



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

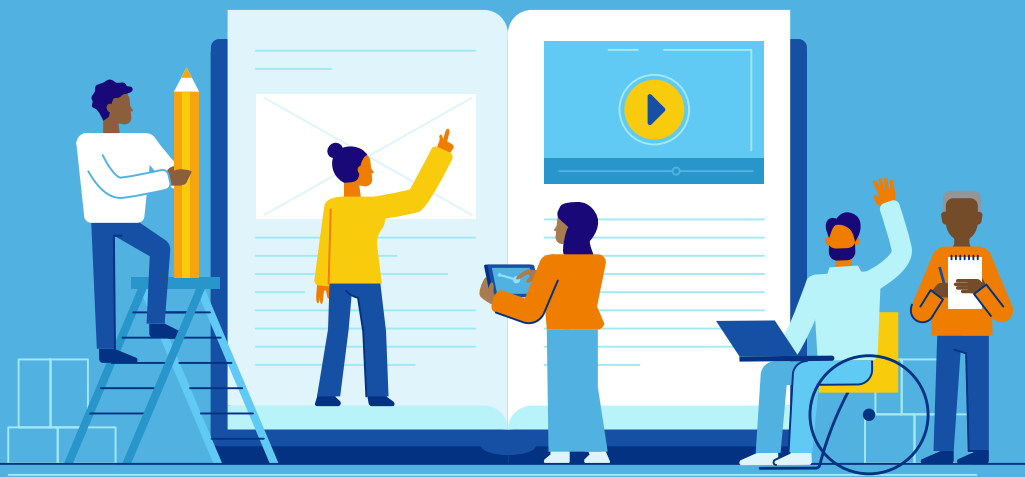


**Making Digital
Assessment Count:
Designing for
Engagement, Integrity
and Authenticity**

KNOWLEDGE SERIES

knowledge
Series

A TOPICAL START-UP GUIDE TO DISTANCE EDUCATION PRACTICE AND DELIVERY



Introduction

The rapid pivot online prompted by Covid-19 has prompted educators to capitalise on the unique attributes of the online classroom and discover new ways to not only engage their online learners but also assess them. At the same time, they are challenged to ensure digital assessments are valid, reliable and authentic. When assessing learning in an online environment, how can those who teach online minimise issues around submission and marking while also ensuring academic integrity remains high? How do they ensure assessment in an online environment aligns with competencies, content and workplace relevance?

At the heart of making digital assessment count is purposeful, strategic design: design that is **learner centred**, builds **academic integrity** into the fabric of the learning experience, and uses **authentic** assessment tasks. These design features minimise the need for learners to cheat, increase relevance and encourage learners to produce their best work. This document discusses each of these features in turn and provides examples of how they can be incorporated into the digital assessment process.

At the heart of making digital assessment count is purposeful, strategic design

Designing Learner-Centred Assessment

Assessment that is learner centred focuses on learners and learning. It engages learners with content and practice; it encourages them to think about what they are learning, how they are learning, and how to apply their learning. Because it provides opportunities for interaction with and feedback from peers and the educator, learner-centred assessment is particularly important for online learners who are physically separated from their educator and peers. Typically, designing learner-centred assessment involves attention to four design components: learning outcomes, assessment strategies, assessment types and assessment tools.

Learning Outcomes

The starting point when designing a course is identifying the learning outcomes — what a student needs to know to complete the course, module or programme. When designing for online learning, it is always a good idea to start with the desired end result, because it provides guideposts for subsequent development of activities. Learning outcomes help learners understand how to perform optimally in the course and assist them in understanding why a particular piece of knowledge is useful. They also help the educator make assessment decisions. Because learning outcomes provide a shared understanding about the goals of the course, it is important for them to be focused on the student and expressed in terms of what the student will be able to do by the end of the course.

Educators with a deep understanding of their subject area may be tempted to focus on content instead of rooting the design in learning outcomes.

Educators with a deep understanding of their subject area may be tempted to focus on content instead of rooting the design in learning outcomes. One way to ensure outcomes are the touchstone is to begin the design process by answering three key questions:

- What do I want learners to know and be able to do?
- How will I know that learners know and are able to do this?
- What content and activities do I need to provide for learners to understand and apply new learning?

