

Checklist – Assessments

Instructional design literature and numerous course development rubrics point to the importance of systematically designing and aligning course elements (click here to see a brief overview of [systematic alignment guides](#) as well as a [course rubric comparison table](#)). A central part of these considerations are the assessments that one conducts in the course. The following checklist is therefore intended to help guide you in these considerations. Clearly, there are many resources that are available to guide you in the development of educational assessments in far greater detail. As a result, the following are merely beginning areas to think about as you design and develop your course. As always, please adapt this checklist to fit with your own needs.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS & GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Assessment approaches as well as grading criteria are clearly explained to learners in ways that they can easily understand (for more information regarding this, see the syllabus [teaching template](#) and/or [checklist](#))
 - ☐ Examples of varying levels of proficiency are provided to learners to help them better understand what is expected
 - ☐ Feedback is concrete, specific, and able to be implemented
- ☐ Methods of collecting and returning work are clearly stated
 - ☐ Assessment results and feedback are provided in a timely manner
- ☐ Multiple and varied types of assessments are provided to measure competency and progress, particularly in relation to course level objectives
- ☐ When appropriate, pre-developed and tested assessments are utilized (e.g., National standards, rubrics that are common to the discipline, institutionally developed criteria, etc.)
- ☐ Wherever possible, pre- and post-assessments are used to help the instructor to know how prepare and deliver course content, assess the effectiveness of course components, etc.
- ☐ Wherever possible, assessments mimic real-world applications of course content/skills
- ☐ Where appropriate, self-check, self-assessments, and peer-assessments are used to help learners to better gauge their own progress in relation to the objectives

- ☐ Where appropriate, anonymous feedback from learners in relation to course content (objectives, content and materials, tools and technologies, activities, etc.) is gathered and utilized to continually improve the course
- ☐ Assessment data is collected via formal and informal methods (e.g., via formal tests, projects, and/or assignments as well as informal observations made by you)
- ☐ Assessments and how they are implemented should be constructive in nature rather than punitive or deconstructive (i.e., their primary purpose and use should be to support and facilitate deeper learning and development rather than to merely point out mistakes and errors)
- ☐ All assessments are accessible by all students (for more information on accessibility guidelines, see the [course organization](#) checklist)
- ☐ All privacy and confidentiality policies are adhered to for each assessment (for more information on accessibility guidelines, see the [course organization](#) checklist)

ADDITIONAL SYSTEMATIC ALIGNMENT CONSIDERATIONS:

- ☐ Course assessments are clearly and directly aligned with course objectives, content & materials, tools and technologies, teaching and learning theories, strategies and activities, and contextual analyses (click here to see a brief overview of [systematic alignment guides](#)):
 - ☐ Assessments directly assess the objectives in the course and this feedback should help the learner to not only know where they are in relation to these objectives but to also know how they continue to improve when compared to them – click here to see guidelines for developing [objectives](#)
 - ☐ Each assessment clearly states which objective(s) it is assessing
 - ☐ Assessments are directly related to the content and materials that are the focus of the course (e.g., if a general skill such as critical analysis is being assessed then the assessments will apply this general skill to the specific course content) – click here to see guidelines for choosing [content, tools, and technologies](#)
 - ☐ Assessments utilize the tools and technologies that have been chosen for the course – click here to see guidelines for choosing [content, tools, and technologies](#)
 - ☐ Assessments should also help to assess the quality and effectiveness of these tools and technologies
 - ☐ Assessments help to assess the kinds of deeper learning and development that are depicted by the teaching and learning theories – click here to see guidelines for considering [teaching and learning theories](#)

- ☐ Assessments should also help to assess the validity of these theories
- ☐ Assessments utilize the selected pedagogies, strategies, and activities to collect assessment data – click here to see guidelines for choosing [pedagogies, strategies, and activities](#)
 - ☐ Assessments should also help to assess the quality and effectiveness of these pedagogies, strategies, and activities
 - ☐ Assessments should help to support the kinds of interactions that are being fostered by these pedagogies, strategies, and activities
- ☐ Assessments are appropriate for the instructor's as well as each learners' abilities, diversities, and backgrounds, they are able to be adequately implemented in the local context, and they align with the contextual analysis that has been conducted as well as the instructional design methods being utilized – click here to see guidelines for considering [contextual analysis and instructional design methods](#)
- ☐ Assessments are aligned across discipline and institutional levels (e.g., institutional and/or departmental assessments and surveys are used, discipline specific tests are facilitated, etc.)
 - ☐ The assessments focus on the areas of learning and development that are deemed of highest importance and value for the institution. If a school seeks to foster holistic development of its students (e.g., mind, body, spirit), then assessments might give precedence to assessing the ways that the specific course has an impact on these.
- ☐ Assessments are aligned across course levels (e.g., course level, module/unit level, and lesson/topic level) such that lower level assessments collectively and increasingly provide data, insights, and guidance for higher level assessments
 - ☐ Assessments are sequenced across the course to provide formative as well as summative data to the instructor

For more information and to see the references used to develop this template, click here to view the [Course Design & Development Guidelines](#).