

## ASSESSMENT TYPES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
DISCIPLINE OF HIGHER EDUCATION



A summary of different assessment types, why you might consider using them and what additional issues you may need to consider.\*

### Case-Studies

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Case-studies can be presented as text-based reports, online or multimedia format.</p> <p>Teaching Materials Using Case Studies Claire Davis and Elizabeth Wilcock <a href="http://www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp">http://www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp</a></p> <p>Assessment by Case Studies and Scenarios <a href="http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessment-case-studies-and-scenarios">http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessment-case-studies-and-scenarios</a></p>	<p>Examples of authentic learning and assessment. Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level.</p>	<p>Development and marking of case-studies is time-consuming.</p>

### Practical reports from laboratory and studio work

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Regular laboratory practical work, computer simulations and programming.</p> <p>Coping Strategies for Staff Involved in Assessment of Laboratory Write-Ups <a href="http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/journal/vol3/beej-3-4.htm">http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/journal/vol3/beej-3-4.htm</a></p> <p>Assessing Laboratory Learning <a href="http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-laboratory-learning">http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-laboratory-learning</a></p> <p>Assessing Laboratory Activities <a href="http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/assessment/lab.html">http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/assessment/lab.html</a></p> <p>Practical learning (lab and fieldwork) <a href="http://jiscdesignstudio.pbworks.com/w/page/39208429/practical%20learning%20%28lab%20and%20fieldwork%29">http://jiscdesignstudio.pbworks.com/w/page/39208429/practical%20learning%20%28lab%20and%20fieldwork%29</a></p>	<p>Can assess a variety of skills and capabilities. Facilitates group work.</p>	<p>May be formula driven and following recipe. Need to match time spent on activity with weighting of assessment. Can be time-consuming to assess. Marking criteria required to ensure consistency of grades, especially when a number of sessional markers used.</p>

## Multiple-choice questions (MCQ)

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>MCQs use a standardised format and marking scheme. Can consist of large databank of questions so that different options presented to students.</p> <p>MCKENNA, C. and BULL, J., 1999. Designing objective test questions: an introductory workshop <a href="http://caacentre.lboro.ac.uk/dldocs/otghdout.pdf">http://caacentre.lboro.ac.uk/dldocs/otghdout.pdf</a></p> <p>PASS-IT Good Practice Guide in Question and Test Design, Project on Assessment in Scotland – using Information Technology. <a href="http://www.pass-it.org.uk/resources/031112-goodpracticeguide-hw.pdf">http://www.pass-it.org.uk/resources/031112-goodpracticeguide-hw.pdf</a></p> <p>CAA Centre, 2002, <a href="http://www.caacentre.ac.uk/resources/objective_tests/assertion.shtml">http://www.caacentre.ac.uk/resources/objective_tests/assertion.shtml</a></p> <p><a href="http://web.uct.ac.za/projects/cbe/mcqman/mcqcont.html">http://web.uct.ac.za/projects/cbe/mcqman/mcqcont.html</a></p> <p>Effective Practice in Objective Assessment <a href="http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/ps/documents/practice_guides/practice_guides/ps0072_effective_practice_in_objective_assessment_mar_2004.pdf">www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/ps/documents/practice_guides/practice_guides/ps0072_effective_practice_in_objective_assessment_mar_2004.pdf</a></p>	<p>Useful for diagnostic, formative and summative assessment. Opportunity to provide feedback. Once established have minimal administration, suitable for large classes.</p> <p>Can be effective for assessing unistructural and multistructural SOLO levels.</p>	<p>Appropriate MCQs are difficult to design. May only encourage assessment at unistructural and multistructural SOLO levels.</p>

## End of semester/year examinations

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Traditional form of summative assessment. Format may be essay, problem solving, short-answer or MCQ. May consist of seen or unseen questions.</p>	<p>Opportunity for students to show what they have learnt. Can draw together themes and concepts from a semester or year. Assurance that students have attained the appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions. Usually secure and can be invigilated.</p>	<p>Can be stressful for students because of limited time available to complete responses. May advantage students with good memory. Pressure on staff to complete marking in short time.</p>

