



R/exams: A One-for-All Exams Generator

Achim Zeileis

https://www.R-exams.org/

#### Goals:

- Enable individualized organization of learning, feedback, and assessment.
- Foster continuing active participation.
- Encourage learning from peers and supporting each other.

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- Enable individualized organization of learning, feedback, and assessment.
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- Encourage learning from peers and supporting each other.

#### **Challenges:**

- Deal with large(-ish) student groups.
- Discourage cheating without learning.

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#### Strategy:

- High-frequency low-stakes formative assessment in supportive environment.
- Strict summative assessment in controlled environment.
- One pool of exercises as the basis for all assessments.

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**Technology:** R/exams software & learning management systems.

- Individualization: Randomized dynamic exercise pools.
- Feedback: Support for complete correct solutions.
- Automatic evaluation: Rendering into different (closed) assessment formats.

#### Possible formative assessments:

- Quick quiz: Recap of knowledge from previous session or preparation.
- Asynchronous test: Several days, encourage group work, support in forum.
- Synchronous test: In learning groups in live sessions (possibly completion of individual tests afterwards).
- Open-ended tasks: Upload of solutions online, discussion in live sessions.

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## R package exams

#### **Exercises:**

- Each exercise is a single file (either .Rmd or .Rnw).
- Contains question and (optionally) the corresponding solution.
- Dynamic templates if R code is used for randomization.

#### Answer types:

- Single choice and multiple choice.
- Numeric values.
- Text strings (either closed/short or open-ended).
- Combinations of the above (cloze).

### R package exams

#### **Output:**

- PDF fully customizable vs. standardized with automatic scanning/evaluation.
- HTML fully customizable vs. embedded into exchange formats below.
- Moodle XML.
- QTI XML standard (version 1.2 or 2.1), e.g., for Canvas, OpenOlat, ILIAS.
- Blackboard (partially based on QTI 1.2)
- learnr, Particify, ...

## R package exams

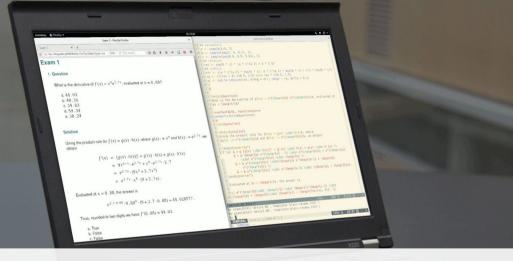
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**Infrastructure:** Standing on the shoulders of lots of open-source software...

- R, Markdown, LATEX.
- knitr, rmarkdown, pandoc, Sweave.
- Moodle, OpenOlat, and many others.

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# **Dynamic Exercises**

## Dynamic exercises

#### Text file:

- Random data generation (optional).
- Question.
- 3 Solution (optional).
- 4 Metainformation.

#### **Examples:**



Multiple-choice knowledge quiz with shuffled answer alternatives.

Which of the following cities are the capital of the corresponding country?



Dynamic numeric arithmetic exercise.

**Example:** Which of the following cities are the capital of the corresponding country?

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#### Question

Which of the following cities are the capital of the corresponding country?

#### Answerlist

- \* Lagos (Nigeria)
- \* São Paulo (Brazil)
- \* Toronto (Canada)
- \* Auckland (New Zealand)
- \* Istanbul (Turkey)
- \* Zürich (Switzerland)
- \* Tokyo (Japan)
- \* New Delhi (India)
- \* Astana (Kazakhstan)
- \* Warsaw (Poland)
- \* Riyadh (Saudi Arabia)

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**Example:** Which of the following cities are the capital of the corresponding country?

#### Solution

#### Answerlist

-----

- \* False. The capital of Nigeria is Abuja.
- $\boldsymbol{\ast}$  False. The capital of Brazil is Brasilia.
- \* False. The capital of Canada is Ottawa.
- \* False. The capital of New Zealand is Wellington.
- \* False. The capital of Turkey is Ankara.
- \* False. The de facto capital of Switzerland is Bern.
- \* True. Tokyo is the capital of Japan.
- st True. New Delhi is the capital of India.
- \* True. Astana is the capital of Kazakhstan.
- st True. Warsaw is the capital of Poland.
- st True. Riyadh is the capital of Saudi Arabia.