Assessment Strategies

Once the learning outcomes have been identified, the next step is to think about designing the appropriate assessment strategies to improve student learning. These strategies must strive to respond to the learning outcomes — that is, what the educator wants students to know and do, and how they will learn to address a particular learning outcome. This step leads to thinking about the tools and methods that will make this happen.

Assessment can be formative or summative. The former is essentially embedded in the process of teaching and learning, while the latter focuses mainly on evaluating

the learner’s performance at the end of the course. Robert Stake uses the analogy of cooking: “When the cook tastes the soup, that’s formative; when the guests taste the soup, that’s summative” (cited in Scriven, 1991, p. 169). The cook can taste the soup, assess whether it needs improvement and add more ingredients to make it more palatable. But once the soup is served, the customer cannot change or improve it. They can only pass final judgement on the soup. In formative assessment, learners go through a series of frequent interactive activities that help them to identify areas needing improvement. Through this process, the educator is also able to assess learners’ performance and provide guidance to help them perform optimally. When learners take an examination at the end of a course, they do not have an opportunity to go back and check whether they are on the right track.

Regardless of how assessment is designed and packaged, the actual methodology used to determine whether an assessment is formative or summative is key. Summative assessment is often referred to as assessment **of** learning, while formative is viewed as assessment **for** learning. Table 1 summarises the distinctions and how each can be used.

Table 1. Assessment Types

	EDUCATORS USE IT TO	LEARNERS USE IT TO
<p>Assessment OF learning (summative) It is designed to certify competency and verify learners’ knowledge and skills. It measures learners’ competencies and proficiency based on what was taught. It is usually conducted at the end of the course/module for the purposes of accountability and/or ranking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certify or inform administrators, parents, potential employees and others of a student’s proficiency in relation to curriculum learning outcomes • Verify learners’ knowledge and skills 	<p>Demonstrate their understanding of a range of skills and knowledge acquired in the course</p>
<p>Assessment FOR learning (formative) This takes place during the process of learning; it informs educators how well their learners are learning what they are teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate learning to ensure the learning outcomes are achieved • Inform and guide changes needed to advance student learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out what they know and can do • Receive regular feedback from educators and peers on how to improve • Assess themselves against the learning objectives and learning outcomes



In their 2018 study, Ogange et al. concluded that formative assessment in the online learning environment positively influences student engagement and learning outcomes. For years, distance education enthusiasts have been advocating for greater reliance on formative assessments, which keep learners engaged and provide benchmarks to gauge progress. Unlike in a traditional classroom setting, where assessment usually takes place after the delivery of content or teaching, assessment in an online space is integrated into the instructional material and learning activities and forms part of the facilitation of teaching and learning. Formative assessment therefore plays a central role in ensuring that assessment is learner centred.

Another consideration when designing assessment for the online environment relates to the selection of assessment methods and tools. It is important for the online educator to map the activities and learning interactions to appropriate methods and tools. Table 2 outlines a variety of these.

Designing for Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is not something added to a course; it is woven into the course. This does not mean that systems to prevent cheating are built into every stage of the course development process and every stage of the course itself. Instead of this negative approach, which emphasises

surveillance and oversight, designing for academic integrity can be regarded as a strategy for finding ways to support learners in the production of their best possible work without resorting to unnecessary — or unacceptable — tools and resources.

Keeping academic integrity front of mind so it becomes part of the course fabric from the start requires paying close attention to several design features. These are a mixture of styles (the how of assessment) and genres (the what of assessment), and they are messy and overlapping. However, they help the educator develop assessment tasks that both encourage deep learning and decrease the likelihood of cheating. It is possible to promote academic integrity and reduce reliance on deficit-driven solutions by:

- using backward design
- building flexibility, regular formative assessment, collaborative activities and applied learning into the course
- attending to localisation

Backward Design

The traditional approach to designing a course has been to start with the course topic, determine what learners need to learn about that topic, build the content accordingly, and then figure out what kinds of assessments will best measure the learners' learning. Backward design flips this model on its head by starting with what learners should be able to know and do at the end of the course, and designing back from there.

