Perusall manual

Perusall is a social annotation tool that integrates with Canvas. In Perusall, students can read, comment on and discuss texts (e.g. articles and book chapters) you upload. They can see the comments of other students and ask each other questions, discuss the text, and link to other texts. For the lecturer, Perusall produces a report to indicate which questions and discussions students have had. Moreover, Perusall calculates a grade based on various indicators, such as whether the whole text has been read, whether comments were placed, as well as the quality of the comments.

Research shows that the use of **Perusall increases students' understanding of the materials, better prepares them for class, leads to more involving and productive class discussions and to higher grades**. It also allows lecturers to get a better idea of which aspects of the paper students find interesting, difficult, inspiring, etc.

1. Adding Perusall to your course

After opening the Canvas page of your course, go to 'Settings'.

Open the tab 'Feature Options' and enable the following settings by clicking on the state icon, and selecting 'Enabled':
- *Learning Mastery Gradebook*
- *Student Learning Mastery Gradebook*
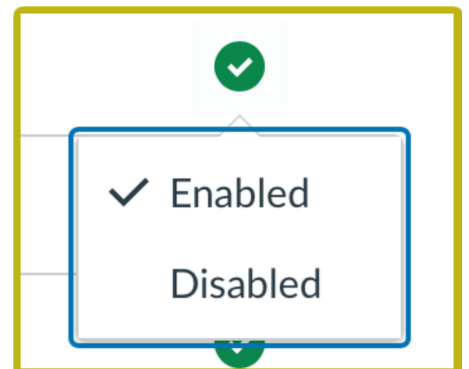
Course

Feature	Status	State
> Anonymous instructor annotations		⊗
> Discussions/Announcements Redesign	FEATURE PREVIEW	⊗
> Enhanced Gradebook Filters	FEATURE PREVIEW	⊗
> Learning Mastery Gradebook		✅
> Moderated grading		⊗
> New Course and User Analytics	FEATURE PREVIEW	✅
> New Quizzes		⊗
> Quiz log auditing		⊗
> Student Learning Mastery Gradebook		✅

Subsequently, create an assignment in your course. In the submission type drop-down menu, select 'External tool'. Click 'Find', scroll down, and find Perusall. Click 'Select'.
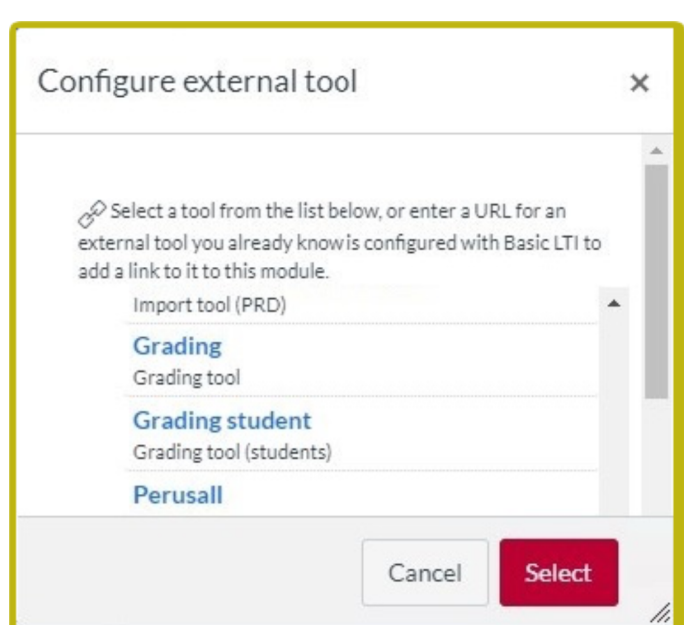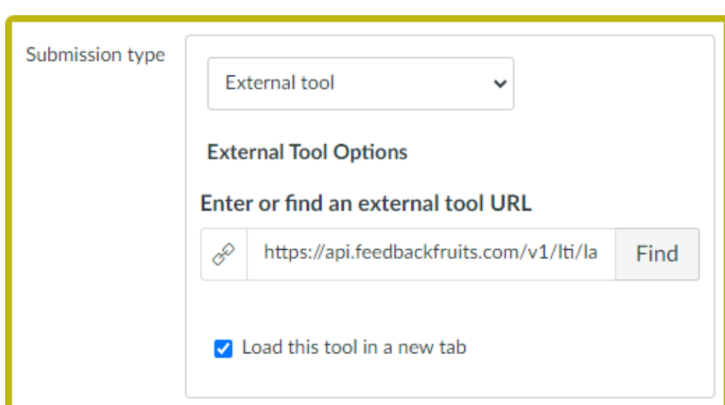
Make sure to select the option '**Load this tool in a new tab**'. *If you omit this option, Perusall will not work properly in Canvas!*

Next, complete the remaining settings, and click 'Save'. Now you can start creating your Perusall assignment.

