

Assessment Types

Assessment type	Description
Academic	Assessment of theory, knowledge and/or understanding.
Adaptive	Questions are selected during a test on the basis of their difficulty, in response to an estimate of the learner's ability.
Analytic scoring	A method of scoring grades for tests such as speaking and writing. For example, a writing test would have an analytic score based on grammar and vocabulary.
Aptitude	A diagnostic test to assess a learner's ability for a particular skill, job or vocation.
Assessor led	Assessment is planned and carried out by the assessor, for example, an observation.
Benchmarking	A way of evaluating learner performance against an accepted standard. Once a benchmark standard is set, it can be used as a basis for the expectation of achievements with other groups/learners.
Blended	Using more than one assessment method in different contexts, for example, observation in the work environment backed up with online knowledge assessments in a training room.
Competence based	Assessment methods are based on certain criteria that learners need to perform e.g. in a workshop or work environment.
Controlled Assessment	An activity or test which occurs in a number of stages with varying levels of control to ensure reliability. Ensures the same conditions for everyone and is usually timed.
Criterion referencing	Assessing prescribed aspects which a learner must achieve to meet a certain standard, sometimes referred to as assessment criteria.
Diagnostic	A specific assessment relating to a particular topic or subject and level, which builds on initial assessment. Sometimes called a skills test. The results determine what needs to be learnt or assessed in order to progress further.
Differentiated	Adapting an informal assessment activity to suit learners' abilities and needs. Permission might be required from an awarding organisation for adaptations to formal assessment activities.
Direct	Evidence provided by a learner to meet the requirements being assessed, for example, products from their work environment.
End-point (synoptic)	Assessment is only a snapshot of what has been learnt from a full programme, for example, an apprenticeship. The learner might do well with what is assessed, but not do well with what is not assessed, or vice versa. Several methods of assessment will be used, for example, observation, discussion and tests. It is carried out by someone who has not trained the learner.

Evidence	Learners provide examples of products or written statements to prove their competence and knowledge towards agreed criteria.
External	Assessments set and marked externally by an awarding organisation.
Formal	Assessment that involves the recognition and recording of achievement, often leading to certification of an accredited qualification.
Formative	Ongoing, interim or continuous assessment to determine progress, for example, an observation. Can be used to assess skills and/or knowledge in a progressive way, to build on topics learnt and to plan future learning and assessments. Often referred to as assessment <i>for</i> learning, allowing additional learning to take place prior to further assessments.
Holistic	Assessing several aspects of a unit, qualification, standards, criteria, programme, or job specification at the same time.
Independent	An aspect which is assessed by someone other than the designated assessor.
Indirect	Evidence provided by others regarding a learner's progress, for example, a witness testimony from their supervisor at work.
Informal	Assessment that is in addition to formal assessment to measure progress, for example, questioning during a progress review with a learner.
Initial	Assessment at the beginning of a programme, unit or topic. It can identify a learner's starting point and any particular needs they may have.
Integrated	A way of linking and assessing theory and practice. Information acquired in a learning context is put into practice and assessed in a work environment.
Internal	Assessments carried out within an organisation, either internally set and marked, or externally set by an awarding organisation or professional body, and then internally marked.
Ipsative	A process of self-assessment to recognise development. Learners match their own achievements against a set of standards or their own previous achievements. This is useful for learners to consider how they are progressing. However, they do need to work autonomously and be honest with themselves.
Learner led	Learners plan how they can achieve what is required, and then produce evidence of this. The learner informs the assessor when they are ready to be formally assessed, having self-assessed their work first.
Linear	Assessment takes place at the end of a programme of learning.
Modular	Assessment takes place after a module or unit of learning.
Norm referencing	Comparing the results of learner achievements to each other, for example, setting a pass mark to ensure a certain percentage of a group will achieve.

Objective	Based around the criteria being assessed which does not lead to a personal opinion of the learner or the learning.
Predictive	An indication of how well the results from a test or activity will predict future performance.
Process	The assessment of routine skills or techniques, for example, to ensure a learner is following a set process or procedure.
Product	The outcome is assessed, not the process of making or working towards it, for example, a completed painting or an operational model.
Proficiency	An assessment to test ability or skills without reference to any specific programme of learning, for example, riding a bicycle.
Profiling	A way of recording learner achievements for each individual aspect of an assessment. Checklists can be a useful way to evidence these and more than one assessor can be involved in the process.
Psychometric	A test of psychological qualities, for example, intelligence and personality.
Qualitative	Assessment is based upon individual responses to open questions given to learners. Clear criteria must be stated for the assessor to make a decision as questions can be vague or misinterpreted.
Quantitative	Assessment is based upon yes/no or true/false responses, agree/disagree statements, or multiple choice tests, giving a clear right or wrong answer. Totals can be added to give results, for example, 8 out of 10. Learners could pass purely by guessing the correct answers, however computer generated questions are often formulated to minimise this.
Screening	A process to determine if a learner has a particular need, for example, in English or maths.
Subjective	A personal decision by the assessor, where the assessment criteria might not have been clearly stated. This can be unfair to a learner.
Summative	Assessment at the end of a unit or programme to determine achievement, for example, an exam. If a learner does not pass, they will usually be offered another chance. Often known as assessment of learning, as it shows what has been achieved at a given point.
Triangulation	Using three assessment methods, for example, observation, oral questioning and a test. This helps ensure the reliability and authenticity of a learner's work and makes the assessment process more interesting.
Vocational	Job related practical assessment, usually in a learner's work environment.