Backward design increases the attention paid to assessment, thereby preventing a disconnect between assessment and content. It encourages the educator to imagine assignments that can be effective and original, drawing upon advances made in authentic assessment and other innovative techniques.

Table 2. Online Assessment Methods and Tools

METHOD/TOOL	DESCRIPTION	IDEAL FOR
Multiple-choice questions (MCQ)	Test the student's recognition or understanding of the content.	Pacing learners. An educator can send weekly self-assessment MCQs to ensure learners go through the study material.
E-portfolio	A collection of the student's work: focused, selective, reflective and collaborative. E-portfolios may contain research papers, reports, case studies, video material, links to podcasts, personal essays, journals, self-evaluations and exercises.	Assessing the student's achievement, capabilities, strengths, weaknesses, knowledge and specific skills over time and in a variety of contexts. The e-portfolio is assessed using a scoring guide or rubric.
Discussion forum	Open platform allowing learners to post, read and provide feedback on messages. Enhances communication between and among learners and educators.	Facilitating active interaction among all learners enrolled in the same course. It gives an educator and learners the opportunity to share.
Examination	Used to determine a student's acquisition and application of knowledge and skills learned from a course.	Evaluating student performance and demonstrating knowledge and skills that learners acquired from the course.
Reflective journal	A student's personal record, containing written, reflective responses to materials they are reading, viewing, listening to or discussing. A journal can be used as an assessment tool in all subject areas.	Learners who are doing practical work. Also ideal for documenting the development process of acquiring a skill.
Talk show	Learners can host their own talk show and discuss the important points of any lesson in their course.	Conducting group work: learners can use social networks such as WhatsApp to form study groups and assist each other. One member can host a talk show while others respond to questions.
Project	The learner uses knowledge, concepts and skills acquired from the course to solve a real-life problem.	Solving a practical problem by synthesising content, knowledge and skills acquired in the course.
"Top ten" lists	Learners write out their ten most important takeaways from a lesson.	Ensuring learners are going through the study material before a discussion class.
Performance tasks	Learners create, produce, perform or present works on real-world issues.	Assessing a skill or proficiency. This can be done through a series of videos.
Self-assessment	The learner assesses their progress in terms of knowledge, skills and processes.	Pacing the student's progress by having them gather information about and reflect on their own learning.
Blogs	An online journal, diary or platform where learners can share their views on the course.	Assessing summary skills and reflection. For example, learners can post opinions and commentary and recommend additional resources, and other learners can comment.
Essay	Detailed written argument responding to a question, topic or brief statement.	Assessing the learner's understanding of an issue and ability to analyse and synthesise relevant information.
Peer instruction	One student teaches other learners about what they have learned.	Enhancing the learner's depth of knowledge by teaching others. It can also help learners motivate each other.
Virtual interviews	A virtual conversation in which the educator or learners use inquiry to share their knowledge and understanding of a topic or problem.	Exploring the student's thinking, assessing their level of understanding of a concept or procedure, and gauging how well they gather information, obtain clarification, determine positions and probe for motivations.



In reality, any course design process is rarely linear. The educator might come up with an assessment that leads them to set the structure accordingly, but that process can just as easily engender new ideas for an assignment. Course design is often untidy, but that is okay; this indicates educators are open to the possibilities that different contexts of learning will bring to their attention.

Other Design Features

Flexibility is all about providing options. Offering different kinds of assessments from which to choose can make learners feel more comfortable, as they are able to select the task for which they feel best suited. Flexible deadline policies — for example, a regular deadline and a no-excuses-necessary extension deadline to account for those times when the regular deadline cannot be met — give the student more control over their time and the distribution of assignments.

Regular formative assessments are key. Summative assessment is often high stakes and consequently can lead to cheating. This is less the case with formative assessment, especially if it is done regularly. Something as simple as a weekly exercise, even when done online, can demonstrate to learners that learning from the quiz will add to their skills and abilities in the course. Such exercises have to be designed carefully, providing a mix of review and challenge and emphasising the learning over the scoring. Multi-stage projects, where learners receive expert advice and guidance at important junctures, also discourage learners from cheating.

