

Section 1:

#1 "Firstly, projects help students connect the material they have learned to the real world, effectively helping the students understand what they learned. While projects simulate real-world experiences, tests are artificial and don't replicate any scenarios that one might encounter in the future."

Strengths:

- You make a clear comparison between projects and traditional exams.
- You introduce the idea of real-world relevance, which is compelling.

Lack of supporting evidence → Your argument needs specific examples of how projects connect to real-world scenarios. You mention statistics about employers and high-performing companies, but don't explain what kinds of projects would build these skills or how they connect to specific learning outcomes.

Projects help students connect classroom learning to authentic challenges by requiring them to apply theories to solve problems. For example, a science project might ask students to design experiments testing water quality in local streams, connecting environmental science to community issues while building practical lab skills.

#2 "Secondly, we have certainly given too much weight to high-stakes tests, and the pressure of the tests is showing up as a serious health issue for students. Cortisol levels, a chemical marker for stress, rise by an average of 15 percent when exams approach, and is associated with worse test performance."

Strengths:

- You include specific data about cortisol levels to support your point.
- You connect test stress to academic performance, which strengthens your argument.

Inconsistent perspective → You shift between first person ("we have certainly given") and second person ("helping you remember") throughout your essay. This creates confusion about who you're addressing and from what perspective you're writing.

High-stakes testing has created significant health challenges for students, with research showing cortisol levels rising by 15 percent during exam periods, directly impacting both wellbeing and academic performance.

#3 "In conclusion, the evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that replacing traditional exams with project-based assignments will help students in many ways. Traditional exams cause a host of

cascading problems, including studying for unrealistic scenarios, causing damage to your health and reducing long term memory."

Strengths:

- Your conclusion clearly restates your main arguments.
- You use strong language that emphasises the importance of your position.

Vague solutions → You state that project-based assignments will help students but don't provide specific recommendations for how schools might implement this change or what kinds of projects would be most effective.

The evidence demonstrates that replacing traditional exams with carefully designed project-based assessments can transform education by creating authentic learning experiences, reducing harmful stress, and promoting deeper knowledge retention through active engagement with subject matter.

■ Your piece presents a passionate argument for project-based learning, but needs more depth in explaining how specific types of projects could replace exams in different subject areas. You could improve your essay by adding examples of successful project implementations in schools. Also, try to keep your writing in a consistent perspective throughout – either first person ("I believe") or third person ("Students experience") would make your argument clearer. Your evidence about stress is strong, but you could connect it more directly to learning outcomes. Think about addressing potential counterarguments – what might defenders of traditional exams say, and how would you respond? Adding more specific details about implementation would make your suggestions more practical for educators. Lastly, consider exploring how different subjects might use different types of projects to assess student understanding effectively.

Score: 42/50

Section 2:

This essay will demonstrate why project-based assignments should replace traditional exams by examining three critical aspects. The aspects that I will be exploring include the unrealistic scenarios that they test you on, with traditional exams being extremely stressful for students and ~~is~~ [are] detrimental to their health. Additionally, project-based assignments will help you remember information for a longer time.

#1 Firstly, projects help students connect the material they have learned to the real world, effectively helping the students understand what they learned. While projects simulate real-world experiences, tests are artificial and don't replicate any scenarios that one might encounter in the future. Projects cultivate the essential teamwork and communication skills that 75% of employers prioritise when hiring

graduates. With companies that encourage a collaborative environment being five times more likely to be high-performing. ~~Traditional exams leave students inexperienced with real world scenarios that require cooperation and communication.~~ [Traditional exams leave students inexperienced with real-world scenarios that require cooperation and communication.]

#2 Secondly, we have certainly given too much weight to high-stakes tests, and the pressure of the tests is showing up as a serious health issue for students. Cortisol levels, a chemical marker for stress, rise by an average of 15 percent when exams approach, and ~~is~~ [are] associated with worse test performance. High-stakes exams ~~correlated~~ [correlate] with poor health ~~behaviors~~ [behaviours], including dysregulated sleep patterns and poor sleep quality, leading to ~~increased~~ [increased] anxiety levels. Laura-Lee Kearns, a professor of education at St. Francis Xavier University found out that students who failed assessments experienced shock at test failure, which made them question their class placement.

Finally, high-stakes exams often lead to cramming and heightened stress, causing cognitive overload and disrupting the flow of knowledge into long-term memory. Cramming also reduces sleep, which is necessary for memory consolidation. However, the deep engagement of project work establishes lasting cognitive connections. When a state of mind is characterized by active involvement in work activities, commitment to the project, and an ability to concentrate, it produces the desired result. ~~Your~~ [The] project being successful, and a positive attitude.

#3 In conclusion, the evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that replacing traditional exams with project-based assignments will help students in many ways. Traditional exams cause a host of cascading problems, including studying for unrealistic scenarios, causing damage to your health and reducing long term memory. By replacing traditional exams with project based assignments, ~~it will transform~~ [we can transform] education from an anxiety-inducing ordeal to a meaningful preparation for life.