

Curtin has for many years used a standard commercially available 'general purpose' form for use with an optical mark reader. This is used to rapidly mark large numbers of candidate answers. However, this standard form has a number of problems which include field sizes that do not match the Curtin student ID. It has a poor layout with a number of fields that are not used. The generic form provides for tests/examinations with 240 questions, which is excessive. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this overly complex form causes unnecessary stress and frustration.

This project aims to purchase specialist software used to develop custom forms, and then develop, pilot and implement a new form at Curtin.

The specialist software has been purchased and we have taken delivery of this plus a small set of blank forms to experiment with. We are currently developing a form, branded to Curtin, with a view to solving these issues and improving the fairness of assessment by reducing the number of errors students make.

Clearer instructions are being developed for the form (coupled with examples) to make this form easier to use, especially for those for whom this type of assessment is new. We hope this will standardise the quality of instructions given to candidates - evidence suggests that this is currently 'patchy'.

Design of the form is due to be completed by early November, with printed samples being used for evaluation purposes thereafter. Using a 'rapid prototyping' approach, successive refinements will be swiftly incorporated based on user experience and feedback.

