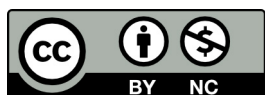


3

Module 3 Assessing Learning HANDBOOK



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Nau mai haere mai! Welcome!

Welcome to Module 3 Assessing Learning!

This handbook is the accompaniment for Module 3 of AUT Essentials+ (Modules 3-5).

Module aims and learning outcomes

This module will give participants the opportunity to discuss good principles and practice in assessment design, with a focus on designing authentic assessment. The workshop will review the purposes of assessment and the role it can play in helping students gauge their learning progress. The following questions are important to consider when planning a formative or summative assessment:

- **Why** am I assessing?
- **What** am I assessing?
- **How** am I assessing it?
- **When** should I assess?

We will be discussing these during the course of the workshop.

By the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

1. Identify the main types of assessment and explain their purposes
2. Integrate authentic assessment experiences into their learning designs
3. Build up a repertoire of assessment to use within their own educational practice

How to use this handbook

This handbook contains all of the information used in the Module 3: Assessing Learning workshop.

The material is purposefully presented in a way different from the slides used in the workshop presentation, as they are designed to do different things. If you want a copy of the slides please ask, although all of the material is in this handbook already.

This handbook is designed to help you work through activities in the workshop, and specific activities are included with space for you to write down key information or ideas that these activities may generate. You are encouraged to annotate and personalize this booklet and make it your own. Remember that noting things down can help you think about the activities and discussions and also capture some of the ideas for later use.

Look out for the navigation keys throughout this handbook:



Apply

Maui's hook guides us beyond our current understanding. Follow Maui's hook to reach forward, respond to questions and activities, and extend your awareness, knowledge, and teaching practice.



Gather

Tane's baskets of knowledge provide us with resources that connect us to the experiences and knowledge of others. Use these resources to shape and form your awareness, knowledge and teaching practice.

Resources:

Links to referenced resources are available on the digital version of this handbook at altlab.aut.ac.nz.

What is assessment?

Assessment is important as it directly impacts on student's lives, including their future directions and careers, and shapes students' opinions of higher education (Boud & Falchikov, 2007). Assessment draws attention to what is important for the student to learn, and also communicates to students what they can and cannot succeed in doing (Boud & Falchikov, 2007; Carless, 2007).

Before considering the why, what, how, and when of your assessment practices, it is important to first examine what is meant by the term 'assessment'. In this section, we will begin by investigating how assessment is defined within academic literature and at AUT.

Defining assessment

A wide variety of definitions have been proposed for the term 'assessment'. A selection of these are:

- Assessment involves the use of empirical data on student learning to refine programmes and improve student learning (Allen, 2004)
- Assessment is any activity in which evidence of learning is collected in a planned and systematic way in order to make a judgement about student learning (Harlen & Crick, 2002)
- Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning (Huba & Freed, 2000)
- Assessment refers to all methods used to gather information about a student's knowledge, ability, understanding, attitudes, and motivation (Ioannou-Georgiou, 2003)
- Assessment is a process of synthesising information about individuals so as to describe, understand and perhaps help them better (Joshua, 2005)

While this may at first appear somewhat overwhelming, on closer examination a number of commonalities are evident amongst these definitions. These include:

- The need for assessment to be a planned and systematic process
- The need for assessment to enable information to be collected that will allow inferences/judgements to be made about the learning progress of individual students
- The need for assessment to inform future student learning



Consider these definitions, are there any that **specifically stand out** to you? Are there any that reinforce your previous experiences of what assessment, and especially good assessment, is and/or should be?

Defining assessment at AUT

Assessment at AUT is defined as:

The process of collecting evidence and making judgements about a student's levels of competence or achievement with respect to paper learning outcomes (AUT, 2017).

There are three critical components to this definition:

1. Assessment is identified as a process, implying that it is structured, planned, and well-considered
2. Conducting assessment involves the collection of meaningful evidence on which judgements and inferences about individual student progress can be made
3. The judgements or inferences about individual student progress are made with respect to the intended learning outcomes of the paper the assessment is conducted within

Why assess?

There are a number of potential purposes. Three of the most commonly cited purposes are explained in more detail below.



Take a few moments to **reflect on your experiences of assessment in higher education**. These experiences may be as a student or from your own teaching practice. Are there any that you particularly enjoyed? Any that you found really engaging?

Support learning

Students learn in anticipation of assessment tasks and they learn from the tasks themselves. Some of this learning occurs from their own realisation of what they can or cannot do, but importantly, they also learn from the helpful comments provided to them by others.

The role of assessment for learning, often called formative assessment, needs careful design and planning to ensure that:

- Key learning outcomes are addressed
- Engagement in the task prompts the kind of learning most desired
- The task is timed to ensure that there is an opportunity for students to benefit from the comments they receive
- There is time within the semester to put their learning into practice in subsequent activities

Tasks that occur at the end of semester may be useful in providing a target for learning, but this is a particularly poor time to provide detailed comments on which students are expected to act. The design of engaging and challenging assessment tasks is one of the most important elements of planning a paper. It may often be fruitful to plan these before other parts of the paper are organised.

Generate grades

Grades or marks provide a condensed summary of student performance. They are collected and weighted within and across papers to provide an account of a learner's overall performance in a programme of study. This is commonly called summative assessment. Marks or grades contribute to decisions about progression to later papers and to students' overall success and failure.