In your assignment, click on '**Load [Assignment name] in a new window**'. Perusall will now be opened. When you open Perusall for the first time, you will be asked to agree to its terms and conditions.

Within Perusall, go to '**Settings**'. On the '**General**' tab, you can fill in the start and end date of your course. Here, you can also indicate the annotation language (i.e. the language students will be asked to write their comments in), as well as when the assignment will be available to students, and when grades are released. You can also choose not to release the Perusall grades to Canvas. Moreover, you can add a welcome message for students. Once everything has been filled in, select '**Save changes**'.

In the '**Access**' tab, you can invite other lecturers by typing in their e-mail address. Subsequently, click '**Send invitations**'. These lecturers will receive full access to the Perusall course.

Next, go to the '**Grouping**' tab. Here, you can enter the estimated number of students in the course, as well as your target group size. The default for the latter is 20, but you can adjust as you wish. After having filled in everything, click '**Save changes**'.

The *target group size* reflects the number of students that will collaborate in the same document. Each document will have a different set of groups and students will only see the annotations and comments of their group.
WARNING: The groups for the document are set once the document is uploaded. If you make any further changes to the group size after this, the groups will be modified. The comments students see will change, and answers may be disconnected from questions.

Next, you can adjust your scoring settings in the '**Scoring**' tab. There are two automatic grading options you can choose from within the 'Scoring' tab. Annotation content only scoring merely looks at the annotations students provided. Holistic scoring also takes into account other factors, such as how often students open the assignment, the time spent reading, and the number of upvotes and responses they receive from other students. The holistic option is recommended, because this minimises the possibility of cheating the system.
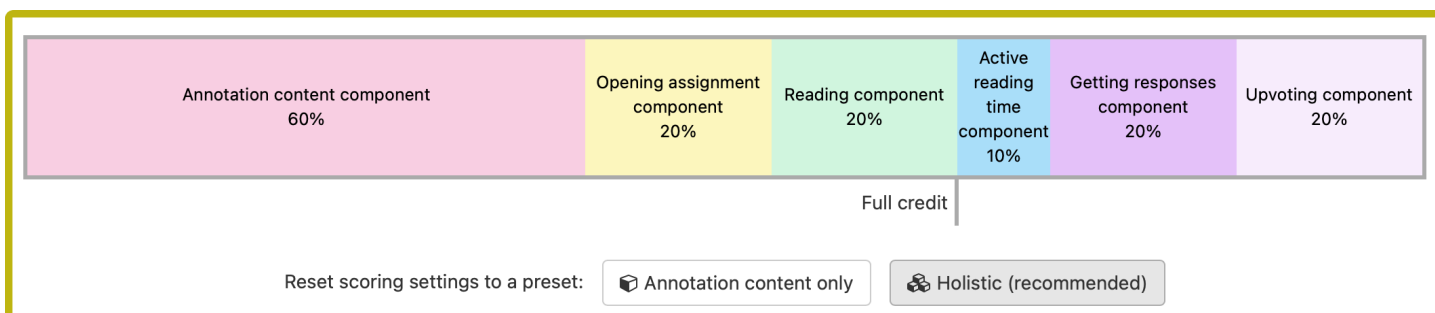
The annotation content only grading system

The holistic grading system
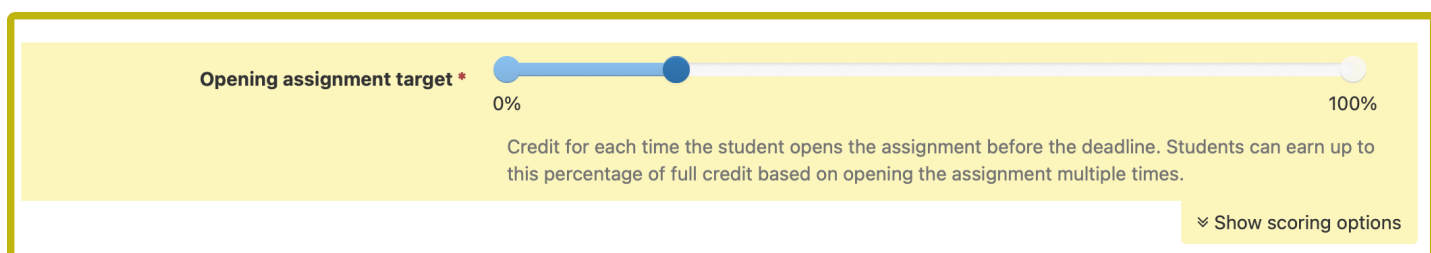
For the holistic system, you can also adjust yourself how each component is built up and how much the component contributes to the overall score. You can do this with the slider for each component.
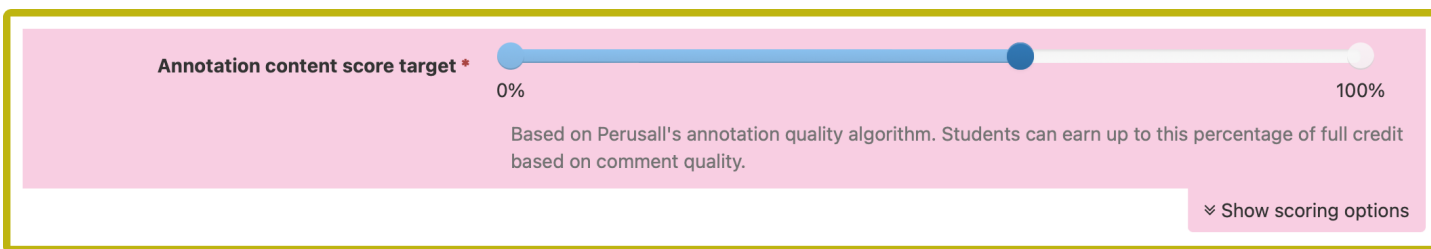
You can also change the number of annotations a student must add in order to be eligible for a full grade. The default option for this is 7, but you can adjust the number to your liking. Moreover, you can still alter the scoring of individual Perusall assignments within your course afterwards.