Collaborative activities foster engagement. There is always a fear that learners will disengage from their studies, especially in the online environment. The dislocation that comes with the virtual world can be

overcome when learners are connected and engaged with their peers and the course material. Collaborative activities can take different forms, ranging from course-length formative projects to single activities where learners collaborate to solve a problem or complete a task. These types of assessments are limited only by imagination and the communication tools available to the learners. One of the most engaging examples comes from the world of digital design: learners are asked to create individual prototypes of a solution, then they are grouped in threes to compare their individual designs and come up with a fourth, collaborative prototype. These kinds of tasks turn what is sometimes viewed as cheating into a rich learning experience.

Applied learning, especially when used with authentic or near-authentic tasks and problems, is another form of engagement that minimises cheating. Case studies are a common form of applied learning, and these can be made more authentic when the problem being studied has been supplied by an actual organisation or business. Application in learning can also extend to using “cheating” tools. Some language educators, for example, forbid the use of Google Translate, yet learners still use it. So other educators have turned the tables and incorporated the tool into their assessment strategies. This is not a capitulation but rather an opportunity to help learners understand how the tool works and, in that process, discover characteristics of the other language with which they were unfamiliar.

Another approach to applied learning is to have learners contribute to the course itself. This can be as simple as asking learners to supply test questions, or as involved as having them participate in the compilation of an open textbook for the course. In all these instances, the focus is on learners applying what they are learning in the course.

Academic integrity is not something added to a course; it is woven into the course.

Localisation is another useful strategy. The advent of textbook packages that come with all sorts of learning and testing materials has made it easier for educators to manage large courses and heavy workloads. However, it has also given rise to illicit sharing of test questions and answer banks; coupled with the vast amount of content on the Internet, it is no wonder learners resort to Googling answers instead of writing their own. Localisation takes aim at this problem by ensuring course content and associated assessment tasks are unique to that particular course, so learners do not benefit by trying to go elsewhere. Meta-reflection exercises and learning portfolios are particularly useful localisation tools, as learners are called upon to examine and present their own learning in their own terms. But any kind of exercise that is unique to the course in question and requires student engagement with the course falls into this category.

Is it possible to eradicate cheating? Highly unlikely, especially given the performance-based nature of our educational systems and the stress baked into them. But academic integrity can be built into online courses through tasks and assignments that engage learners and reduce their need to cheat. Academic integrity can be a win-win proposition: less cheating, better learning. Find more examples and information on all of these strategies at <https://uwaterloo.padlet.org/jamesmskidmore/col2021>.

Remote Proctoring as a Solution?

Some institutions have looked to remote proctoring as a solution. Remote proctoring refers to a family of technologies that create exam-taking conditions in remote environments. For instance, they might involve remote invigilators watching over learners while they are taking their exam. Or they might bypass human invigilation all together and instead employ algorithms and software that check for sounds and movements that might indicate

cheating behaviours, such as a student standing or talking while taking an exam. Other technologies focus on yet other aspects of creating exam-like conditions, such as locking browsers and preventing learners from navigating away from the exam. In other words, these technologies attempt to control student behaviour via surveillance through listening, watching and restricting student activities.

While proctoring software companies argue that these technologies aim to ensure academic integrity and deter academic dishonesty, **many** scholars have recently highlighted that these technologies come with significant and extensive risks, and critics see them as unnecessary and inequitable. Learners have also **called for rethinking the use of such technologies**, and as of 17 March 2021, the faculty senate at the University of British Columbia, in Canada, has **“direct[ed] faculties to restrict algorithmic remote invigilation tools, effective immediately.”**

Importantly, critics argue that reliance on remote proctoring solutions might create more problems than it solves. There are two parts to this argument. The first is that high-stakes assessments may not always be the best way to assess student learning. The second is that remote proctoring technologies rely on monitoring, surveillance and control. In this way, they potentially create a culture of mistrust between faculty and learners. It is arguably hypocritical to encourage learners to develop trusting relationships with faculty and institutions, but then use technologies that watch over them. Learners also describe them as harmful because they raise privacy concerns and can create anxiety among test-takers.