**Example:** Which of the following cities are the capital of the corresponding country?

extype: mchoice exsolution: 00000011111

exshuffle: 5

```
"``{r data generation, echo = FALSE, results = "hide"}
## parameters
a <- sample(2:9, 1)
b <- sample(seq(2, 4, 0.1), 1)
c <- sample(seq(0.5, 0.8, 0.01), 1)
## solution
res <- exp(b * c) * (a * c^(a-1) + b * c^a)</pre>
```

```{r data generation, echo = FALSE, results = "hide"}

```
## parameters
a <- sample(2:9, 1)
b <- sample(seq(2, 4, 0.1), 1)
c <- sample(seq(0.5, 0.8, 0.01), 1)
## solution
res <- exp(b * c) * (a * c^(a-1) + b * c^a)

Question
=======
What is the derivative of $f(x) = x^{r a} e^{r b} x}, evaluated at $x = r c^??</pre>
```

```
<<echo=FALSE, results=hide>>=
## parameters
a <- sample(2:9, 1)
b < -sample(seg(2, 4, 0.1), 1)
c \leftarrow sample(seq(0.5, 0.8, 0.01), 1)
## solution
res \leftarrow exp(b * c) * (a * c^(a-1) + b * c^a)
0
\begin{question}
What is the derivative of f(x) = x^{\left(\sum_{a}\right)} e^{\left(\sum_{b}x\right)},
evaluated at x = \operatorname{Sexpr}\{c\}?
\end{question}
```

```
Solution
Using the product rule for f(x) = g(x) \cdot dot h(x), where
g(x) := x^{r} a^{r} a^{r} a and g(x) := e^{r} a^{r} b^{r} x, we obtain
$$
\begin{aligned}
f'(x) &= [g(x) \cdot h(x)]' = g'(x) \cdot h(x) + g(x) \cdot cdot \cdot h'(x) 
\end{aligned}
$$
Meta-information
extvpe: num
exsolution: `r fmt(res)`
exname: derivative exp
extol: 0.01
```

```
\begin{solution}
Using the product rule for f(x) = g(x) \cdot h(x), where
g(x) := x^{\left( \sum_{a \in \mathbb{N}} and h(x) \right)} := e^{\left( \sum_{a \in \mathbb{N}} b \right)}, we obtain
\begin{eqnarray*}
f'(x) & = & [g(x) \cdot h(x)]' = g'(x) \cdot h(x) + g(x) \cdot h'(x) 
\end{eqnarray*}
\end{solution}
\extvpe{num}
\exsolution{\Sexpr{fmt(res)}}
\exname{derivative exp}
\extol(0.01}
```

## Dynamic exercises: Single choice



extype: schoice
exsolution: 010

## Dynamic exercises: Single choice



extype: schoice exsolution: 010

#### Question

What is the seat of the federal authorities in Switzerland (i.e., the de facto capital)?

- (a) Basel
- (b) Bern
- (c) Zurich
- (d) Geneva
- (e) Lausanne

Knowledge quiz: Shuffled distractors.

## Dynamic exercises: Single choice



extype: schoice exsolution: 010

#### Question

What is the derivative of  $f(x) = x^9 e^{3.9x}$ , evaluated at x = 0.82?

- (a) 61.05
- (b) 49.15
- (c) 72.53
- (d) 45.04
- (e) 61.47

*Numeric exercises*: Distractors are random numbers and/or typical arithmetic mistakes.

## Dynamic exercises: Multiple choice



extype: mchoice
exsolution: 011

## Dynamic exercises: Multiple choice



extype: mchoice exsolution: 011

#### Question

Which of the following cities are the capital of the corresponding country?

- (a) New Delhi (India)
- (b) Tokyo (Japan)
- (c) Lagos (Nigeria)
- (d) Auckland (New Zealand)
- (e) Astana (Kazakhstan)

Knowledge quiz: Shuffled true/false statements.

## Dynamic exercises: Multiple choice



extype: mchoice exsolution: 011

# Question In the following figure the distributions of a variable given by two samples (A and B) are represented by parallel boxplots. Which of the following statements are correct? (Comment: The statements are either about correct or clearly wrong.) 0 (a) The location of both distributions is about the same. (b) Both distributions contain no outliers

*Interpretations*: Statements that are approximately correct or clearly wrong.

## Dynamic exercises: Numeric



extype: num

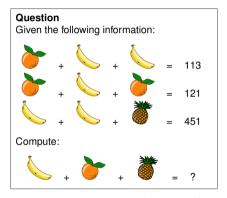
exsolution: 123.45

### Dynamic exercises: Numeric



extype: num

exsolution: 123.45



Numeric exercises: Solving arithmetic problems.

## Dynamic exercises: String



extype: string

exsolution: ANSWER

## Dynamic exercises: String



extype: string

exsolution: ANSWER

#### Question

What is the name of the R function for extracting the fitted loglikelihood from a fitted (generalized) linear model object?

Knowledge quiz: Sample a word/phrase from a given vocabulary or list of question/answer pairs.

## Dynamic exercises: String



extype: string

exsolution: ANSWER

