

*Do we know what
Effective Assessment means?*

*Have we ever
really considered the word
Effective when we design it?*

*To sum up,
Effective Assessment should
embrace students at heart.*

- Chan, C.K.Y.

22 TIPS FOR DESIGNING EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Clear Alignment between Learning Outcomes, Learning Activities and Assessment

For each assessment, there should be a clear alignment between the assessment, learning activities, and the learning outcomes of the curriculum. Teachers should ensure that the assessment methods employed could allow the students to demonstrate the learning outcomes appropriately. For example, to assess business leadership, exam alone may not be the most appropriate assessment method to evaluate student's ability. Do bear in mind that whatever you are trying to assess, they should be aligned with the intended learning outcomes.

2. Appropriate Use of Group Assessment

Do not overuse group assessment; it is inappropriate to assess students' knowledge in a group if the assessment can be done more or as efficiently by one individual.

3. Appropriate Assessment for the Appropriate Problem

Do not use time-consuming assessment methods (e.g. essay) for low level learning outcomes which can be assessed by multiple choice questions.

4. Grading Moderation

Assessment criteria and marking scheme should be explicitly shown and explained to students and shared with other co-teaching staffs to ensure transparency and reliability, and that the grades are awarded appropriately and consistently. Prepare a structured marking sheet (rubrics) for all assessors and students to increase marking reliability; give opportunities for students to practice using these marking schemes and provide exemplars where possible. Let the students know if they will receive marks for showing partial work (process based) - e.g. accounting type of questions - or only the

results (product based). Also indicate if grammar or other criteria, such as visual presentation, organization of information will affect the gradings. Let the students know what your marking style is like: whether bullet point format is acceptable, or does it have to be in an essay format.

5. Workload

Student and staff workload should be taken into consideration when designing the assessment.

6. Class Size

Class size must also be taken into account to allow assessment being conducted in an effective manner.

7. Purposes of the Assessment

Both teachers and students should have a clear idea on the purposes of the assessment; e.g. if it is for pre-diagnosis or guiding student approaches through feedback.

8. Discourage rote learning

Careful and well-designed assessment will discourage rote learning.

9. Bias

Teachers should ensure that there is no bias or disadvantage towards any particular group of students in any assessment.

10. External and Internal Policy and Guidelines

Teachers should be aware of any accreditation body, university, faculty, departmental or programme standards and guidelines that may affect the planning of assessment or a student's overall assessment outcomes.

11. Failure and Repeats

When designing an assessment, keep in mind the possibility that a student might fail or require to repeat the assessment due to sickness or other legitimate reasons.

12. Time for Assessment

Give sufficient time for students to conduct the assessment.

13. Prompt Feedback

Feedback is very important and should be incorporated into the design of the assessment. Feedback should be provided in a short, precise and prompt manner.

14. Diverse Learning Styles

A variety of assessment methods can offer students the opportunity to learn different learning styles and demonstrate their variety of skills.

15. Authentic Assessment

Business students appreciate and become more motivated when assessments involve authentic,



current and topical elements that are related to real-world challenges.

16. Level of Difficulty

Depending on the levels of difficulty in the subject, the assessment should cover some or all of Bloom's Taxonomy.

17. Formative and Summative Assessment

A business curriculum should have both formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments could enhance teachers' teaching and students' learning during the course; teachers can also take this opportunity to find out the degree of students' understanding and arrange additional tutorials for them if required.

18. Clear Assessment

Use clear and direct language and avoid complex wordings that may confuse and frustrate students. Set the questions explicitly and precisely according to the level of the student cohort. Try to reduce ambiguity in the written assessment and define the expected outcomes clearly – whether it is to compare, evaluate, summarize, critique, etc. Try not to use negatives in the assessment questions unless you are trying to catch your students out. If negatives are used, highlight, embolden or italicize them.

19. Practice Run

Unfamiliar assessment methods should be introduced in-class to provide the students with some practice opportunities.

20. Assessment Information

Provide students the time period, venue, assessment guidelines, requirements, assessment criteria, and other items that are important for the assessment.

21. Teacher/Peer/Self-Assessment

The students should also be aware of who is going to assess them – by the tutor, peers and/or themselves. If peer- and self-assessment are used, weightings and components that are assessed need to be specified: e.g. would the weightings be the same for peers, self and teacher? Students are often not used to self- and peer-assessment, and they may not like it as they feel that it is not fair for them to judge each other's work nor do they have the ability to judge. It may be wise to explain to your students why self- and peer-assessment is employed since students tend to seek understanding of the rationale behind learning something and being assessed for it.

22. Unexpected Answers

Be prepared to accept other equally creative and acceptable answers, even though you may not have predicted some of them as a teacher.

USEFUL WEBSITES WITH ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

Name of Institution/Website	Title	Website Link
Assessment Commons		http://www.assessmentcommons.org/
The University of Hong Kong (Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning)	Assessment Resources@HKU	http://ar.cetl.hku.hk/
Association of American Colleges & Universities	Resources on Assessment	http://www.aacu.org/resources/assessment
Australian Universities Teaching Committee	Assessing Learning in Australian Universities	http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/
Cambridge Assessment		http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/
Carnegie Mellon University	Conduct Assessments of Teaching & Learning	http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/design/teach/assesslearningteaching.html
Duke University (Center for Instructional Technology)	Assessment	http://cit.duke.edu/get-ideas/assessment/
The Higher Education Academy	Assessment & Feedback	https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/workstreams-research/themes/assessment-and-feedback
The University of Edinburgh	Enhancing Feedback	http://www.enhancingfeedback.ed.ac.uk/
The University of Queensland	Assessment Guidelines	http://www.uq.edu.au/teaching-learning/assessment-guidelines
The University of Sheffield	Toolkit for Learning & Teaching - Feedback & Assessment	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/lets/toolkit/fa/1.209066#InPractice
University College Dublin	UCD Teaching and Learning - Assessment	http://www.ucd.ie/teaching/resources/assessment/
University of Tasmania	Teaching & Learning - Assessment	http://www.teaching-learning.utas.edu.au/assessment
University of Technology, Sydney	Assessment Futures	http://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/teaching-and-learning/assessment-futures/overview