The rapid adoption of a variety of technologies, as has happened during the pandemic, raises another concern. In adopting tools to ensure continuity, institutions run the risk of certain software becoming “sedimented” in practice. Martin Weller (2020) explains that because of significant



financial and human resource investment in software and technologies, the same technologies become the sine qua non of solutions for the institution. As universities invest significant resources to embed a technology such as remote proctoring in their operations, the software becomes integral. Once these tools are embedded into higher education, they become de facto solutions. They thus encourage adherence to traditional assessments such as exams. In other words, a vicious cycle comes about where exams encourage remote proctoring solutions, remote proctoring solutions require training and support, training and support encourages use of the tools, and the tools encourage exams.

What are some good alternatives that prioritise trust between faculty and learners, value integrity and foster learning? Consider reflections, problem-based assessments, open-book examinations, co-operative exams, presentations, debates, student-led discussions, and so on. No single solution will work for everyone, but it may be worthwhile to explore the assessment approaches of colleagues and peers. For example, the [University of Queensland's Assessment Ideas Factory](#) is a collection of assessments, searchable by discipline and class size, that enable faculty to consider how different assessments may work in their discipline.

Designing Authentic Assessment

Digital assessment must be authentic to align with the competencies and skills demanded by the workforce. Authentic assessment tasks represent aspects of the actual work of specific disciplines, adapted to the knowledge level of a particular group of learners (Lindstrom et al., 2017). In other words, authentic assessments measure the learner's progress in accomplishing course or learning outcomes in a manner that reflects real-life application of the skills and knowledge in a particular field or career. Kerka (1995) describes authentic assessments as having meaning in themselves because they measure learning in ways that have value beyond the classroom and are meaningful to the learner.

Learners who have been required to carry out authentic assessment often appeal to future employers, because they have engaged in tasks that closely resemble workplace practices and can provide examples of how they have applied their knowledge or demonstrated particular skills or attributes. Authenticity in assessment design is therefore critical. Carefully designed authentic assessment actively motivates and prepares a learner for the world of work.

Principles and Protocols for Designing Good Authentic Assessments

Table 3 summarises the principles underpinning authentic assessment (Ashford-Rowe et al., 2021; Conrad et al., 2018; Shaw, 2019; Wiggins, 1998).

Digital assessment must be authentic to align with the competencies and skills demanded by the workforce.

Table 3. Summary of Design Principles for Authentic Assessment

	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE
P1	Are realistic.	Design assessment tasks that replicate or simulate the contexts in which adults are “tested” in the workplace, in civic life and in personal life.
P2	Align with the course objectives and corresponding instructional material.	Focus on a macro-objective — one that illustrates what learners will be able to do by the end of the course.
P3	Require judgement and innovation.	Problematise the assessment task such that learners are called on to be creative, weigh options and make decisions about the best option to resolve the problem.
P4	Demonstrate a rich array of what learners know and can do.	Plan and distribute assessments to provide multiple opportunities for learners to demonstrate their ability to efficiently and effectively use a repertoire of knowledge and skills to negotiate a complex task.
P5	Accommodate multiple learning styles and acknowledge multiple ways of demonstrating competence.	Provide a variety of tasks that allow learners to demonstrate their understanding and application of knowledge in the field or discipline (e.g., case study, videos, portfolios, making a product).
P6	Display products and processes of learning.	Create opportunities for learners to chronicle and reflect on the thought processes, tasks and strategies they engaged in to create the finished product.
P7	Clearly outline the essential performance criteria to frame what the application of skills and knowledge should look like in practice.	Use the performance criteria/learning objectives to develop a rubric, which in turn can be used to evaluate fairly and consistently. This ensures educator expectations are transparent and focuses learners on providing evidence to show what they know and can do.
P8	Have performance criteria that closely resemble the expectations learners would encounter in a real-life or workplace-based scenario.	Develop performance criteria specific to how learners should carry out a task if they were employed in the field. Although learners should not be held to the same standards as professionals in the field, their performance should still be measured in a relevant way, close to what a novice might be expected to be able to do.
P9	Are flexible, ongoing and cumulative; they incorporate feedback that is actionable.	Scaffold the tasks throughout the course, allowing learners to act on the feedback so they improve and to integrate new knowledge and skills.
P10	Allow multiple human judgements of learning.	Build in opportunities for educator and peer feedback that learners can then implement in subsequent drafts. Educators, peer reviewers, and community members may all be involved in various performance ratings, and learners can also evaluate and monitor themselves.

