# Assessment Fundamentals Crib Sheet

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## Description:

This is a brief document that outlines some definitions of some key concepts within assessment and feedback, designed to help staff to both a) remember each of these concepts when designing and/or re-designing their assessments, and b) to work them actively into the assessment’s operation.

## Instructions for Use:

Simply use this sheet for referral and/or as a checklist to make sure that each of your assessments adheres to these fundamental principles.

If you find this resource useful, please feel free to share with others. Please do so, while also retaining this cover sheet. If you are using this resource from outside the University of Liverpool, we would ask you to attribute our text – thank you.



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## Validity

Assessment validity refers to the idea that the assessment has the ability to actually measure that which it sets out to measure. A valid assessment will effectively measure the students’ achievement of the intended learning outcomes that the assessment states it will target, and will measure *all* of the learning outcomes to which it is attached. A valid assessment will also be able to evidence that it has measured the intended outcomes effectively.

## Reliability

The reliability of an assessment is simply it’s accuracy and consistency regardless of time, person and/or context. A reliable assessment should give you confidence that if the assessment were to be repeated an infinite number of times, or if it were to be compared to an equivalent assessment, the results would be the same.

## Transparency

The transparency of an assessment is how well the student understands what is asked of them in an assessment situation. In essence, it is ‘setting the goalposts’, so that students are always aware of exactly what it is they need to do, exactly what they will be assessed on, and how it will be marked and fed back to them. It is not fair to the students if the assessment’s instructions or completion guidelines are part of the assessment’s challenge, and a transparent assessment prevents this from occurring.

## Manageability

The manageability of an assessment refers to the load it places on both students and staff in the context of both the volume of work it creates (relative to its weighting), and its position in the academic calendar relative to other assessments. In essence, it is simply how much time and effort the assessment will take versus how much it is actually worth.

## Authenticity

An assessment is considered to be ‘authentic’ when it requires students to apply knowledge and skills obtained on the module to a realistic, discipline-relevant scenario. This is often understood as reflecting a workplace or professional context, but this is not exclusively so. The key to an authentic assessment is to ensure that it is connected to both the discipline and the activities that the student has completed on the module, to ensure that the students undertake an activity that is relevant to them, and that they have had an opportunity to either practice or at least observe before completing it themselves.