To adjust the number of annotations a student has to add to the document, click on '**Show scoring options**' for the annotation component.
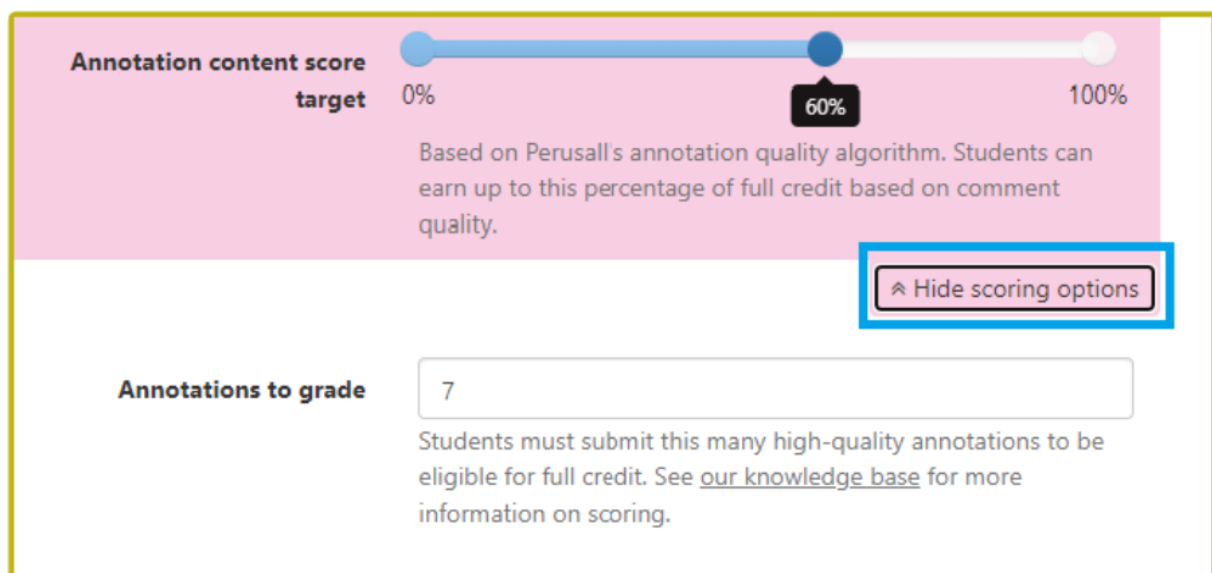
Here, you can also set penalties for not distributing annotations over the full document well enough, and indicate whether late submissions should still be scored, etc. For each component, you can check the scoring options and make adjustments. Once you are done, select '**Save changes**'.

To further modify the grading settings, you can go to the '**Advanced**' tab. The default grading score in Perusall is set to 0-3. You can adjust this to 0-10, for example. *Make sure the maximum score available is the same in both Canvas and Perusall. The minimum score in Canvas is 0 and cannot be adjusted.*

You can also change some other advanced settings here for your assignment, including, but not limited to the following:

Other settings you can enable in the advanced tab:
- Enable group and one-on-one chats
- Enable real-time student "nudges"
- Automatically rotate pages of PDFs uploaded to your course
- Allow instructor to edit any student comment by clicking on it
- This is a test or demonstration course
- Show avatars of active users within content
- Automatically flag duplicate comments as inappropriate
- Do not allow students to flag comments as inappropriate
- Hide grade feedback from students
- Include in-progress assignments in average score

Now that you have completed your settings, you can go back to the '**Get started**' tab in '**Course home**' and start selecting the reading material.

