Guide for Assessments

Overview

Assessments provide online students with the opportunity to reinforce what they're learning to create and provide evidence which demonstrates their achievement of course learning outcomes.

The University of Adelaide abides by the recommended practice to provide students with authentic assessments which allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to relevant real-life situations that are aligned with intended learning outcomes and contemporary professional practices.

Student engagement within an online course is largely determined by the assessment where there is a direct return for effort. The way to focus student engagement and shape specific learning within an online course is through carefully designed authentic assessment tasks.

Considerations

Online assessment tasks should provide students with a way to evidence their achievement of the course learning outcomes. The assessment tasks developed for an online course must be constructively aligned to the application of knowledge and skills appropriate for the AQF level of the program.

Assessment tasks should allow students to apply the knowledge and skills they've learnt within the course to a variety of contexts using different assessment types and tools within MyUni. Tasks should provide students with a variety of challenges or problems which are desirable to engage with and have the appropriate level of difficulty for them to complete. Assessment tasks cannot just assess the student's ability to recall content using quizzes.

Assessments should be structured to allow feedback to be received in a timely manner so they're able to consider it, reflect on their work, use and implement the changes before the course ends. Avoid structuring assessments that provide students with feedback at the end of the course or on the last assessment task where they're unable to consider the feedback or put it into practice.

Students should be provided with clearly defined goals and expectations for how assessment tasks will be marked. Students should be able to easily match their learning goals and expectations to the marking criteria to inform their practice and process for completing assessment tasks.

Quality Criteria

All assessment requirements for the course are clearly articulated and are aligned with the course learning outcomes and the UoA Graduate Attributes.

There is a variety in the types of assessment. Students are required to utilise a range of skills and knowledge in the execution of their assessments.

The course provides learners with opportunities throughout the course to undertake a mix of formative and summative assessments.

Rubrics provide clearly stated marking criteria for all assessments and are available to learners throughout the course.

An assessment feedback cycle makes it clear to learners how they can apply feedback to improve their learning and performance in subsequent assessments.

Clear instructions on how to successfully complete and submit assessments are provided to students at the beginning of the session to allow students to prepare and plan out their study.

Grades for all course assessments need to be recorded in MyUni Grades.

Example

Examples of appropriate assessment strategies:	Examples of inappropriate assessment strategies:
Propose solutions Ask students to propose solutions to real-world problems, this guides students toward demonstrating more sophisticated and professionally focused use of skills and knowledge.	**Read and respond** Ask students to simply read and respond in an essay format to set questions. These are easy to exploit and cheat
Considering real-world scenarios Presenting students with real-world scenarios, asking them to demonstrate how theoretical concepts can be applied to a specific professional or practical situation.	**Basic recall** Useful for formative but shouldn't be relied on for summative - weighting. AQF levels
Collaborating to design a solution for a real workplace problem	**Examinations** Administration overheads, 6 week course timelines, identity
Demonstration and explanation Soft skills and presentation	
Creating personalised assessment tasks	
Connecting theoretical concepts to personal experience	

How To

Design and plan assessment tasks using a constructive alignment framework. This means assessment task design and creation should occur early in the course design process:

Constructive alignment framework for online course design:

1. Identify and establish the intended learning outcomes for the course.
2. Outline the identifiable criteria which indicate that students have achieved the intended learning outcomes.
3. Design the assessment tasks to measure the attainment of the learning outcomes. Develop a rubric which describes all of the possible grading levels for each part of the assessment task.
4. Develop learning activities which enable students to establish the skills, knowledge and understanding described in the intended learning outcomes which are measured by the planned assessment tasks.

5. Develop and create content to support the learning activities.

Do not leave assessment task design and creation until the end of the design process. In most instances designing the assessment early can help to scope the learning design of the course.

Providing students with a mix of 'formative' and 'summative' assessment tasks is important:

- **Formative assessment** is focused on the learning process, the development and improvement of knowledge and skills and their application in a range of real-world contexts. Formative assessment monitors student progress against a set of standards and should provide them with feedback to help them achieve the intended learning outcomes. It can provide students with an environment to test out ideas and to take risks without there being consequences to their final grade.
- **Summative assessment** is focussed on making judgments about what learning has occurred and so it contributes to the final grade a student receives. Summative assessment, particularly early in the course, has a formative dimension through feedback. It can also be integral to the assessment through the design of 'nested' or 'cascading' assessment tasks which progressively build on each other. It's important that summative assessments are closely matched to real-world professional tasks or are centred around solving real-world problems.