```
Question
Consider the following regression results:
Call.
lm(formula = log(v) \sim log(x), data = d)
Residuals:
           10 Median
-5.490 -1.056 0.102 1.593 5.187
Coefficients:
            Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
             -0.039
(Intercept)
                          0.304
                                  -0.13
  0.90
log(x)
               0.217
                          0.308
                                   0.70
  0 48
Residual standard error: 2.24 on 53 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.00927.
                                     Adjusted R-squared
F-statistic: 0.496 on 1 and 53 DF. p-value: 0.484
Describe how the response v depends on the regressor x.
```

Open-ended question: Answer in an essay editor and/or by file upload (via exstringtype).

## Dynamic exercises: Cloze



extype: cloze

exclozetype: mchoice|num

exsolution: 10|123.45

### Dynamic exercises: Cloze



extype: cloze

exclozetype: mchoice|num

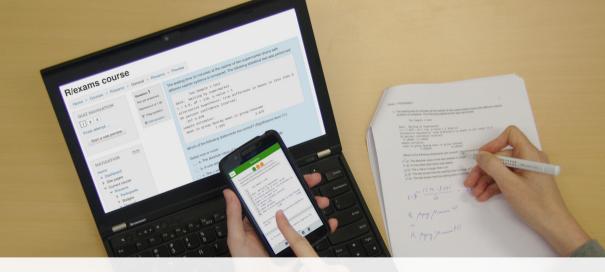
exsolution: 10|123.45

#### Question

Using the data provided in <code>regression.csv</code> estimate a linear regression of <code>y</code> on <code>x</code> and answer the following questions.

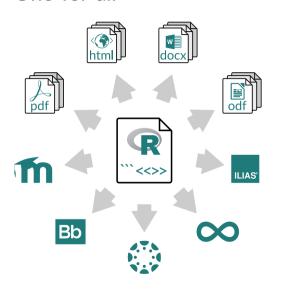
- (a) x and y are not significantly correlated / y increases significantly with x / y decreases significantly with x
- (b) Estimated slope with respect to x:

Exercises with sub-tasks: Several questions based on same problem setting.



**One-for-All** 

## One-for-all



- The same exercise can be exported into different formats.
- Multiple standalone documents vs. combined exercise pool.
- Multiple-choice and single-choice supported in all output formats.

# One-for-All

**Idea:** An exam is simply a list of exercise templates.

