

Principles of Assessment

The big ideas by Nicki Rehn

1. Assessment should focus on and promote learning.
2. Conversation and communication are central to good assessment practice.
3. Assessment is tied to your teaching values.
4. Learning is unseen and so assessment is never an exact science. It's not as objective as you think.
5. Evaluating students' learning is when the power relationship inherent in teaching becomes public and undeniable.

Principles of Assessment

What is it?

Assessment is the ongoing process of:

- ▶ Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning.
- ▶ Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches expected targets.
- ▶ Communicating the results.
- ▶ Students and teachers using the resulting information to understand and improve learning.

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Terminology

Is there a difference between assessment and evaluation?

- ▶ Some people claim that “assessment” is diagnostic, and is used for the purpose of improvement in the current performance (formative), whereas “evaluation” is an act of passing judgment (summative).
- ▶ However, judgment is involved in both practices to some degree, and hopefully every act you perform as an instructor leads to learning and improvement.

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Formative versus summative

FORMATIVE

The goal of formative assessment is to gather feedback that can be used by the teacher or the students to guide improvements in the ongoing learning and teaching context.

Assessment-for-learning

SUMMATIVE

The goal of summative assessment is to measure the level of success or proficiency that has been obtained, generally at the end of an instructional unit or point, measured against a pre-determined reference point. It's the point where you "draw a line in the sand" and measure progress or achievement. It generally has some degree of weightiness or significance imposed on it by one or more of the stakeholders, such as a grade on a report card, a ranking with implications, a diagnosis, or an audience.

Assessment-of-learning

Principles of Assessment

Formative versus summative

FORMATIVE SUMMATIVE



WHEN THE **CHEF**
TASTES THE SOUP



WHEN THE **GUESTS**
TASTE THE SOUP

Principles of Assessment

Stakeholders

Students

Institution

Communities

External agents and agreements

Provincial government

BC's post-secondary system uses a rigorous degree quality assurance review process to ensure degree quality and equivalency across degree levels and institutions. Using this approach makes B.C. degree credentials transferrable in Canada and internationally, and is consistent with pan-Canadian degree level standards (EQA).

Principles of Assessment

Why assess?

- ▶ To compare learner performance to the goals of the instruction (during instruction and at the end of instruction).
- ▶ To assess effectiveness of teaching methods.
- ▶ To check a learner's background knowledge, strengths and weaknesses (i.e. diagnostic tool)
- ▶ To determine learner satisfaction.
- ▶ To develop self-regulation and ownership in learners.
- ▶ Assessment-as-learning – the assessment tasks itself leads to learning (e.g. effortful recall and summarization implicit in a quiz).

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Why assess?

- ▶ Have something on which you can provide feedback for improvement to students.
- ▶ Motivation (i.e. reward or currency for work done)
- ▶ Streaming, sorting, and gate-keeping.
- ▶ Generate marks and data for reporting.
- ▶ Performance indicator for institution, province, or other stakeholders.
- ▶ To assign value to a task.
- ▶ Accountability as an instructor

Principles of Assessment

What kinds of performances are there?

- ▶ Factual recall of acquired content
- ▶ Indicators and evidences of understanding
- ▶ Student created products and performances
- ▶ Skills (psychomotor and process)
- ▶ Decision-making and problem-solving
- ▶ Reflection on experience
- ▶ Practicum/field work
- ▶ Relational/“soft” skills
- ▶ Participation and contribution