Students should be judged solely against explicit learning outcomes and standards of performance. Judgements must avoid comparing students with each other as this practice can lead to the undermining of academic standards. While it has been common to provide percentage marks in some situations, care must be taken to avoid marking schemes that generate spurious levels of accuracy. Care must also be taken in adding marks and grades in ways that could permit students to pass a paper without having met all the learning outcomes and addressed threshold standards. Students are sensitive to a lack of fairness and consistency and otherwise good assessment practices can be undermined by a lack of attention to this.

Inform future judgements

There is more to assessment than providing helpful information to improve performance in the current paper, and in generating marks and grades. Assessment, if well designed, also acts to build students' capacity to make judgements beyond immediate tasks or learning outcomes. It does this through developing their assessment literacy (how assessment operates and how it can be utilised for learners) and their own self-assessment capabilities. It is important that a student is not only able to do something, but that they know they can do it and thus deploy such an understanding to useful ends beyond the course.

Assessment for learning beyond the paper is often called sustainable assessment. It focuses on developing students' capacity to identify appropriate standards and apply them to their own work and that of others. It also focuses on their ability to self-regulate, that is, to monitor their own work, identify what they need to do, and to seek and utilise feedback from a variety of sources.



Further information regarding [assessment purposes](#).



Here is an interesting research article about [the purposes of assessment within higher education](#).

Types of assessment

While there are a number of different types of assessment, for the purposes of this workshop and handbook we have organised these into two main categories, which relate to whether the assessment tasks are graded or non-graded.

Grade bearing assessment is considered 'summative assessment' or 'assessment of learning', which forms a formal record of an individual student's achievement. Non-grade bearing assessment is often referred to as 'formative assessment' or 'assessment for/as learning'.

However, in reality all forms of assessment offer the opportunity to develop the learner's capacities through receiving feedback on their performance.

Formative assessment (assessment for/as learning)

Formative assessment is a phrase that originated from the term 'formative evaluation', which was coined by Australian academic philosopher Michael Scriven (1967) to refer to the evaluation of curricula, instructional material/media, and teaching methods during the paper/course (Lau, 2016). Evolving from that phrase, formative assessment refers to a wide variety of methods that teaching staff use to informally evaluate student progress, comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress without directly informing student grades (Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Lau, 2016). Formative assessment also provides opportunities for meaningful feedback to occur and helps maintain academic integrity (Houston & Thompson, 2017; Rogerson & Basanta, 2016).

Summative assessment (assessment of learning)

Summative assessment refers to a wide range of methods through which individual student performance can be measured against a pre-determined standard, typically at an end point of a paper (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). Summative assessment has a final mark/grade attached to it and passing these assessment pieces is typically required for continued progression through a course of study e.g. end of paper exam, practical assessment, or coursework assignment (Boud, 2000).

Assessment for learning, assessment as learning, and assessment of learning

In recent years, there has been an increasing body of research evidence regarding the positive impact of formative assessment, in higher education contexts, on student learning (Hawe & Dixon, 2017; Nicol & Mcfarlane-Dick, 2006). In this growing body of literature, formative assessment is split into two separate, yet interrelated concepts: 1) assessment for learning and 2) assessment as learning. A full investigation of assessment for, assessment as, and assessment of learning is beyond the scope of this handbook, however, these terms are introduced and briefly described in the table below.

Formative (assessment for learning)	Involves methods used to provide feedback to students and teachers on strengths and weaknesses of student performance while there is still time to take action for improvement. Enables teachers to use information about students' knowledge, understanding, and skills to inform their teaching.
Formative (assessment as learning)	Involves the student using self-assessment and self-reflection processes to measure their own learning progress. Enables students to monitor their own progress, consolidate their understanding and work towards learning goals.
Summative (assessment of learning)	Involves methods used to measure individual student performance against a pre-determined standard, typically at the end point of a course. Enables teachers to use evidence of student learning to assess student achievement against learning goals and standards.



Dr. Dylan Wiliam explores [what we mean by assessment for learning](#).



An interesting video that explores [five key assessment for learning strategies](#) you may wish to consider incorporating into your practice.

Common reasons why students may not engage with formative assessment

While there are a multitude of reasons why students may not engage with formative assessments, the following are some of the most commonly cited reasons:

- Students are not aware of what their teachers are trying to achieve through assessment
- Feels optional
- Too many competing priorities, bunching of assessments
- No need – they have the mark and they've passed!

If we then examine these reasons through a student-centered lens, we may ask ourselves:

- How explicit are we being about the purpose(s) and educational value of these assessments?
- How accountable do students feel about doing these assessments?
- Do the students feel a sense of ownership of the work being produced?

- Are there other competing/conflicting demands on the student at this time? How can we minimize this?
- At what point are we doing the assessment?

If the teacher is able to pre-empt why a student may be reluctant to engage in a piece of formative assessment, that teacher can then decide whether to continue with the assessment as planned or modify it (e.g. change the length or timing of the task, provide more student choice in the ways that they complete the task, etc.) to address these potential issues.



Reflect on some of the reasons that your students **may not engage with formative assessments** in your paper(s). Can you add to the list above with your own examples/ideas? How would/could you preempt and minimize some of the concerns related to completing these assessments?