## Essays and text-based assignments

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Essay is a traditional academic assessment. Rubrics can assist in writing and assessing essays.</p> <p>History essay marking rubric  <a href="http://home.comcast.net/~vagekeller/rubric.pdf">home.comcast.net/~vagekeller/rubric.pdf</a></p> <p>Essay Marking Criteria  <a href="http://www.kent.ac.uk/english/handbook.html?tab=lecturesseminars-writing-essays&amp;tab2=marking-criteria">http://www.kent.ac.uk/english/handbook.html?tab=lecturesseminars-writing-essays&amp;tab2=marking-criteria</a></p> <p>Scoring rubrics: what, when &amp; how?  <a href="http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&amp;n=3">http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&amp;n=3</a></p>	<p>Encourages the development of academic writing skills, and skills in extended argument, inquiry-based learning. Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level.</p>	<p>Time consuming to assess, need to develop practices to ensure consistency in grading. Plagiarism may be an issue.</p>

## Field reports

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Reports can be text-based, or posters, multimedia presentations.</p> <p>Planning a fieldtrip?  <a href="http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Schools/Fieldwork+and+local+learning/Planning+your+fieldtrip/Planning+your+fieldtrip.htm">http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Schools/Fieldwork+and+local+learning/Planning+your+fieldtrip/Planning+your+fieldtrip.htm</a></p>	<p>An example of authentic learning and assessment. Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level. Develops observation and recording skills.</p>	<p>Field trips can be expensive in terms of funds and time. Weighting for assessment versus time commitment may be difficult. Ethical and safety issues need to be considered.</p>

## Literature reviews

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Reports can be text-based, or posters, multimedia presentations.</p>	<p>Opportunity for student to engage with primary literature and experts in the discipline. Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level.</p>	<p>Students need to be taught how to review            May be difficult to find journal articles at the appropriate level.</p>

## Group Work

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Having students work together to produce a project or presentation.</p> <p><a href="http://learn.lincoln.ac.nz/tls/groupwork/assessment/assessment.htm">http://learn.lincoln.ac.nz/tls/groupwork/assessment/assessment.htm</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/03/group.html">http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/03/group.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.iml.uts.edu.au/assessment/group/index.html">http://www.iml.uts.edu.au/assessment/group/index.html</a></p> <p>Dealing with free-riders in assessed group work  <a href="http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/resources/dealing-free-riders-assessed-group-work">http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/resources/dealing-free-riders-assessed-group-work</a></p>	<p>Can assess process and product. Opportunities to develop skills in collaboration and co-operation. An example of authentic learning and assessment. Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level.</p>	<p>May be difficult to assess individual contribution. Peer pressure may be a problem. Can be difficult for students to meet. Students may not collaborate or cooperate, so time needs to be invested in laying down ground rules for this and assessment criteria and processes for individual participation/contribution.</p>

## Portfolios

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Student work can be text-based, digital recordings, artistic productions or designs.</p> <p>Learning by producing student journals  <a href="http://www.english.heacademy.ac.uk/explore/projects/archive/independent/ind1.php">http://www.english.heacademy.ac.uk/explore/projects/archive/independent/ind1.php</a></p> <p>Assessing with ePortfolios  <a href="http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-eportfolios">http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-eportfolios</a></p> <p>The Clinical Portfolio  <a href="http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/nhcp/aejne/archive/vol2-2/v2-2ljs.htm">http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/nhcp/aejne/archive/vol2-2/v2-2ljs.htm</a></p>	<p>Can assess progress towards end product. An example of professional practice. Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level. Use to show reflective practice. Evidenced based approach to demonstrate competency.</p>	<p>Unless specific criteria are developed low consistency between students output. Time consuming to assess.</p>

## Performances and presentations

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Common in performing arts and sport.</p> <p>Automated Video Assessment of Human Performance  <a href="http://people.ict.usc.edu/~gordon/publications/AVA.PDF">http://people.ict.usc.edu/~gordon/publications/AVA.PDF</a></p> <p>Assessing Creativity  <a href="http://www.webducate.net/amp/examples/batty/presentation.html">http://www.webducate.net/amp/examples/batty/presentation.html</a></p>	<p>Can assess progress towards end product. An example of professional practice, authentic learning and assessment.</p>	<p>Need to develop meaningful assessment criteria so that consistency is maintained.</p>