Table 4. An Example of Authentic Assessment: Supervision Project

CONTEXT	
Course Title: Instructional Supervision	Assessment Title: Supervision Project
Learners: Teacher educators, heads of department in schools, education officers, co-operating teachers, and other school-based teacher leaders expected to supervise student teachers and teachers.	
Outcomes: Learners will be able to:	
1. Select and use supervisory skills and strategies appropriate for the developmental stages of student, beginning and experienced teachers.	3. Analyse and critically evaluate their use of observation and conferencing techniques with pre- or in-service teachers.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of several techniques for observing and conferencing with pre- or in-service teachers.	4. Apply the principles of clinical supervision to guide their approach to pre- and in-service teacher supervision and evaluation.
ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTION	EXTRACT FROM RUBRIC: SELECTED CRITERIA
<p>This supervision project requires that you apply the clinical supervision model in an authentic classroom setting and submit a written report supported by artefacts that illustrate the decisions you made and what you did. Your report should describe how you planned, conducted and evaluated a clinical supervision cycle with a selected student teacher or teacher. This project requires that you complete three tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and conduct at least one clinical supervision cycle with either a teacher or a student teacher who has agreed to work with you. Your clinical supervision cycle should include a pre-conference, an observation of at least 20 minutes, and a post-conference. Take notes during or after each of these parts of the cycle. Ensure that you retain a copy of the data collected during observation and any other artefacts that will serve as evidence of your plan of action, as well as your engagement in the observation phase and in the pre- and post-observation conferences. • Engage in a critique session with this teacher or student teacher in which you request their input on how the process might be improved. This should take place <i>after</i> you have completed the cycle and should focus specifically on <i>your role as a supervisor</i>. • Prepare a report related to this supervisory experience. The report should include a description of the supervision context; an explanation of the supervisory approach selected and the steps involved; an analysis and evaluation of the supervision; and appendices that include copies of the observation tool, data collected and any other documents or artefacts used for this project. The report should not exceed 4,000 words and will be evaluated based on the rubric supplied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the focus of the observations and conferences. • Describes the data collected and specifically discusses the trends and patterns that were revealed (analysis). • Explains how the supervisee was helped to interpret the patterns and trends to improve the supervisee's instructional practice (interpretation). • Includes materials or artefacts from the observation and conferences as evidence of what was done and how it was done (e.g., aide-memoires, partial transcripts of audio- or video-recorded conferences, observation instruments used, data collected, notes on analysis). • Analyses supervisory strengths and weaknesses as illustrated through materials and artefacts. • Discusses any supervisory problems encountered, how they were resolved and the thinking that informed the solutions. • Identifies problems that remained unresolved at the end of this experience. • Reflects on supervisee's suggestions for improvement. • Lists ideas for improving effectiveness in the future.
PREVIOUS ASSIGNMENTS	
The tasks above were scaffolded earlier in the course through two other assignments. Based on a case, learners conducted an analysis of a fictitious supervisee and justified their selection of an appropriate supervisory strategy for a scenario-based conference. They also role-played a supervisory conference with a peer and benefited from self, peer and educator feedback.	

P1: Realistic: This assessment asks learners to carry out a series of activities that replicate what happens in the work world of educators.

P2: Alignment with outcomes: Each of these tasks corresponds to one or more of the learning outcomes.

P3: Judgement required: The first task requires the learner to select and use a strategy that is appropriate for the supervisee's developmental level.

P4: Opportunity to demonstrate a variety of skills: The assessment tasks are connected and complex. They require the learner to draw on knowledge and use skills from across the entire course; they must transfer their knowledge to a real-world setting.

P5: Demonstrate competence in multiple ways: To complete the assessment, learners demonstrate competence through video-recorded interactions, various working documents, reflections and a report with appendices as evidence of their work.

P6: Display products and processes of learning: The final task asks the learner to do work in the field with a real teacher and produce real tools and documents used to undertake the work. The report details the processes undertaken and provides the products as evidence. This assessment gives them an opportunity to improve on and refine their practice and products.