```
R> myexam <- list(
+    "capitals.Rmd",
+    "deriv2.Rmd",
+    c("ttest.Rnw", "boxplots.Rnw")
+ )</pre>
```

### Draw random exams:

- First randomly select one exercise from each list element.
- Generate random numbers/input for each selected exercise.
- Combine all exercises in output file(s) (PDF, HTML, ...).

# One-for-All

### Online test:

```
R> exams2moodle(myexam, n = 10, dir = odir)
Live quiz:
R> exams2particify(myexam, n = 1, dir = odir)
Written exam:
R > exams2nops(myexam, n = 3, dir = odir,
    language = "de", date = "2023-03-29",
    institution = "Universität Innsbruck", logo = "uibk-logo-bw.png")
Other: exams2pdf(), exams2html(), exams2canvas(),
exams2forms::exams2webquiz(),...
```

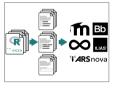




### 1. Scenarios

- Short quizzes conducted in-class.
- Online tests conducted over several days.
- E-exams conducted in-class or remotely.





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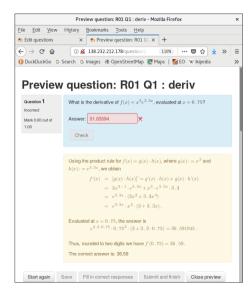
### 2. Create

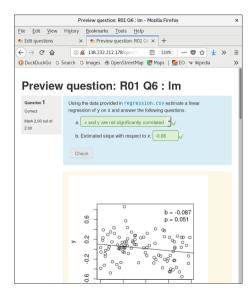
- Draw random replications from exercise templates.
- Embed these into exchange file format.

## 3. Import

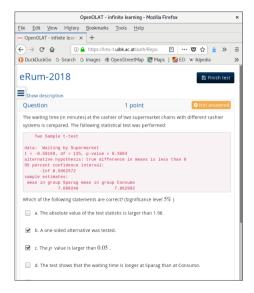
- Import in learning management system.
- Then handle "as usual" in the system.

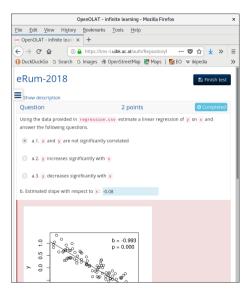
# E-Learning: Online test



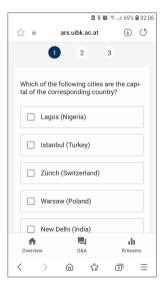


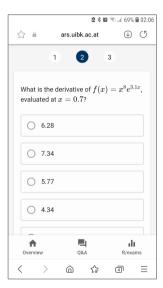
# E-Learning: Online test

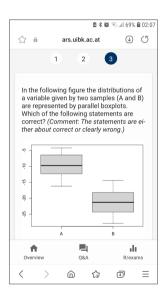




# E-Learning: Live quiz







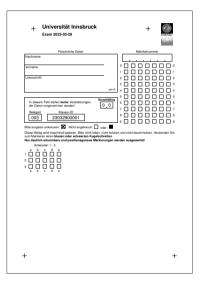


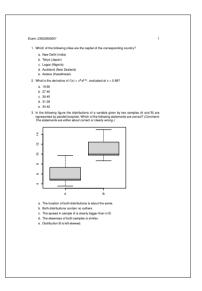
## Flexible: Roll your own.

- Combination with user-specified template in exams2pdf() and exams2pandoc().
- Customizable but typically has to be evaluated "by hand".

### Standardized: "NOPS" format.

- exams2nops() intended for single- and multiple-choice questions.
- Can be scanned and evaluated automatically within R.
- Limited support for open-ended questions that have to be marked by a person.







## 1. Create

• Using exams2nops(), create (individual) PDF files for each examinee.





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### 2. Print

- Print the PDF exams, e.g., on a standard printer.
- ...or for large exams at a print shop.







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## 3. Exam

- Conduct the exam as usual.
- Collect the completed exams sheets.



## 4. Scan

- Scan exam sheets, e.g., on a photocopier.
- Using nops\_scan(), process the scanned exam sheets.
- Correct potential scanner problems with nops\_fix().





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### 5. Evaluate

- Using nops\_eval(), obtain grades, points, etc.
- ... plus individual HTML reports for each examinee.

#### A vizsga eredménye

Név: Jane Doe Regisztrációs szám: 1501090

Érdemjegy: 5 Pontok: 3.1666666666667

#### Értékelés

| Kérdés | Pontok    | Adott válasz | Helyes válasz |
|--------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| 1      | 1.0000000 | c_           | c_            |
| 2      | 0.5000000 | abc_e        | abc           |
| 3      | 0.0000000 |              | ab_d_         |
| 4      | 1.0000000 | c_           | _bc           |
| 5      | 0.6666667 | d_           | ab_d_         |
| 6      | 0.0000000 | _bc_e        | a_c           |

#### Vizsgalap

### \_ R University

Exam 2015-07-29

#### A vizsga eredménye

Név: Ambi Dexter Regisztrációs szám: 9901071 Érdemjegy: 5 Pontok: 1.5

#### Pontok: Értékelés

| Kérdés | Pontok | Adott válasz | Helyes válasz |  |
|--------|--------|--------------|---------------|--|
| 1      | 0.0    | a_c_         | d_            |  |
| 2      | 0.0    | a_cde        | ab_d_         |  |