## Practicum

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Industrial training, clinical and teaching practice skills.</p> <p>A Briefing on Work-based Learning  <a href="http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?process=full_record&amp;section=generic&amp;id=11">http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?process=full_record&amp;section=generic&amp;id=11</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.herdsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/conference/1999/pdf/Orrell.PDF">http://www.herdsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/conference/1999/pdf/Orrell.PDF</a></p>	<p>Assessment input from employers and professionals in the discipline.</p>	<p>Need to develop meaningful assessment criteria so that consistency is maintained. Can be time consuming for students and staff but results in re-usable criteria and transferable skills.</p>

## Projects

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Can involve group or individual work. Open-ended learning activity. Inquiry-based learning. Student work can be text-based, digital recordings, multimedia or artistic productions or designs.</p>	<p>Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level. Authentic, real world activities. Introduces students to research methodology.</p>	<p>Need to develop meaningful assessment criteria so that consistency is maintained. Can be time consuming for students and staff.</p>

## Simulations and Role Play

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Simulations range from sophisticated flight simulators to online role-plays. All based on some form of decision making process and analysing the options available.</p> <p>In-Class Simulation Games: Assessing Student Learning  <a href="http://jite.org/documents/Vol2/v2p001-013-59.pdf">http://jite.org/documents/Vol2/v2p001-013-59.pdf</a></p> <p>Simulated Worlds: Rapid Generation of Web-Based Role-Play  <a href="http://ausweb.scu.edu.au/aw01/papers/refereed/ip/paper.html">http://ausweb.scu.edu.au/aw01/papers/refereed/ip/paper.html</a></p> <p>Fablusi  <a href="http://www.fablusi.com/">http://www.fablusi.com/</a></p> <p>Simulating War: Studying Conflict through Simulation Games  <a href="http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/warstudies/people/professors/sabin/simwar.aspx">http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/warstudies/people/professors/sabin/simwar.aspx</a></p>	<p>Role play allows students to practice real life decision making with minimal risks. Assesses relational and extended abstract SOLO level. Authentic, real world activities.</p>	<p>Need to develop meaningful assessment criteria so that consistency is maintained. Can be time consuming for students and staff.</p>

## Viva Voce Examinations

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Involves oral questioning, often for thesis.</p> <p>Preparing for your Thesis Oral Examination [video]  <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aYZ-WRoXsQ">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aYZ-WRoXsQ</a></p> <p>Guidance on preparing for your viva  <a href="http://www.shef.ac.uk/snm/research/guidance-on-preparing-for-your-viva">http://www.shef.ac.uk/snm/research/guidance-on-preparing-for-your-viva</a></p>	<p>Can be used to relate theory and practice in a discipline. To assess for overall understanding.</p>	<p>Need to develop meaningful assessment criteria so that consistency is maintained. Can be time consuming for students and staff.</p>

## Self and peer assessment

Examples	Learning outcomes	Issues to consider
<p>Students develop skills to assess themselves and their peers. Can be used for formative and summative assessment.</p> <p>Preparing for Peer Observation: A Guidebook  <a href="http://ctl.utexas.edu/teaching-resources/advance-your-career/prepare-for-peer-observation/">http://ctl.utexas.edu/teaching-resources/advance-your-career/prepare-for-peer-observation/</a></p> <p>A Briefing on Self, Peers and Group Assessment  <a href="http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/evidencenet/Briefing_on_self_peer_and_group_assessment">http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/evidencenet/Briefing_on_self_peer_and_group_assessment</a></p> <p>Can students assess students effectively? Some insights into peer-assessment.  <a href="http://www.ltu.mmu.ac.uk/ltia/issue4/langanwheater.pdf">http://www.ltu.mmu.ac.uk/ltia/issue4/langanwheater.pdf</a></p>	<p>Develops skills in critical analysis and benchmarking.</p>	<p>Need to spend time developing assessment skills in students. Peer pressure may be an issue for peer assessment.</p>

### See also:

Office of Learning & teaching (OLT) Projects: assessment  
<http://www.olt.gov.au/list-projects?text=assessment>

Transforming Assessment: Rethinking assessment in a participatory digital world - Assessment 2.0  
<http://www.transformingassessment.com/>

\* Original prepared by Associate Professor Geoffrey Crisp, The University of Adelaide, 2005. Updated 28/8/2012.