Rationale for doing formative assessment

Research has shown that formative feedback, when done well:

1. Is a low-risk way of learning from the feedback received (Sadler, 1989)
2. Allows for fine-tuning of student understanding of goals (Boud, 2000; Nicol, 2006)
3. Aids lecturers with adapting the teaching to meet the needs of the students (Hattie, 2009)
4. Encourages and helps distribute student effort (Gibbs, 2004)

Common reasons why students do engage in formative assessment

Recent research by Jessop (2019) surveyed 32 students about what factors are important for them when choosing to participate in formative assessment. The responses were as follows:

1. "Give quick and useful feedback" (n=22)
2. "Make it meaningful" (n=19)
3. "Do it in class" (n=15)
4. "Link it to the summative" (n=11)
5. "Make it collaborative" (n=10)
6. "Require it" (n=9)
7. "Reduce summative load" (n=6)
8. "Give it a grade" (n=2)
9. "Make it a public activity" (n=0)

What are we assessing?

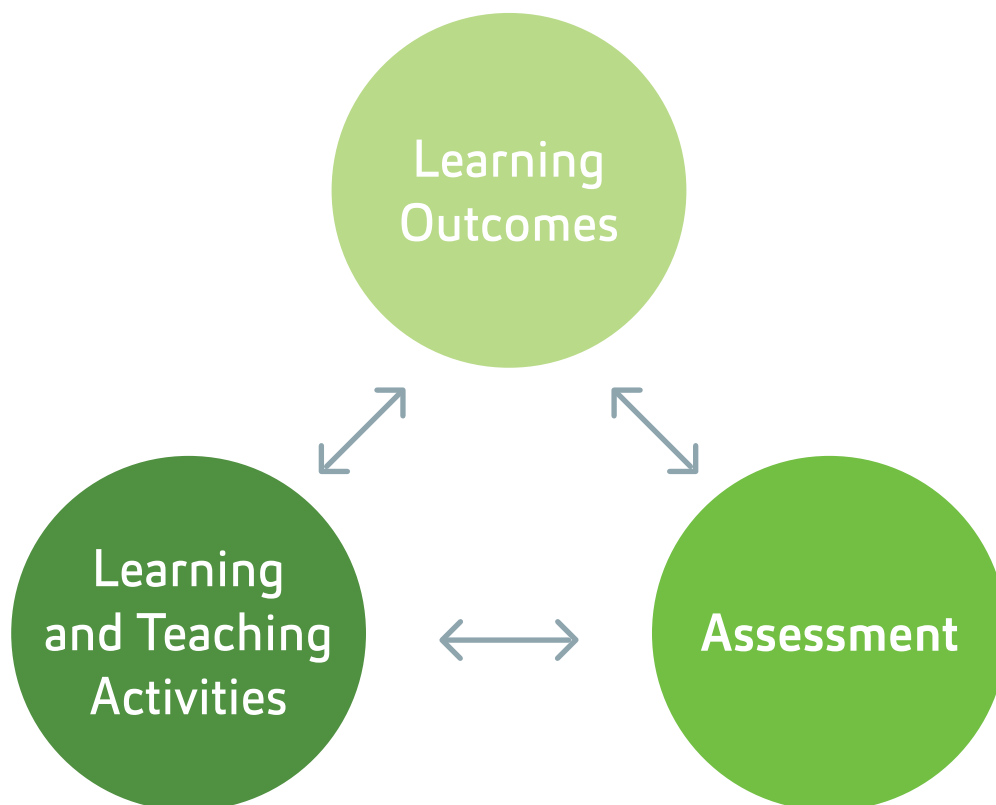
Constructive alignment

According to Biggs and Tang (2011):

The 'constructive' aspect refers to what the learner does, which is to construct their own meaning through relevant learning activities.

The 'alignment' aspect refers to what the teacher does, which is to set up a learning environment that supports the learning activities appropriate to achieving the desired learning outcomes. The key is that the components in the teaching system – the learning outcomes, the teaching and learning experiences and the assessment tasks – are all coherent and aligned.

Your learning outcomes should clearly inform the students what they will be expected to know and be able to do by the end of the unit of study (session/paper)



Your teaching and learning activities should be designed to support the achievement of those outcomes

Your assessment tasks are designed to enable your students to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes

The process of thinking about designing teaching to best deliver the Learning Outcomes (LOs) and then designing the assessment to test whether those outcomes have been appropriately delivered allows us to look at the alignment of the teaching with the assessment. This structure or strategy for planning teaching is very beneficial, as it ensures the students are being exposed to, and given opportunities to practice, the skills and knowledge required of them. A well aligned piece of teaching is also more likely to result in a good, positive learning experience for the student and be easier for the teacher to manage and deliver.

Therefore, in accordance with the concept of constructive alignment, the curriculum should be designed so that the learning and assessment are also aligned with the LOs. Formative assessment that combines learning with assessment helps with this alignment and helps signpost the most important elements for the student to know or be able to do.

Key assessment considerations

How does assessment align with and promote desired student outcomes, including the:

- Paper learning outcomes?
- Overall programme learning outcomes?
- Professional requirements?
- Learners' general professional or intellectual development?