| 3      | 0.0    | _b           | е             |  |
| 4      | 0.0    |              | a_cd_         |  |
| 5      | 0.0    |              | _bc           |  |
| 6      | 1.5    | abc          | a             |  |

#### Vizsgalap

## + Universität Innsbruck

Persönliche Daten

Klausur 2015-07-29

| lachname:         | 9,9,1 |
|-------------------|-------|
| forname:          |       |
| Interschrift: / 7 | 2 🗆 🗆 |

Matrik



# In action: First-year mathematics

## Structure: Mandatory.

- 2-hour lecture (VO), about 700 participants.
- 2-hour tutorial (PS), up to 40 participants per tutorial.

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## Weekly schedule:

- Learning: Online textbook, screencasts, slides.
- Flipped classroom: Overview, questions & answers in lecture session.
- Formative assessment: Numeric online test, several days, support in forum.
- Feedback: Discussion of more complex exercises in tutorial session.
- Formative assessment: Another online test in tutorial learning groups.

# In action: First-year mathematics

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- 2-hour tutorial (PS), up to 40 participants per tutorial.

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- Feedback: Discussion of more complex exercises in tutorial session.
- Formative assessment: Another online test in tutorial learning groups.

Summative assessment: Written single-choice exams (mid-term & end-term).

# In action: Data analytics

### Structure: Elective.

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- Formative assessment: Open-ended practical task, several days, file upload.
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- Formative assessment: Open-ended practical task, several days, file upload.
- Feedback: Discussion of practical tasks in tutorial session.

**Summative assessment:** Online exams with open-ended theory questions and individualized practical tasks (mid-term & end-term).

# In action: Do it yourself

# If you want to try R/exams:

- Start with simple exercises before moving to more complex tasks.
- Focus on content of exercises.
- Don't worry about layout/formatting too much.
- Try to build a team (with lecturers, assistants, etc.).
- Connect to experienced users.
- Use exercise types creatively.
- Don't be afraid to try stuff, especially in formative assessments.
- Thorough quality control for dynamic exercises before summative assessments.

# In action: Do it yourself

### Installation:

- 1 R, Rtools on Windows, RStudio recommended for beginners.
- 2 R package exams (including dependencies).
- **3** Later Text for producing PDF output.
- 4 Pandoc (e.g., provided along with RStudio).
- **5** Possibly further tools needed for scanning NOPS exams.

More details: https://www.R-exams.org/tutorials/installation/

# In action: Do it yourself

```
First steps: https://www.R-exams.org/tutorials/first_steps/
```

**Quality control:** Stress testing.

- Generate a large number of random versions of an exercise.
- Check for errors, warnings, long computation times, ...
- Especially for numeric exercises: Check solution distribution, outliers, dependency on randomized parameters.
- Especially for multiple-choice exercises: Check shuffling of correct answers.

More details: https://www.R-exams.org/tutorials/stresstest/

## Resources

### **Contributors:**

Zeileis, Grün, Leisch, Umlauf, Smits, Birbaumer, Ernst, Keller, Krimm, Sato, Stauffer, Wickelmaier.

### Links:

- https://www.R-exams.org/
- https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=exams
- https://stackoverflow.com/questions/tagged/r-exams
- A https://R-Forge.R-project.org/forum/?group\_id=1337
- @zeileis@fosstodon.org
- X @AchimZeileis