3. Setting up your Perusall assignment

Before you can set up your Perusall assignment, you first have to add the content you would like students to annotate to your Perusall library. In the course home, click on '**Library**'. Subsequently, select '**Add content**'. You can now upload various types of documents. You can even browse for a book in the Perusall catalog, through which students can then buy the book digitally.

For copyrighted material, please make sure to select one of the options for which students will pay a fee through Perusall. For UvA's general rules on sharing materials in courses, please check the UvA website.
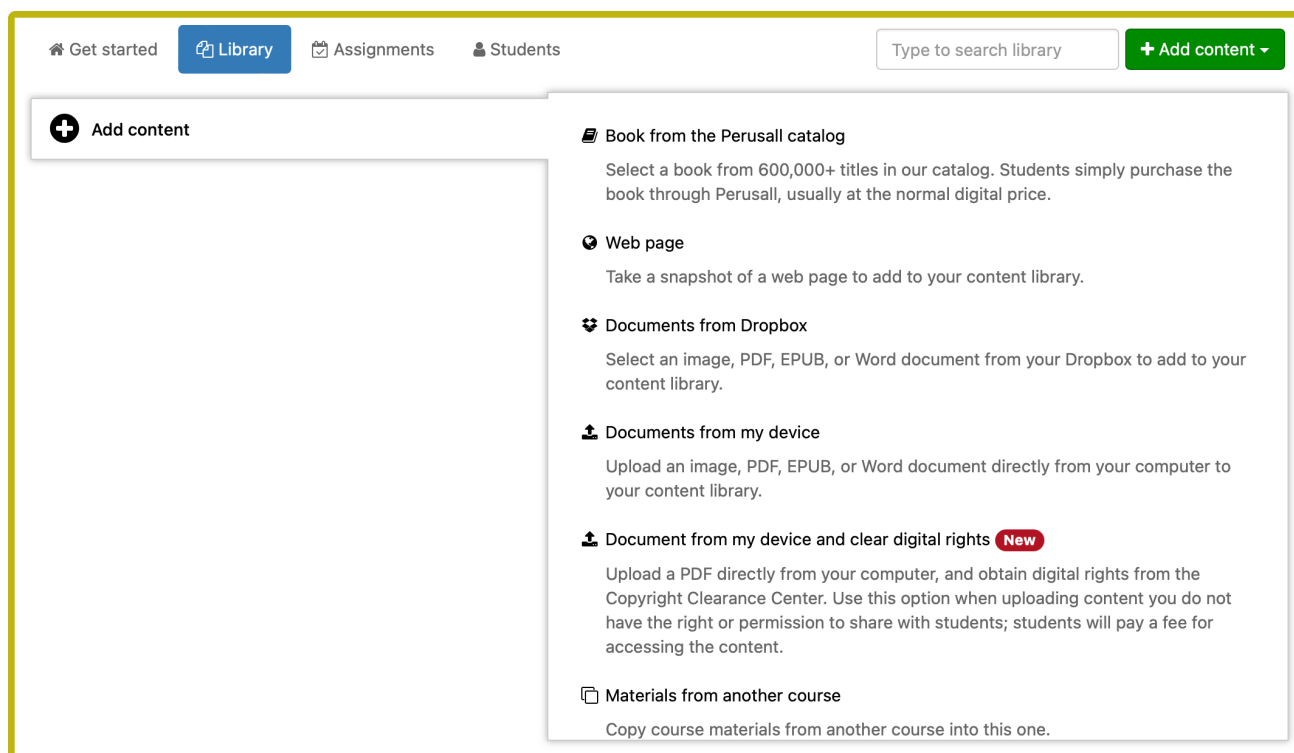