Assessment should ideally align with desired learner outcomes. This is most obvious from a grading or accreditation perspective, as it is critical to ensure that the learner has met the paper requirements and there is not any disjunction between the general teaching and the assessment tasks, and on some occasions, external professional requirements as well. However, assessment tasks have more complex interactions with student outcomes, as learners develop over the course of a paper, and continue to develop through the programme and into graduation.

Any substantive new learning outcome needs to be:

- Introduced
- Developed through formative assessment
- Assured through summative assessment

Additionally, educators often design assessment to develop learners in broader ways than the specific learning outcomes. These can be at a programme level (for example, to develop writing skills commensurate with a tertiary graduate), or at a discipline or professional level (for example, to be able to apply scientific arguments)

Paper learning outcomes

All papers have official learning outcomes or objectives detailed in the approval documentation that students are expected to achieve. Ensuring that students can demonstrate what they have learned in relation to these formal outcomes is one of the purposes of assessment. When designing (or redesigning)

assessment, it is important to critically evaluate the learning outcomes to see how well the paper learning outcomes align with the assessment tasks set. Additionally, it is also worth mapping the content of a paper against the learning outcomes to determine how well the non-graded activities contribute towards the learning outcomes and the assessment tasks. These links have to be communicated to the students to help them understand the paper as a whole and how it contributes to their learning. It may also be valuable to consult with others who have taught in the paper before (e.g. previous lecturers and tutors) and those teaching related paper in the same programme.

Programme learning outcomes

Programme learning outcomes are those higher-level outcomes which have been specified for a paper or programme. These outcomes help educators think about how the paper contributes to a programme overall. For papers where progression through the course is highly dependent on success within that unit, these outcomes are particularly significant. Programme outcomes are often identified in the unit proposal, but also may have changed since the unit was established. Linking to these higher-level outcomes in a clear and logical manner can help learners make sense of the paper within their programme of study. Without these links, the paper may seem disconnected.

Be mindful that learning outcomes within your paper are situated within wider programme learning outcomes. Consider how these build upon one another to help the students fulfil the great graduates profile.

Outcomes and assessment in relation to professional requirements

Outcomes that reflect the accreditation requirements of industry and professional bodies may also be important. If there are accreditation requirements, educators need know how the assessment tasks contribute to developing the required competencies. This may go beyond covering particular content and extend to engaging learners with specific practices and skills. Some of these outcomes may already be mapped at the programme level, and it may be a matter of consulting with colleagues to locate that documentation. Professional requirements may form a significant part of the design/redesign of assessments. It is also worth considering what other knowledge and skills your learners need to prepare for a profession. These might include dispositions and attitudes, as well as knowledge and skills not expressed in competencies. This gives the opportunity to think more generally about what it takes to be a successful person in that profession.

Features of good assessment

The literature on assessment consistently identifies good assessment as needing to be:

- **Valid:** measures what it is supposed to measure
- **Fair:** is non-discriminatory and matches expectations
- **Transparent:** processes and documentation, including assessment briefing and marking criteria, are clear

- **Reliable:** assessment is accurate, consistent and repeatable
- **Feasible:** assessment is practicable in terms of time, resources and student numbers
- **Educationally impactful:** assessment results in learning what is important



Take a few moments to **reflect on your views of assessment**. What are your views on good assessment and how did you come to these beliefs?



Compare **the above list to your own views on good assessment**. What commonalities are there between your views and the literature? What differences are there? Why do you think these differences exist?

In addition to the list above, there is also a growing need for graduates to be work-ready. This creates opportunities to design assessments that start with relationships that make learning relevant. This, in turn, makes academic rigor possible that naturally leads to the student taking further responsibility of their life and learning.



Further information on [assessments that support the development of work-ready graduates](#).



Further information on [The Four Es of Employability, specific to the Aotearoa New Zealand context](#).

Inclusive assessment

Inclusivity is a very important factor in assessment design as fair assessment must reflect the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Inclusive practice means:

- Ensuring that an assessment strategy includes a range of assessment formats
- Ensuring assessment methods are culturally inclusive
- Considering holidays and observances when setting deadlines and creating assessments

- Considering school holidays and the impact on students with childcare responsibilities when setting deadlines
- Considering students' previous educational background and providing support for unfamiliar activities
- Considering the needs of students with disabilities.

Ensuring that an assessment strategy includes a range of assessment formats

Using a range of assessment methods gives students more latitude to demonstrate their knowledge and skills across a range of contexts. By adopting a wider repertoire of assessments you can also help support students who may for one reason or another be disadvantaged by the extensive use of particular assessment formats. A diversification of assessment methods, where appropriate and practical, can therefore effectively lead to a more inclusive approach to assessment design.



Further information on [different methods of assessment](#).

We have provided a list of different assessments types on page 22.

Ensuring assessment methods are culturally inclusive

If we refer to the XLE Framework (see page 26), at AUT we need to think about ways of immersing students in bi-cultural, inter-disciplinary, and inter-cultural ways of knowing, doing and being.

Within a bi-cultural approach, we can consider ways in which we can connect with each other across our disciplines (inter-disciplinary), and how we safely welcome and acknowledge all cultures (inter-culturalism).

Inter-cultural learning spaces are ones in which there is a deep understanding and respect for all cultures. In an inter-cultural learning space, all cultures are welcomed and acknowledged yet no one is left unchanged because everyone learns from one another and grows together. When thinking about assessments we can consider culturally responsive education.



Further information on [culturally responsive education specific to the Aotearoa New Zealand context](#).



Further information for [enhancing tertiary teaching through assessment for Māori and Pasifika learners](#).



It is also worthwhile considering the [Pasifika Education Plan](#) and [Tapasā](#) (Pasifika cultural competencies).

Considering holidays and observances when setting deadlines and creating assessments

Where possible, consider public holidays and religious and cultural observances when setting assessments and related learning activities. Sometimes these observances/days could be incorporated into activities and assessments to reflect the diversity in our learning spaces. Up to date AUT public holidays and observances can be found on the University calendar/website.



Information on [observances in Aotearoa New Zealand](#). Information on [Worldwide Religious Observances](#).

Considering school holidays and the impact on students with childcare responsibilities when setting deadlines

The impact of the school holidays will depend a little on your programme and subsequent student body. It is worth considering that some of your students may have caregiver responsibilities during these times.



Information on [how New Zealand school terms operate and the New Zealand school holidays for 2020–2022](#).

Considering students' previous educational background and providing support for unfamiliar activities

Kift (2009) explains that “in all their diversity, students coming to higher education to must be inspired, supported, and realise their sense of belonging; not only for early engagement and retention, but also as foundational for learning success and a lifetime of professional practice”.



Kift's complete report: [Articulating a transition pedagogy to scaffold and to enhance the first year student learning experience in Australian higher education](#).

Considering the needs of students with disabilities.

AUT staff and students can refer to [Disability Support Services](#) and AUT supports the principles of [Kia Ōrite: Code of Practice](#), which enables all students to achieve fully in an inclusive tertiary environment.



Further information on [respectful disability language](#).

Revisiting Bloom's Taxonomy

At this time, it may be worth revisiting **Bloom's Taxonomy**:

Creating	Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganising elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing.
Evaluating	Making judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing.
Analysing	Breaking material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose through differentiating, organizing and attributing.
Applying	Carrying out or using a procedure through executing, or implementing.
Understanding	Constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages through interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarising, inferring, comparing and explaining.
Remembering	Retrieving, recognising, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory.



Reflect on the learning outcomes from the paper(s) you are involved in teaching and **consider how you may create formative assessment tasks** to inform student progress towards those outcomes.



Bloom's Taxonomy provides teachers with a way of categorising **the verbs they use to describe what the student must do** into a hierarchy of increasing complexity. Below are some verbs that may assist with ensuring that the assessment is conducted at the correct level.

Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyse	Evaluate	Create
Define	Explain	Solve	Analyse	Reframe	Design
Identify	Describe	Apply	Compare	Criticise	Compose
Describe	Interpret	Illustrate	Classify	Evaluate	Create
Label	Paraphrase	Modify	Contrast	Order	Plan
List	Summarise	Use	Distinguish	Appraise	Combine
Name	Classify	Calculate	Infer	Judge	Formulate
State	Compare	Change	Separate	Support	Invent
Match	Differentiate	Choose	Explain	Compare	Hypothesise
Recognise	Discuss	Demonstrate	Select	Decide	Substitute
Select	Distinguish	Discover	Categorise	Discriminate	Write
Examine	Extend	Experiment	Connect	Recommend	Compile
Locate	Predict	Relate	Differentiate	Summarise	Construct
Memorise	Associate	Show	Discriminate	Assess	Develop
Quote	Contrast	Sketch	Divide	Choose	Generalise
Recall	Convert	Complete	Order	Convince	Integrate
Reproduce	Demonstrate	Construct	Point out	Defend	Modify
Tabulate	Estimate	Dramatise	Prioritise	Estimate	Organise
Tell	Express	Interpret	Subdivide	Find errors	Prepare
Copy	Identify	Manipulate	Survey	Grade	Produce
Discover	Indicate	Paint	Advertise	Measure	Rearrange
Duplicate	Infer	Prepare	Appraise	Predict	Rewrite
Enumerate	Relate	Produce	Break down	Rank	Role-play

How do we assess?

Assessment can be used as a strategic tool to guide learners through a series of tasks that optimise higher-order learning beyond simple recall and recognition.

To achieve this, teachers focus on what they want students to learn, and the specific activities required by each assessment task. These activities allow students to develop their skills, but also allow teachers, individual students, and/or the student's peers to judge and provide feedback on task performance. However, as discussed earlier, it is important that the assessment requirements that are superfluous to the actual learning being assessed are not so onerous that they swamp the purpose of the assessment itself.

Some examples of activities which are helpful for learning as well as allowing judgement and feedback include, but are not limited to:

- Problems where the learner must supply solutions, drawing from original thinking
- Written tasks which require synthesis and application of reflective thinking into concrete situations
- Debates, role-plays and simulations where learners have to perform and respond to feedback in real time

The creation of specific tasks can be the most enjoyable part of developing assessments and there is significant academic literature available regarding how to design tasks that promote student learning. Designing in opportunities for students to discover more of the local and indigenous community encourages students to engage in and with the local community that hosts them, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Some assessment examples

Learning outcome (some examples)	Assessment (some options, not limited to these)
Create, execute, lead, tito, tūhurahura, whakaaro	Project, folio, exhibition, campaign, peer/self assessment, mōteatea, haka, waiata
Plan, design, adapt, ōkawa	Proposal, plan, strategy, project, folio, exhibition, campaign, peer/self-assessment
Develop, generate, collaborate, solve, te wānanga me hīraurau hopanga	Project, exercise, blog, presentation, folio, peer/self-assessment, whakapūaki, mihimihi
Recommend, propose, justify, reflect, whakaaroaro	Report, project, reflective paper, presentation
Evaluate, assess, test, whakamātautau, wānanga	Report, assignment, project, presentation, mihimihi, whakapūaki, whakapapa kōrero
Research, investigate, rangahau, mataihia	Essay, report, research paper, presentation, literature review, bibliography, online knowledge bank of annotated resources, whakapapa kōrero
Critique, compare and contrast, whakatairitea	Blog, journal, assignment, essay, peer/self-assessment, debate
Examine, analyse, explore, integrate	Essay, reflective paper, journal, report, folio, debate, blog, tautohetohe, mihimihi, haka
Apply, use, interpret, implement, present, communicate, wānanga, mahia, whakapūaki	Simulation, project, exercises, folio, presentation, peer/self-assessment, wānanga, toi
Summarise, explain, articulate, outline, pūkōrero	Folio rationale, assignment, presentation, blog, waiata, tautoko, mihimihi
Identify, describe, illustrate, outline, titiro, whakarongo, tuhi	Quiz, assignment, presentation, whakatauki, whakatauakī, wāiata, tauparapara



What methods do you use in your teaching practice to **assess** students? Can you add to the list above with your own examples/ideas?

Benefits and limitations of some assessment types

Type of assessment	Benefits	Limitations
Regular practical work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps students 'on task' • Encourages students early rather than later • Formative in nature as there are opportunities for students and teachers to make adjustments • Can encourage application, translation, and interpretation of concepts learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time-consuming for teachers
Final exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance that the product belongs to the student • Assurance that students have attained the knowledge, skills, and dispositions tested in the exam • Less time-consuming to mark than extended writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merely summative • A measure of recall • Often reproduction rather than transformation of information due to time limits
Essays and extended writing assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to develop an extended argument • Encourages depth of learning • Opportunity to develop capacity to interpret, translate, apply, critique, and evaluate • Opportunity to pose problems and conduct inquiry • Opportunity to explore beyond the boundaries of what is known 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time-consuming to assess
Field reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic form of assessment • Develops observation and recording skills • Requires organizational skill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be costly to supervise • Difficult to timetable • Need to consider additional and site specific ethical and safety

Review of research article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires interpretation and evaluation • Opportunity to understand how experts proceed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not appropriate for introductory level students
Group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages collaboration, cooperation, and communication • Encourages independence by students • Opportunity for authentic skill development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to assess individual input • Time-consuming for students to organize • Time-consuming for staff to prepare students for successful groupwork • Can disadvantage students if groupwork is not well supported

When should we assess?

Choosing when assessment tasks are distributed and scheduled across a semester is more than just an administrative decision.

Indeed, carefully connecting tasks with areas of overlap provides an opportunity to create an assessment narrative for a paper, with multiple opportunities for learners to receive and act upon feedback and subsequently demonstrate how they have improved. This overarching assessment narrative should also include alignment with other learning and teaching activities such as lectures, tutorials, learning activities, and practicums.

The effort required for a student to complete a task should also be considered. Scheduling feedback opportunities is important, as time must be allocated for marking assessment and providing feedback.

Talking with colleagues about the assessment can help pre-empt assessment 'pinch points' throughout the semester where learners have many tasks, especially high stakes ones, due at once. There may also be institutional imperatives, such as examination periods which dictate how assessment is scheduled.

Some considerations for timing of assessments

- Does your department/faculty have any rules about the scheduling of assessment tasks?
- What are the assessment schedules of the other papers your learners are undertaking? Are there potential synergies or conflicts?
- How much time do you expect your assessment task(s) to take students? How do you know if your estimates are reasonable?
- Can you sequence these tasks to best encourage a sustained engagement and development over the whole semester?

- How can you time this sequence of tasks to ensure assessors and learners have multiple opportunities to engage in feedback? Do the students have enough time to effectively use this feedback to inform their performance on subsequent tasks?
- How will you support students who underperform or miss earlier tasks to enable them to have a chance to successfully complete later tasks?

What adjustments will you need to make to the teaching schedule so that assessments can be completed and feedback can be provided in a timely fashion?



Consider **the assessment schedule** in your paper(s). How do the assessments fit within the overall narrative of your paper? How do students gain feedback to improve their performance in these assessments? At what point do students gain information about how they are doing and where they are going next on their learning journey?

Developing practical strategies

Good assessment practice at AUT is guided by three interrelated frameworks:

1. Xceptional Learning Experiences (XLE) Framework
2. Care, Question, Act Graduate Profile
3. The concept of constructive alignment

These are explored in more detail in the following sections.

The Xceptional Learning Experiences Framework

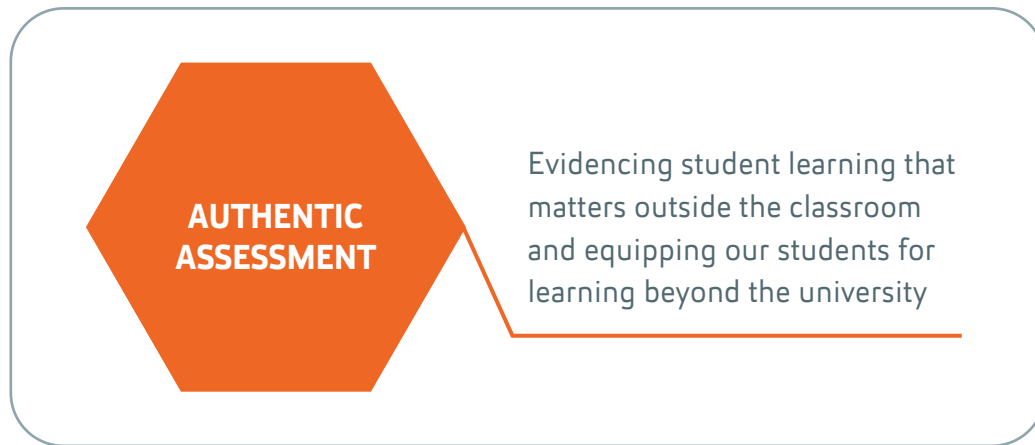
Xceptional learning experiences

Learning experiences that draw inspiration from the complex fields of practice and environments that our students are moving into

Through a framework that shapes how we think about formal and informal learning experiences



Authentic Assessment at AUT



At AUT, we are challenging ourselves to design assessments that are authentic. Assessment tasks, whether assignments or controlled tests and exams, should reflect the kinds of tasks or practices that our students will be doing in the workplace and in the community. As Boud (1995) reminds us, 'assessment is the most significant prompt for learning'. It is what students consider important and is at the heart of the student learning experience.



Watch [David Boud's keynote](#) from the AUT Teaching and Learning Conference 2019.



Watch [Anke Nienhuis and David White's presentation](#) from the 2019 Sustainability Symposium.

Checklist for papers

- ☐ How does the task develop students' capacity to assess:
 - > their own work?
 - > the work of others?
- ☐ Does the task encourage students to work productively with others (as distinct from collude with them)?
- ☐ How does the task develop students' ability to think critically and make judgements about their work?
- ☐ What are likely students responses to the task? How can the task be framed to avoid inappropriate responses?
- ☐ Has feedback about earlier versions of the task been used to revise it?
- ☐ Is the task realistic or 'authentic' and linked to course learning outcomes as well as longer term learning aims?
- ☐ Does the task encourage students to position themselves as active learners?
- ☐ Is the task a learning activity in its own right and not just a compliance requirement?
- ☐ What particular capabilities and capacities does the task help build in students?
- ☐ Have students had sufficient practice in some of the key areas being assessed (e.g. through activities that are not formally assessed) for it to be a realistic task for them?
- ☐ Will the task focus students' attention on productive learning activities and lead them away from 'cramming' and plagiarism?
- ☐ Is feedback used to help students calibrate their own judgements about their work?
- ☐ Is feedback from both peers and staff used, and are tasks scheduled so that students are able to utilize comments from others to improve their work?
- ☐ How will the assessment task have a longer-term effect on students beyond the immediate period of assessment?

Online assessments

Class discussions

(as an assessment or learning activity)

Adapting for online delivery:

- Upload the discussion resources (e.g. case study/scenario and questions) in Bb
- Create [Online discussions](#)
- Create a space (e.g. [Bb wiki](#)) for sharing key points

Tips:

- Break bigger class discussions into smaller group discussions. Groups to share key points with the class
- Make the online discussion part of the weekly to-do list to help focus students studying online
- Assign a discussion leader for student group(s) to summarise key points. Rotate this role to ensure each student has an opportunity to lead
- Online discussion allows students more time to think and compose their responses as well as their replies to others

Oral presentation

Adapting for online delivery:

- Can be done 'live' online via [Blackboard Collaborate](#) (scheduled synchronous session)
- Students can 'pre-record' their presentation using a [voice-over PPT presentation](#) or [record a video using Panopto](#)

Considerations:

- Synchronous presentation is more authentic, allowing a live audience and follow up Q&A
- Synchronous presentation may be more stressful for all, especially when technology is less familiar, or if the internet speed is unstable

Tips:

- If allowing students to 'pre-record' their presentation, the assessment can be set up as an assignment in Blackboard. Students can then [submit their \(Panopto\) file for marking](#)
- Presentations can be shared with class in discussion forums to allow the Q&A experience

Group assessments / projects

Adapting for online delivery:

- Group work can be completed and assessed using [Bb wiki](#), eBooks or recorded presentations (e.g. video, audio/podcast, slideshow)
- [Office 365](#) (Word, PowerPoint etc.) can be used for live collaboration among groups
- Video conferences can be set up between groups and lecturer in [Bb Collaborate](#)
- Create a peer evaluation for student groups using [iPeer](#)

Consideration:

- › University of New South Wales's [guide to assessing group work](#) invites consideration of the advantages and challenges of group work, and provides useful strategies

Tips:

- › Allow off-campus students to form groups in the same time zone so they can communicate effectively
- › WeChat groups is a useful way for Chinese students to collaborate online. You can [set up WeChat in Blackboard](#)

Peer assessment

Definitions:

- Peer review: review each other's work and give feedback
- Peer evaluation: evaluate a peer's contribution to group work

Adapting for online delivery:

- Peer evaluations can be done using [iPeer](#)
- Peer reviews can be done by sharing and commenting on a Microsoft document in [Office 365](#), or through [Bb wiki](#) (using the wiki in the group space)

Tips:

- › Provide some basic guidelines or training for your students, especially if they have never done any peer assessment
- › Use a rubric to support peer assessment
- › Use structured peer reviews activity to provide more feedback opportunities for students and build their evaluative skill

Reflections

Adapting for online delivery:

- You can use [Bb blogs](#) or [Bb journals](#) to encourage student reflection on learning

Tips:

- Provide some basic guidelines for your students, especially if they have never done any reflective writing
- Asking students to publish and share a weekly blog post on their studies or readings can greatly enhance engagement, reflection and interaction
- Include a self-assessment task against the rubric with the reflection activity will help students learn to evaluate their own work, and reflect on what they did well and what they may need more support on

Written assessments

Such as essays, papers, reports, case studies, literature reviews and critiques, and research essay.

Adapting for online delivery:

- Students can complete their work individually or in groups using [Office 365](#) (e.g. Word, Power Point) and submit via Turnitin on Blackboard
- Students might collaborate on a [wiki](#) to write a report or case study
- Students could author or co-author an [interactive eBook](#)
- Students can collaborate on literature search, discuss then write up the review as an individual assignment

Tips:

- Students can peer review each other's work as part of the feedback process
- Consider reducing the word count, which helps students to focus on key points and learn to write concisely

Portfolio

Adapting for online delivery:

- You can use [Mahara](#) as an e-portfolio

Considerations:

- › Students may need technical guidance on using Mahara, if this is their first e-portfolio
- › They may also need pedagogical guidance on structuring their e-portfolio

Tip:

- › E-portfolios can be easily shared by the student

Multimedia

Adapting for online delivery:

Panopto and Blackboard can be utilised for:

- Students to record video or audio essays/reflections
- Students to record performances, role-plays, presentations or exhibitions showcasing their work
- Assessment of some practical skills (by requiring students to record an instructional or demonstration video)

Considerations:

- › Ensure the rubric focuses on assessing the learning outcome to avoid assessing how well the students use the multimedia tool, unless that is part of a learning outcome
- › If your students have not been exposed to this type of assessment before, consider starting by assigning a smaller, formative task

Tips:

- › See instructions for [integrating Panopto into Blackboard](#).
- › See instructions for students to [submit assignments to Blackboard through Panopto](#)
- › Increased variety of assessment type
- › Offers a viable alternative to assessment of 'practical' tasks where the student performs or demonstrates a practical skill
- › Video and audio remove the need for in-person observation

Student-generated content

Adapting for online delivery:

- Students to create practice exercise questions in given topics, with marking guides, for other students to practice
- Students might create a mini lesson on specific concept taught in the paper as a resource for future cohort
- Students may provide real-life examples to relate to concepts taught
- Students might collaborate on a [wiki](#) to write a report or a case study on special topics

Considerations:

- › Ensure the rubric focuses on assessing the learning outcome
- › If your students have not been exposed to this type of assessment before, consider starting by assigning a smaller formative task

Tips:

- › Linking these to the XLE framework (authentic assessment; work and social connection; and interdisciplinary collaboration)
- › Assessing higher order of thinking and provides opportunity for deeper learning
- › Content generated may be used in future course iteration.
- › Increase quality of output from students, knowing the content can be used beyond the current context

Need more assessment ideas?

- [Selecting assessment methods based on skills](#) from The London School of Economics & Political Science
- [Types of assessment task mapped against intended learning outcomes](#) from Charles Sturt University (scroll down to the second table)
- [Assessment case studies](#) from King's College London
- [Alternative online assessments](#) from Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, University of Calgary

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Appendices

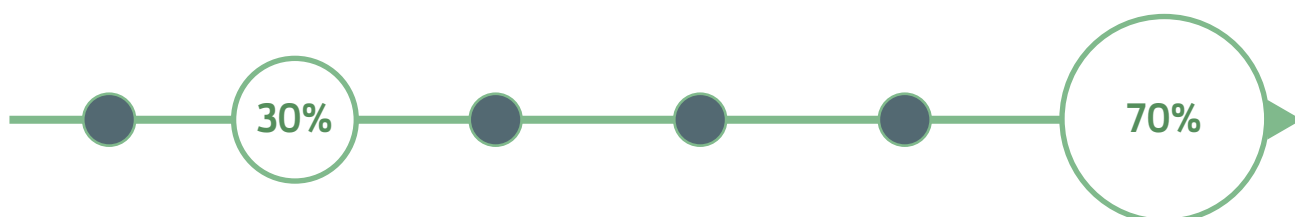
Action plan

You could take this approach.. **for a paper**

What do you expect your students to be able to do at the end of the paper?

Week 1  Week 12

What formative assessments could you include to support the summative assessment?



You could take this approach.. **for a series of sessions**

What do you expect your students to be able to do at the end of the session?

Start of Session  End of Session Start of Session  End of Session

What formative assessments could you include in these sessions?



Or this...

What are three of the things that you expect students to be able to do by the end of the session(s) or paper?	How do you assess your students on doing these three things?	What do you think of the alignment between the two columns?	Do you need to change the assessment and if so, how?	What support do you need to make these changes?
1				
2				
3				



Our altLAB suite of
resources is available at:
altlab.aut.ac.nz