## Formal Examinations or Continual Assessment Essay

This IELTS model essay deals with the issue of whether it is better to have **formal examinations** to assess student’s performance or **continual assessment** during term time such as course work and projects.

This is an **agree / disagree** question meaning that you are given **one opinion** and asked if you agree with it or not.

In the response to this question, the writer **partially agrees** with the opinion.

The writer agrees that formal examinations are effective, but does not believe these are the **only** effective way to assess a student's abilities.

The writer thinks that there are disadvantages of examinations so continual assessment is a good way to balance this.

### IELTS Model Essay

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

**Formal examinations are the only effective way to assess a student's performance. Continual assessment such as course work and projects is not a satisfactory way to do this.**

***To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?***

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own experience or knowledge.

Write at least 250 words.

**IELTS Model Essay Answer**

Many educational establishments such as schools and universities are choosing to assess their students through course work and projects undertaken during term time rather than the traditional examinations. Continual assessment can be an effective way to evaluate student’s abilities, but formal examinations should also be maintained.

There are two principal benefits of formal examinations. Firstly, they are a fair system as every student has an equal opportunity since they all sit the same exam at the same time, meaning that those students who work hard should be rewarded with a high grade. In addition to this, it is also difficult to cheat if the exam is properly invigilated.  However, some students naturally excel in exams, whereas others find it difficult to work under these stressful and time-constrained conditions. Formal exams, may not, therefore, always reflect a student’s true ability.

Continual assessment, on the other hand, allows those students who work at a slower pace more time to work on their course work and projects.  The teacher can also observe and assist students who may be weaker, thus providing them with the opportunity to improve during the term. Not only this, projects encourage team work, an important skill that is necessary for future employment. Focusing only on formal exams may mean that this important component of children’s development is not seen as important by teachers or students.

To conclude, it is evident that both continual assessment and formal examinations are effective in different ways, but they also have weaknesses. I would therefore argue that in order to have robust evaluation procedures in the future, both should be used to assess students during their education.

273 words