

## Purposes of Assessment

Purpose	Function
<b>For students, assessment</b> Enables them to demonstrate their learning  Enables them to improve their learning and study skills  Acts as a motivating factor by providing a focus for their learning activity with timescales and deadlines to work to  Provides intellectual challenge and can stimulate their interest in and around the subject  Can provide opportunity for students to work collaboratively to achieve a common goal  Ultimately decides the degree classification that they are awarded	Supports learning  Supports learning  Supports learning  Supports learning  Supports learning  Judgement
<b>For staff, assessment</b> Provides an opportunity to give constructive and encouraging feedback to students in their learning  Enables them to monitor the effectiveness of their teaching  Enables them make decisions about whether students can progress through academic levels  Helps them decide the degree classifications they award	Supports learning  Supports learning  Judgement  Judgement
<b>For the institution, assessment</b> Assures and upholds the standards of the institution  Enables the institution to make its results public	Quality assurance  External judgement

\* by the teacher

Source: Butcher, C. *et al* (2006) *Designing Learning; From module outline to effective teaching*  
 Routledge: Abingdon (Chapter 6, p95)

## Examples of assessment methods

Examples	Validity – what each task might assess
Examination (time bound and unseen)	Organising and presenting information, developing an argument, synthesis, analysis, problem solving, writing skills, memory, knowledge, working under pressure, ability to formulate thinking/ideas quickly, revisions skills
Course essay or dissertation	Gathering, selecting, synthesising and presenting information, developing an argument, understanding, synthesis, analysis and evaluation, writing skills
Report – e.g. lab report, project report	Organising, presenting and interpreting information, analysis and evaluation, report writing skills
Case study or open problem	Application of knowledge, analysis, problem solving and evaluation skills
Direct observation and Observed Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE)	Practical or clinical skills, communication skills, working under pressure
Oral presentation	Verbal and non-verbal communication skills, knowledge and understanding, preparing/presenting/structuring information, using visual aids/presentation software, responding to questions
Oral examination	Communication skills, knowledge and understanding, ability to think quickly under pressure
Poster presentation or exhibition – individual or group	Ability to interpret and present findings attractively
Project work – individual or group	Planning, project management, research methods, problem solving, relaying concepts to situations, application of knowledge, decision making. Group work – ability to assume certain roles, responsibility to others, team work, leadership
Multiple choice test	Memory, knowledge of subject, ordering of material. Potential to assess analysis, problem solving, evaluation and decision making
Placement	Applying theory, interpersonal/communication/time management/problem solving/technical skills, reflection
Portfolio	Recording progress over time, skills development, self reflection, analysis, applying theory, organising and presenting material
Video or film	Team work, planning, technical/presentation/editing skills, creativity, decision making
Performance	Self-presentation, team work, pitching material appropriately, selecting material, relating to an audience
Log, diary, minutes	Selection of key issues/elements, reflection, self-awareness, record of progress, planning/organisational skills

Source: Adapted from G. Brown (2001) *Assessment: A Guide for Lecturers*. No. 3 LTSN Generic Assessment Series, York, LTSN