Now that your content has been added, you can set up the Perusall assignment. To set up your Perusall assignment, open the '**Assignments**' tab in Perusall and click on '**Add assignment**'.
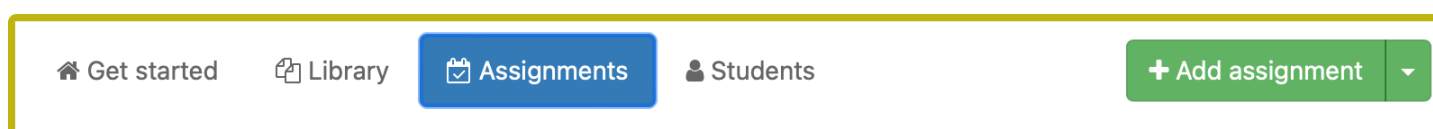
Under '**Content**', select the document or part of the document you want to use for the assignment. You can also select a certain range of the content to assign.
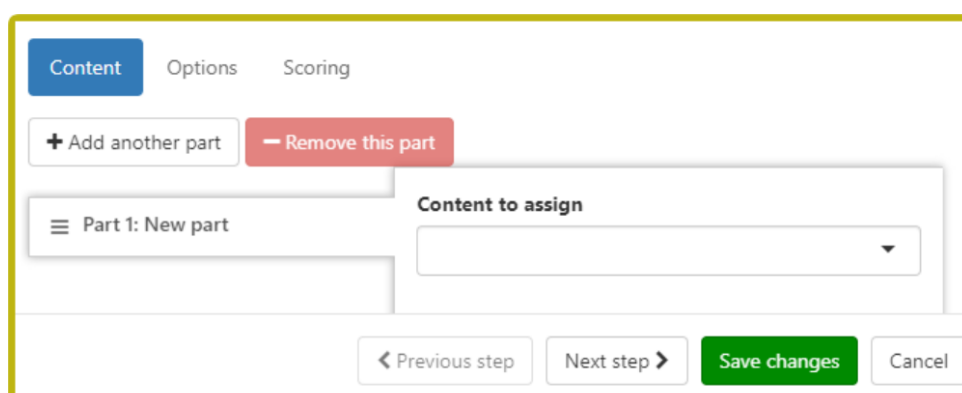
Then, click '**Next step**'. In the following screen, enter the submission deadline and assignment name. Make sure that the assignment name in Perusall is the same as the assignment name in Canvas for synchronisation. Once done, click '**Save changes**'.
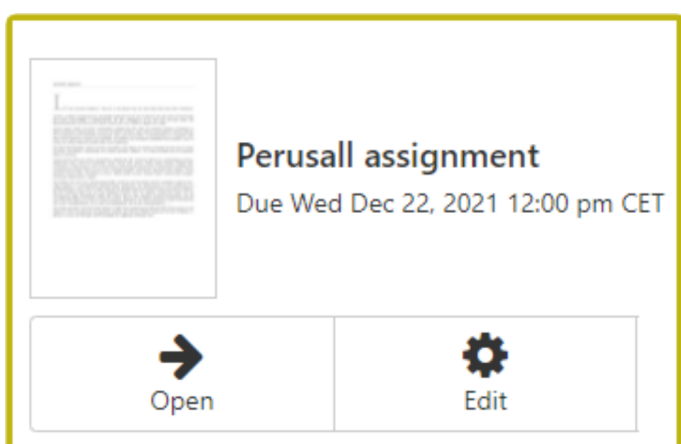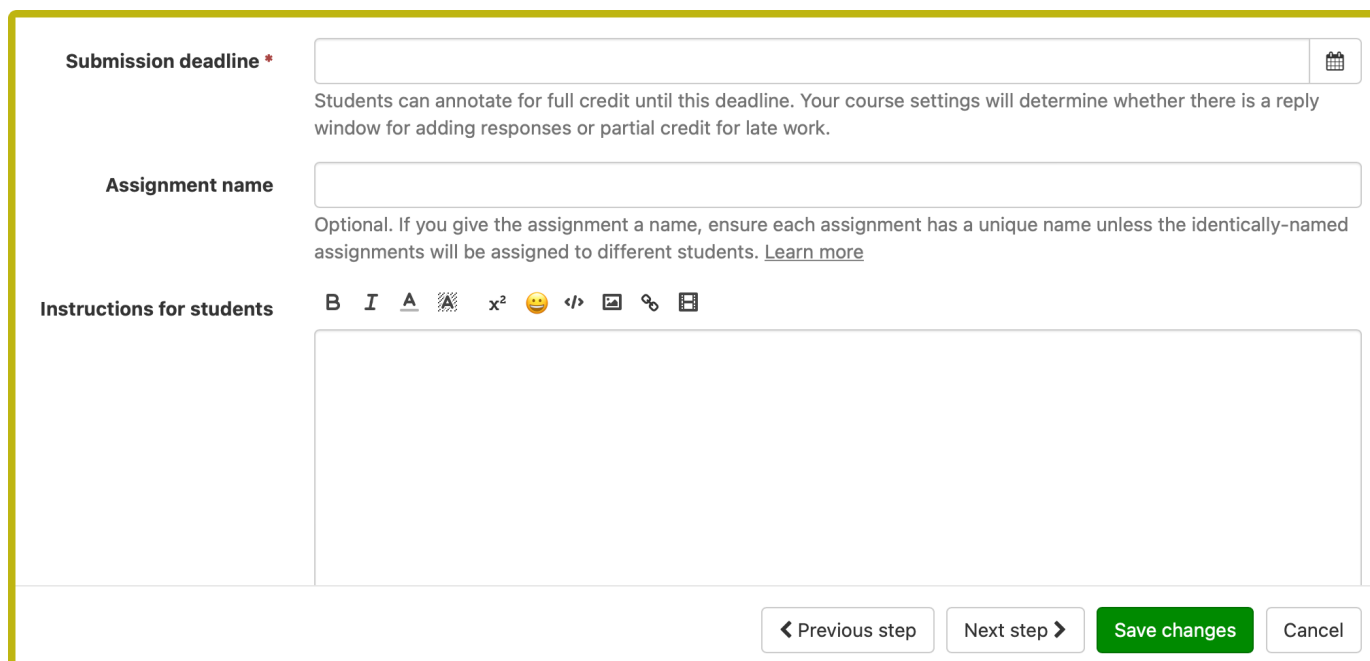
When you want to view the document and/or add comments, you can click on 'Open'.

