



Utilize a Variety of Assessment Types

UDL CHECKPOINT 6.4: [Enhance capacity for monitoring progress](#)

— Making sure to vary the types of assignments and assessments can help learners to engage with the material on a deeper, more personal level while helping them internalize the information and succeed in the course.

What is it?

One of the longest-standing forms of assessment (academically and otherwise) is the test. However, simply having learners complete a test (or quiz/exam) is not always the best option for learners' success. Instead, it is important to have learners complete a number of assessments (of varying types) throughout a semester. Some of these alternative types can include written essays, projects, presentations, portfolios, journals, etc.

Why do it?

Many learners feel overwhelmed with testing, which can cause them to perform poorly on the assessment. This barrier can negatively impact the learner's academic success in the course as well as their motivation throughout their higher education career. Additionally, testing can cause learners to rely on rote learning and recall, which does not allow for long-term retention of the concept(s). Rather than simply relying on tests and quizzes, varying the types of assessments can help learners better understand and retain the information in both the short and long terms of their academic lives while keeping them more engaged in the course.

How can I apply it?

Here are some ways that you can improve assessments.

- **Don't rely solely on tests/quizzes/exams.** While tests can offer a fantastic measurement of learners' knowledge, instructors should not only use these types of assessments. Balancing testing with other project-oriented assessments can help learners succeed more fully in a course.
- **Have learners reflect on their learning and assessments.** Self-reflection is vital to learner success. These reflections help learners better understand what they need to improve in their academics, and the reflections help instructors recognize what is working and what may not be working in a course.
- **Use rubrics, checklists, and templates in assignments/assessments.** Guiding learners through their assignments and assessments with the aid of rubrics, checklists, and templates helps learners be prepared for the coursework and expectations ahead.
- **Offer constructive and timely feedback.** Whatever type of assignment or assessment is given, it is important to give learners timely and individualized feedback so that they

understand how to improve the quality of their work (which will result in their success in the course).

Summary

While tests, quizzes, and exams are important forms of assessment and cannot (and should not) be done away with, it is essential to vary the types of assessments in any given course. Instructors should continuously be working to keep learners engaged in the material while challenging them. Incorporating collaboration, creativity, and reflection within assessments can help keep learners better their understanding of the material.