



Pearson

Understanding Grading: How to get the best score in Mastering

Default grading in Mastering is set up to give you the best possible score for the work you do. Remember these three simple things to get your best grade:

One: You get credit for Mastering items part by part.

Two: Multiple-choice questions are graded differently than other types of questions.

Three: By default, in **hints**, you can submit wrong answers for free.

One. Your professor may charge late penalties on any question parts you haven't finished. Finish as many parts as you can before your assignment is due. Any parts you don't finish get late penalties even if you've done a lot of work in the part.

Two and **Three** can be confusing, so let's go over them.

Here's a multiple-choice question. By default, each unique wrong answer in a multiple-choice item loses you a fraction of possible credit. We inelegantly call this fraction the guess factor. We know **you** don't **ever** guess your way through multiple-choice items, but some people might.

The fraction is big. It's equal to one over the number of possible wrong answers. So try not to guess your way through multiple-choice items. You can lose a lot of credit, and if you run out of wrong answers before you submit the right one, you get no credit at all.

Here's a question that isn't multiple choice. You get a small percent taken off your score for every wrong answer. The default is 3%.

Your professor usually limits you to some number of answers. The default is 6. If you run out of answers, or if you give up and request the answer, you get no credit.

But here's the magic: **Three.** By default, in **hints**, though not in parts, you can submit wrong answers for free. That makes hints tremendously valuable.

Look at this item and its scoring. Open the hint. Submit one wrong answer. Then submit the right one.

Close the hint and submit the right answer in the main part question.

Select My Scores to see how your answers were graded.

The hint grades and the grade on the main part question were averaged to get the score for the part. But Mastering erased the deduction for that wrong answer in the hint before it calculated your score. You got 100%.

On main part questions, deductions are always taken. So somebody who hadn't used the hint and submitted one wrong answer in the main part would have got a deduction and their score would have been lower.

You don't have to **complete any hints**. Any hints on which you haven't exhausted all attempts or given up **count as correct** if the main part answer is correct.

Occasionally your instructor may grant full credit for a part. In that case, everyone in your course gets the same credit.

These rules apply to **default** grading. Your professor can customize almost anything about grading, and different types of assignments can be graded differently. For example, in the default grading for Quizzes, you don't see hints and you get only one chance at an answer. Check the grading settings on each assignment to see how it's graded.

Your professor may choose to take deductions on hint questions. But even if they do, Mastering grading is set up so that, statistically, you get a better grade if you open hints when you need them. And if you're allowed free wrong answers on hints, you can significantly improve your score.

There's more information in the knowledge base articles listed under Grading on the Support page.

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