In Perusall, students are graded based on quantity, timeliness, distribution, and quality. Perusall calculates individual scores for each student based on these elements. The quality of the annotations is determined by Perusall's machine learning algorithm.

In order to view the student report for your assignment, go to the assignment through Canvas. It is possible to go to Perusall directly, but do not do this and go through Canvas. _Please note that you should always access Perusall via Canvas in order to ensure proper synchronisation. The same goes for students: please emphasise to your students that they should always navigate to Perusall through Canvas._

Subsequently, find your Perusall assignment and click on '**Open**', as also shown above.

You will now see the assignment dashboard. Here you can view:
- The student activity report under '**Analytics**'. Here you can see various student statistics.
- The confusion report, which summarises general questions and areas of confusion.
- All comments. You will be able to see all the comments placed by students and their corresponding score. You can manually adjust the score assigned by Perusall for each comment by clicking on the score and selecting a new score from the drop down menu.
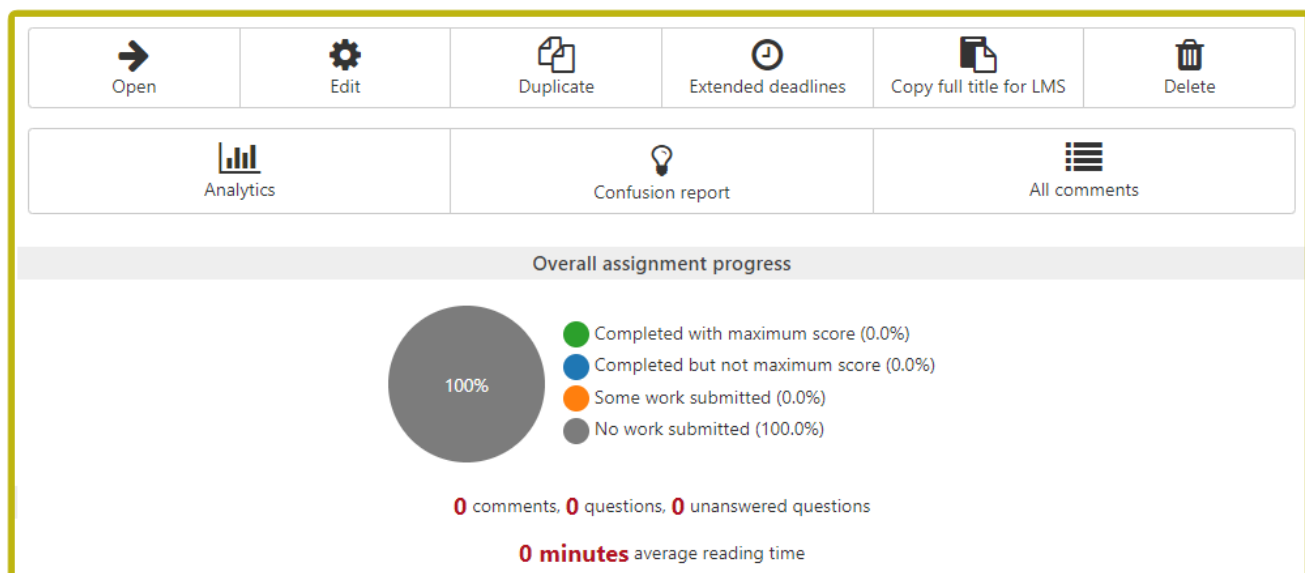
If you want to transfer the Perusall grades to Canvas, this is also possible. Of course, you can also choose not to do this.

In order to transfer the grades to Canvas, click on '**Gradebook**'.
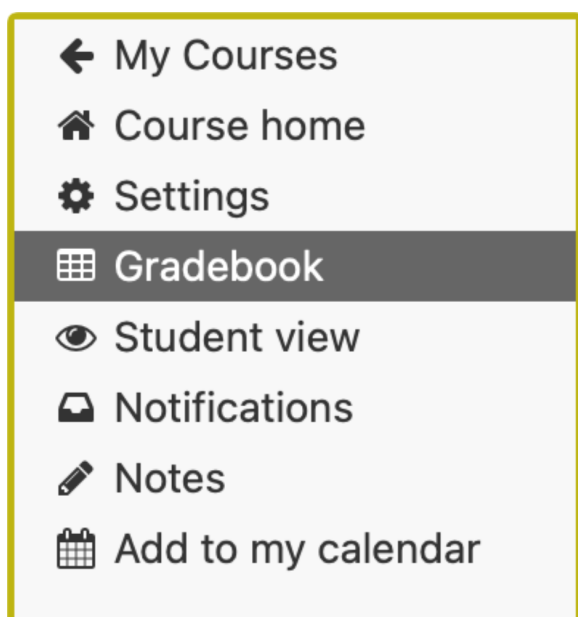
You can click on a student's score under the assignment name column in order to see how the score is built up. *Tip: make sure to check students with very low or very high scores.*
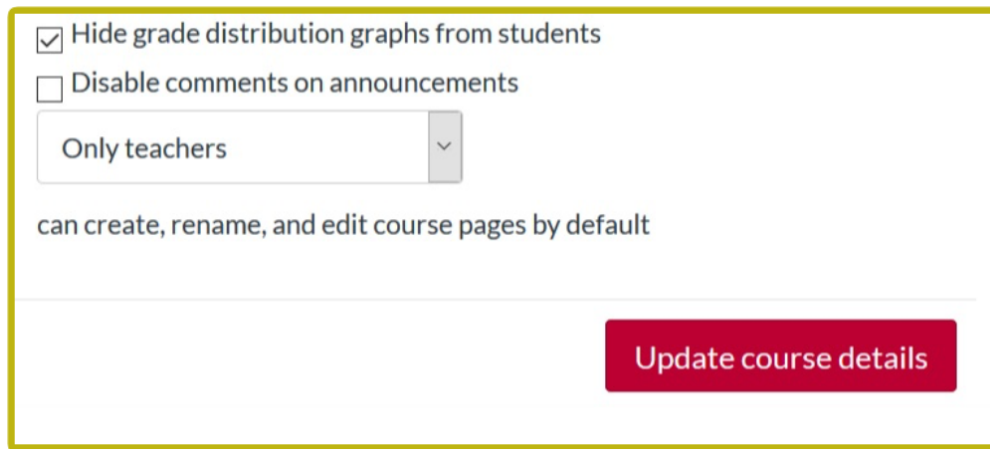
Once you are satisfied with the scores, click on '**Release to students**'. The scores will now be released to students and transferred to Canvas.
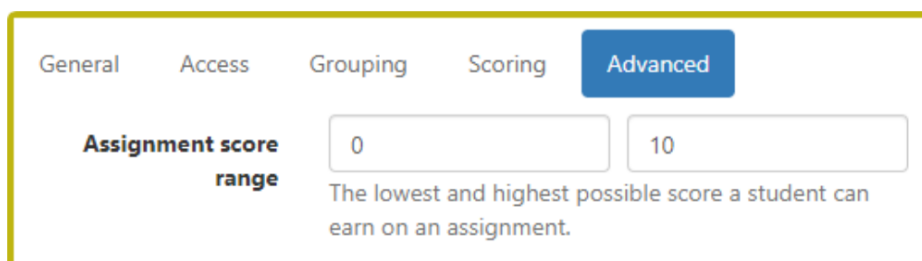
By default, once the grades are released to Canvas, students are able to view their own score, the average score, and the lowest and highest scores. If you do not want students to be able to see this, you can change this in Canvas:
1) Open the Canvas course and go to '**Settings**',
2) Click '**More options**' on the bottom of the page,
3) Select '**Hide grade distribution graphs from students**',
4) Click '**Update course details**'

It is also possible to re-grade in Perusall by changing the minimum and maximum score. You can do this by going to '**Settings**' within your Perusall assignment and clicking '**Advanced**'. Here, you can change the assignment score <u>for all students</u>. Keep in mind that the minimum and maximum grade must be similar to the grading in Canvas. To send the new grades to Canvas, open the tab '**Scoring**' and click '**Save changes**'.

5. Perusall tips & tricks

In this section, we will go over some tips & tricks that you can use with regards to Perusall.

Tip 1: first consider how many students you would like to group together into one Perusall group and how you would like to score the students.

Tip 2: make use of a pilot Perusall assignment in week 1. This allows you, as a lecturer, to get familiar with the Perusall environment, but also benefits students, as they will get some time to practise with the tool before the assignments that impact their final grade start. You can, for instance, use the first week's reading materials for this.

Tip 3: clearly communicate to students what is expected from them within the Perusall environment and how their contributions are scored. This will allow students to get the most out of using Perusall, as well as to make them aware how they can impact their Perusall grade. For an example of how you can clearly communicate Perusall instructions to students, see section 6, which provides an example from a fellow lecturer.

Tip 4: make clear to students which language they must annotate in (namely, the algorithm only scores annotations in the selected annotation language).

Tip 5: remind students not to highlight entire paragraphs, but rather to highlight and annotate specific words or (partial) sentences. Namely, when one student highlights an entire paragraph, other students cannot leave comments on that paragraph anymore.

Tip 6: remember that you should always navigate to Perusall via Canvas in order to allow for proper synchronisation between the two. Please also emphasise this to students, as their grades will not properly be displayed if they do not do this.

Tip 7: make use of the confusion report to see common areas of confusion and students' questions when preparing for your lecture.

Below will follow an example text that you could use as an inspiration for how to put Perusall instructions on your Canvas page. This example was taken from the course 'Judgment & Decision Making in Accounting' (6314M0407Y, course coordinator Victor Maas). Note how this explanation illustrates the kind of annotations students could make.

Assignments weeks 2 - 6

For Assignments 2 – 6, we will use a relatively new tool: **Perusall**. Perusall is a software tool that allows students to read, highlight, annotate and comment on academic papers. In weeks 2 through 6 of the course you will be asked to prepare two articles with this tool. Thus, in each of these weeks you will actually have two assignments (e.g. in week 2: Assignment 2a and Assignment 2b).

The main benefit of Perusall is that it forces you to carefully read and think about the paper. You will also need to fully read the paper (you cannot get away with only the abstract or the Introduction section) and you will need to read it on time, i.e. before the start of the class in which the paper will be discussed.

Research shows that the use of Perusall increases students' understanding of the materials, better prepares them for class, leads to more involving and productive class discussions and to higher grades. It also allows lecturers to get a better idea of which aspects of the paper students find interesting, difficult, inspiring, etc.

What do we expect from you?

You need to carefully **read and annotate the assigned papers**. You can make several different **types of annotations**:

- you can make comments on parts of the text that you find important, relevant, difficult, inspiring, etc.
- you can ask questions (click on the question mark) that other students can help answer for you.
- you can answer other students' questions or respond to other students' comments, creating a thread about a topic.
- you can upvote (green 'check' sign) other students' comments or answers if you agree with them and you can second other students' questions to indicate that this is also a question for you.

To help you **focus,** we suggest that you keep the following **questions** in mind **when reading and commenting** on a paper:

1. What is/are the judgment(s) or decision(s) that are studied in this paper?
2. Are there any (normative) benchmarks against which the judgment(s) or decision(s) can be compared? In other words: what *should* a person do in this setting?
3. What is/are the psychological phenomenon/phenomena that affect the judgment(s) / decision(s)?
4. Can you think of other accounting-related judgments / decisions that might be affected by this psychological phenomenon?

For each assignment, Perusall randomly and anonymously matches students to form **groups of 15 people** that work together on one annotated version of the paper. Thus, you can only see - and respond to - the comments of 14 other students. Note that the system will notify you (by email) if other students responded to your comments/questions, inviting you to return to Perusall and join the discussion about a point that you raised or responded to.

Because each group will contain students from different nationalities, it is important to **only provide comments in English**. Comments in Dutch or other languages will be disregarded.

How are the week 2-6 assignments graded?

For each paper that you work on in Perusall you can get a maximum of 5 points. Your contributions are scored automatically by Perusall using a machine learning-based algorithm.

Contributions are scored on several criteria, including:

- the **number** of your comments (seven is the minimum - more is generally better but only if the comments are of sufficient quality – see below)
- the **distribution** of your comments over the article (make sure to not only comment on one section of the paper but to show that you read the full paper)
- the **level of participation in the discussions** that emerge in the document and your responses to the comments of others.
- the **quality** of your comments. This is the most important criterion. Comments are typically not 'correct' or 'incorrect' but they can be more or less valuable. More valuable comments are, for example, comments in which you share relevant information or ask questions that go beyond the surface. For example, the question 'I don't understand this. Who can explain?' is not rated as high quality. Instead, a question like 'I do not understand this part; it seems to be at odds with will the loss aversion phenomenon that we discussed in week 2" will get a higher rating, as it contributes more to the discussion. Perusall scores the quality of comments by marking them with 0, 1, or 2 points. Here ⤓ is an example.

While it is not always exactly clear exactly how the Perusall algorithm assigns scores to contributions, you do have much control over your score. That is: if you provide many valuable comments throughout the paper and on time, you are more or less guaranteed to receive a decent score. If you feel you have received an unfair score or if you have other questions about the assignment, please contact the lecturer.

To become familiar with Perusall and how it grades contributions, a test assignment is available here. In this assignment you can comment on Baron (2004), one of the two background reading assignments for week 1. Your grade for this test assignment will not contribute to your assignment score and making the test assignment is not required (it is highly recommend!)

Using Perusall

You access the Perusall assignments through the links in the modules on the course home page in Canvas or under Assignments in the menu on the left side of the screen.

Here ↗ is the online manual for Perusall, which, among many other things, explains how to get started and how to create comments. Note that there are also many YouTube video's available explaining how to use Perusall. Here ↗

is one that seems particularly useful.