting the finished essay, but on the ACT, there is no time for that. Therefore, the writing process must be condensed to allow the full development of an idea within a brief time interval.

Such essays present a prompt that is a paragraph or longer, so it is vital to know exactly what is required so as to respond to all components.

Though it may be tempting to forego the outline in an effort to begin writing immediately, planning the essay is the most difficult and time-consuming part; it is easier to accomplish it at the beginning rather than in the midst of the composition process, as the student may panic at
seeing the amount of re-structuring to be done in order to keep the logical flow of ideas. Time management is as follows:

In the first paragraph, the thesis statement should identify the writer’s position on the topic and should briefly describe the 3 or 4 points to be made in defending that position. The body of the essay should follow the plan outlined in the thesis by devoting a paragraph to each of the points mentioned in the thesis statement. Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence that defines the point being made, and then proceeds to present examples and supporting arguments. The conclusion summarizes the paper, also commenting on how the evidence presented upholds the position the writer has taken. Practice is the best preparation for timed essay tests.

4 Conclusion
Most students do not look forward to writing essays as homework, and the combination of intricate requirements & strict deadlines is daunting.

Understanding the purpose of the essay is crucial as formulations&methods of presenting information vary according to the specific type of composition: research essays discuss all sides of the issue, while persuasive ones feature only one perspective.

The introduction includes the thesis statement which communicates the focus and ultimate goal of the essay, an outline, and an attention-grabber: a question, a startling fact, or a brief story related to the topic. The body should consist of at least three paragraphs, each with a topic sentence (main idea, demonstrating the thesis) and supporting arguments (details, facts, evidence). The conclusion restates the thesis from the introduction, summarizes all debated ideas, and provides a memorable, lasting impression.

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