P7: Performance criteria used to develop the rubric: This focuses the learner on the application of knowledge, demonstration of skills and importance of collecting evidence that supports professional practice. The rubric also increases transparency in relation to expectations and grading.

P8: Performance criteria mirror the workplace: This helps the learner to see the relevance of the tasks undertaken. Selecting a supervisory approach that is consistent with the supervisee's needs is a critical first step; helping a supervisee interpret data is also a key task for any supervisor.

P9: Feedback that is actionable: Learners practised and had opportunities to rehearse the skills in two earlier assignments. On each occasion, they received feedback. Giving and receiving feedback is a common and important part of teachers' professional practice.

P10: Multiple human judgements of learning: The learners received feedback from peers and the educator and engaged in self-assessment following the role play. The combination of scaffolding and feedback gives learners opportunities to integrate new knowledge and skills and improve performance.

At the heart of making digital assessment count is purposeful, strategic design.

Designing Authentic Assessment: An Example from the University Classroom

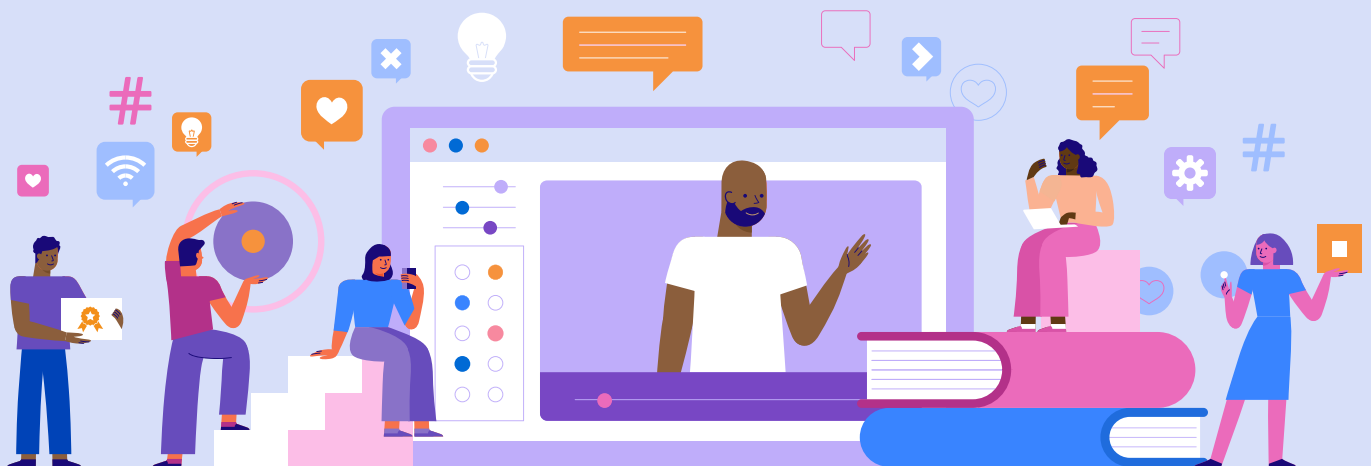
Table 4 illustrates how these design principles were woven into a series of assessment tasks for a group of teacher educators taking a postgraduate course in instructional supervision at a university. Although each principle is presented separately in the table, they overlap in practice. The red text in the left and right margins refers to the design principles outlined in Table 3.

These examples illustrate that the online environment is fertile ground for cultivating authentic assessment. It allows learning designers to approximate the workplace. For example, they can invite industry experts and prospective employers to join in interactive oral assessments, ask questions and make suggestions; learners are thereby challenged to problem-solve on the spot and are called on to demonstrate, defend and explain in real time. Educators can also assess practical subjects in a digital environment — for example, by asking students to upload a video of themselves performing a task, or to produce an artefact with a series of audio-video recordings illustrating its development.

Conclusion

The aim of this document has been to advocate for design as the “star”; such an approach positions design — not content — as the driver of digital assessment. The relationships between design, integrity and authenticity are mutually reinforcing. Integrity pivots on design, specifically learner-centred design that foregrounds authentic assessment. By extension, design foregrounding authenticity increases the likelihood that learners will engage in activities that build knowledge and skills relevant to personal, civic and work life.

Even as education institutions reopen for in-person classes, the demand for remote and online learning opportunities is unlikely to wane; therefore, supporting educators to move assessment online and optimise the learning power of digital assessment is critical. At the heart of making digital assessment count is purposeful, strategic design. Design embodying the principles of learner centredness, academic integrity, and authenticity is central to ensuring digital assessment that is reliable, valid and meaningful.



References

- Ashford-Rowe, K., Herrington, J., & Brown, C. (2014). Establishing the critical elements that determine authentic assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 39(2), 205–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2013.819566>
- Conrad, D., & Openo, J. (2018). *Assessment strategies for online learning engagement and authenticity*. Athabasca University Press. https://www.aupress.ca/app/uploads/120279_99Z_Conrad_Openo_2018-Assessment_Strategies_for_Online_Learning.pdf
- Grant, K., Fedoruk, L., & Nowell, L. (2021). Conversations and reflections on authentic assessment. *Imagining SoTL*, 1, 146–162. <https://mrujs.mtroyal.ca/index.php/is/article/view/532/365>
- Kerka, S. (1995). *Techniques for authentic assessment. Practice application brief*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED381688>
- Lindstrom, G., Taylor, L., & Weleschuk, A. (2017). *Guiding principles for assessment*. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, University of Calgary. <https://studentassessment.ucalgaryblogs.ca/files/2017/06/Guiding-Principles-for-Assessment-of-Student-Learning-FINAL.pdf>
- Ogange, B., Agak, J., Okelo, K. & Kiprotich, P. (2018). Student perceptions of the effectiveness of formative assessment in an online learning environment. *Open Praxis*, 10(1), 29–39. <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/183571/>
- Scriven, M. (1991). *Evaluation thesaurus* (4th ed.) Sage Publications.
- Shaw, A. (2019). *Authentic assessment in the online classroom*. Centre for Teaching and Learning, Wiley Education Services.
- Weller, M. (2020). *25 Years of EdTech*. https://www.aupress.ca/app/uploads/120290_99Z_Weller_2020-25_Years_of_Ed_Tech.pdf
- Wiggins, G. (1998). *Education assessment: Designing assessments to inform and improve student performance*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Useful resources and websites

- Podcast by Monica Ward about assessing online: <https://www.dcu.ie/teu/what-works-and-why>
- Podcast by Ann Marie Farrell about online continuous assessment: <https://www.dcu.ie/teu/online-continuous-assessment>
- Website of James Skidmore, Designing for Academic Integrity: <https://uwaterloo.padlet.org/jamesmskidmore/col2021>
- OISE Online website Assessment Practices in Online Contexts: <https://teachingonline.oise.utoronto.ca/the-course-design-process/>
- University of Queensland's Assessment Ideas Factory: <http://www.uq.edu.au/teach/uqassess/>

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning/distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. COL is helping developing nations improve access to quality education and training.

MAKING DIGITAL ASSESSMENT COUNT: DESIGNING FOR ENGAGEMENT, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Authors: Dr Maggy Beukes-Amiss, University of Namibia; Dr Tashane Haynes Brown, The University of the West Indies; Dr Schontal Moore, The University of the West Indies; Professor Mpine Makoe, University of South Africa; Professor James Skidmore, University of Waterloo; and Professor George Veletsianos, Royal Roads University

Critical Readers: Professor Shermaine Barrett, University of Technology, Jamaica; and Dr Mairette Newman, COL

Acknowledgements: Dr Kirk Perris and Dr David Porter

Photo credits:

Cover: Pexels, Oladimeji Ajegbile

Page 5: Pexels, Monstera

Page 6: Pexels, Kampus Production

Page 8: Pexels, Andrea Piaquadio

 Commonwealth of Learning, 2022

Commonwealth of Learning, 4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500, Burnaby, BC V5H 4M2, CANADA
PH: +1.604.775.8200 | FAX: +1.604.775.8210 | E-MAIL: info@col.org | WEB: www.col.org



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER