Varieties of Assessment

There are many good reasons for introducing diversity into assessment methods, both formative and summative, for example:
- helping to engage and motivate learners;
- providing learners with opportunities to develop relevant skills;
- ensuring that individuals or groups of individual are not disadvantaged by an emphasis on one assessment type;
- enabling learners to demonstrate their learning in ways that are appropriate to them as well as to the discipline they are studying;
- providing flexibility and assessment choice can empower students and reduce the need for reasonable adjustments.

It is, however, important to take a balanced approach so that the range of assessment types used are appropriate and do not confuse students about expectations. This guide presents a range of options for you to consider when designing courses and modules. The suggestions provided are prompts and by no means exclusive; you may well come up with more ideas and different applications of the methods given here.

How to use this resource

Table 1: assessment methods that align to learning objectives uses Bloom's taxonomy as an organising principle for the types of learning activity being assessed to reflect the way that learning outcomes at both module and Course level are designed. Revisions to the model include the addition of 4 dimensions (Factual, Conceptual, Procedural and Metacognitive) that might help you when thinking about assessment at different levels or stages of learning (Anderson et al 2001). A *personal and professional development* section has been added to Bloom's categories of learning includes skills, attributes and behaviours that can be applied across all academic disciplines and learning activities with a view to encompassing graduate attributes and LSBU values. This section reflects the aims of the LSBU Educational Framework, summarized as '[enabling] our students to achieve academic success, to secure graduate level work, to be resilient and adaptable individuals capable of leading in their professions, practices and industries'.

The last column lists *suggested assessment method / assignment tasks* which can enable learners to demonstrate the learning objectives. A more detailed description of each of these is provided in the following pages, organised alphabetically.

This resource can be used in conjunction with other CRIT resources such as *Assessment for Learning*, *Course Level Assessment* and *Writing Learning Outcomes*

Table 1: Assessment methods that align to learning objectives.

Learning objective	skills, aptitudes, behaviours	Learner actions	suggested assessment method/assignment task
Remember	The ability to retrieve, recognize and recall relevant knowledge from long-term memory.	list, recite, outline, define, name, match, quote, recall, identify, label, recognize	Class participation, Creating a database, Immediate learning reflection, Performance, Simulations, Short answer questions, Work based assessment, Written exam (closed book)
Understand	The ability to construct meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages,	classify, compare, contrast, describe, discuss, explain, infer, interpret, paraphrase, restate, give original examples of, summarize.	Annotated bibliography, Creating a database, Design learning materials, Dissertation, Learning log, Oral exam, Poster, Project, Question banks, Short answer questions, Write an abstract.
Apply	The ability to successfully perform or use a procedure.	calculate, predict, apply, execute, solve, illustrate, implement, use, demonstrate, determine, model, perform, present.	Artwork, Care plan, Design learning materials / guides Group work, Lab report, Media profile, Observation of practice, Problem sets, Role play, Simulations, Testing stations, Video, Work based assessment
Analyse	The ability to break material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose	analyse, attribute, classify, break down, categorise, diagnose, differentiate, document, draw a diagram, illustrate, criticize, simplify, relate, correlate, connect, group.	Class participation, Conference paper, Critical incident, Discussion / debate, Essay, Group work, Media profile, Participate in a 'Court of Enquiry', Patchwork texts, Observation of practice, Poster, Presentation, Report, Role play , Write a newspaper article for different audiences
Evaluate	The ability to make judgements based on criteria and standards.	check, choose, critique, support, relate, reflect, determine, defend, judge, grade, compare, contrast, argue, justify, support, convince, select, evaluate.	Case study, Committee paper, Discussion / debate, Dissertation, Essay, Immediate learning reflection, Oral Exam, Policy paper, Reflective journal, Report, Research proposal, Review of book /article / film, Written exam (open book)
Create	The ability to put elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing elements into a new pattern or structure.	generate, design, formulate, build, invent, create, compose, generate, derive, modify, develop, perform, plan, produce.	Artwork, Care plan, Conference paper, Group work, Business plan, Hackathon, Hypothetical piece, Patchwork texts, Performance, Portfolio, Practical exam, Presentation, Product design, Project, Sketchbook, Video, Work based assessment, Write an Abstract, Writing (creative)
Personal and professional development	These often include so called 'soft skills' which are key to student and graduate success.	Demonstrate the ability to be: adaptable, self-directed, organised, cooperative/collaborative, empathetic, open. Demonstrate qualities of citizenship, leadership, emotional intelligence, enterprise, intitiative. Demonstrate commitment to ethics, inclusiveness, equity, interdisciplinarity, professionalism. [1]	Artwork, Care plan, Design learning materials, Grant application, Group work, Hackathons, In-tray assessment, Performance, Participate in 'Court of Enquiry', Portfolio, Practical exam, Project, Reflective journal, Research proposal, Role play, Simulations, Sketchbook, Work based assessment, Writing (creative), Video.

[1] These may appear less easy to measure and this will depend on the disciplinary context and teaching methodologies. For example, Health practitioners may measure the ability to empathise through self, patient and observer ratings and Arts practitioners in the ability to collaborate.

Below you will find a descriptions of the suggested assessment methods, arranged in alphabetical order.   For ease of reference a key has been provided to indicated which assessment method matches which learning objective (as outlined in **Table 1: Assessment methods that align to learning objectives).**

R Remember	U Understand	A Apply	An Analyse	E Evaluate	C Create	P Personal and Professional Development

Annotated bibliography U

Students produce a list of sources on specified or agreed topics to a particular referencing convention. They annotate these with a commentary / review.
Suggested formats: written document

Artwork A C P

The production of artworks (visual arts, music, theatre, film, creative writing) can assess diverse skills including problem solving, planning, production and research. This method can be useful to develop and assess experiential learning in any discipline. Assessment criteria specific to creative disciplines can be adapted to meet requirements. See also Writing and Video.
Suggested formats: a range of formats can be used.

Care Plan A C P

Students work through a care plan to identify problem(s) and offer potential solutions; useful for assessing students' understanding and for encouraging students to see links between theory and practice.
Suggested formats: written document.

Case study E

Students are asked to analyse a particular organisation / project during a particular event or period of time in order to extrapolate key themes and highlight previously hidden issues that can be applied to practice, and/or provide greater clarity on an important problem for practice or research.
Suggested formats: written document, blog, website, video, podcast.

Class participation R An

Assessing class participation in specifically designed activities encourages students to contribute to discussions and activities. It can be used to help them engage with reading / preparation for a class session, to assess disciplinary knowledge and understanding and to develop communication and group skills
Suggested formats: online discussion / activities, web-conferencing, face to face

Committee briefing paper E

Demonstrates the ability to identify and synthesise key ideas for a particular context.
Suggested formats: written document, website.

Concept Maps `R` `U`

Students map out their understanding of a particular concept. This is a useful (and potentially quick) exercise to provide feedback to staff on students' understanding.
Suggested formats: mind map software, Word document, drawing, photographs, video.

Conference Paper `An`

Students are asked to put on their own conference / panel discussion and present at it. This combines a range of methodologies including those involved in essay writing, research, giving a presentation or writing a case study.
Suggested formats: written document, presentation, podcast, video streaming.

Creating a database `R` `U`

Demonstrates the ability to organise information, to be user focused, to think laterally and provide experience of a workplace skill.
Suggested formats: database tool.

Critical Incident `An`

Students write about a critical incident in the workplace, reflecting on context, process, outcomes, how theory underpins their understanding and how they might do things differently in future
Suggested formats: portfolio, written documents, audio, video, images.

Design Learning Materials `U` `A` `P`

Students prepare a learning package or guide for a particular audience e.g. members of the public, school children etc. on a specified or agreed topic.
Suggested formats website, documents, images, videos.

Discussion /debate `An` `E` `P`

This activity encourages students to articulate and refine their vocabulary and demonstrates the ability to reason, to listen to others and weigh up often contradictory or disparate sources.
Suggested formats: online activities, web-conferencing, social media, face to face.

Dissertation `U` `C` `E`

Students work on their own project, identifying their area of interest and research question to explore in depth. Dissertations can demonstrate a wide range of cognitive, practical, analytical and interpretative skills.
Suggested formats: usually written but can use other formats, depending on discipline.

Essay `An` `E`

Demonstrates the ability to construct and develop an argument or line of reasoning. If written, consider the word length – does making it longer add any value to learning or what you are trying to assess? An essay plan could also be used to help students prepare for a final written assessment.
Suggested formats: written document, video, podcast.

Group Work `A` `An` `C` `P`

The ability to work in a group is an essential transferable skill for many real life contexts, both professional and personal. Group work can be an effective method to motivate students, encourage active learning, and develop key critical-thinking, communication and decision-making and personal skills.
Suggested formats: a range of formats can be used.

Hackathon `C` `P`

A hackathon is an event where participants involved in software development (graphic or interface designers, project managers, subject-matter-experts) collaborate intensively to come up with a functioning product by the end of the event. The format could be used for a range of design projects, not just software.
Suggested formats: live event, social media.

Hypothetical piece `C`

This could be used in a range of contexts e.g. architecture students could design a utopian housing plan for future generations. Health practitioners could draw up a care plan incorporating emergent technologies.
Suggested formats: a range of formats can be used depending on the discipline.

Immediate learning reflection `R` `E`

Useful to demonstrate learning in workplace settings, project work and so on.
Suggested formats: apps, online forums and information sharing platforms, portfolio.

In-tray assessment `P`

Students are provided with an initial dossier of papers to read, prioritise and work on, with a variety of tasks and new information given at intervals throughout the period of assessment. This simulates real practice where unknown elements and irrelevancies are often encountered.
Suggested formats: portfolio, online document sharing platforms.

Lab report `A`

The purpose of a formal lab report is to explain what the student did in the lab, what they learned from it and why these findings matter. The structure of the lab report will depend on the discipline conventions.
Suggested formats: written document, online template.

Learning log `U`

Useful to help students identify what they have learned and to highlight problem areas to tutors. Tutors can use learning logs to provide students with regular formative feedback and / or design opportunities for self and peer assessment.
Suggested formats: portfolio, spreadsheet, online document sharing platform.

Media profile `A`

Students (individually or in groups) are asked to use pictures or headlines from newspapers and magazines to illustrate the public perception / profile of a particular aspect of your subject area.
Suggested formats: online journal, blog, website, written document.

Observation of practice `A`

Students reflect on the learning they gained from the observation, usually with predetermined questions or prompts for reflection. Observers can also be asked to provide feedback to others.
Suggested formats: proforma - document or online.

Oral exam `U` `E`

Useful to explore students' understanding of a wide range of topics and ability to think and respond in an un-prescribed way. It may also be used for assessing 'borderline' degree classifications.
Suggested formats: live event - face to face or web-conferencing.

Participation in 'Court of Enquiry' `An` `P`

This could entail a legal brief (e.g. on intellectual property) where students enact a hearing. This would demonstrate a range of skills not only in law but also in relation to any subject where IP was a factor (design, engineering etc.).
Suggested formats: live event.

Patchwork tests `An` `C`

Students write a number of small pieces of work ('patches') which they to later 'stitch' together in a reflective commentary. Each element should be discrete and complete in their own right, but together contribute to a holistic understanding of the module.
Suggested formats: reflective journal, portfolio, written documents.

Performance `R` `C` `P`

Demonstrates the student's ability to act, to relate to an audience, deliver a script and imagine or embody other points of view and behaviours.
Suggested formats: live event, video or audio recorded event.

Policy paper `E`

Students prepare a presentation on a contemporary policy issue, proposing a set of alternatives to current policy along with evidence-based recommendations which enable the decision-maker to reach an informed decision on their next course of action.
Suggested formats: written document, presentation software, video.

Portfolio `C` `P`

This is a collection of artefacts (artwork, documentation, reflection, etc.) across a course of study. The brief can be determined by disciplinary or professional requirements. Students understanding of assessment criteria needs to be checked throughout to support development of self-directed learning skills.
Suggested formats: online or physical documentation/collection.

Poster `U` `An`

A poster demonstrates the ability to communicate content and the findings of a topic to an audience. It is often used to assess student learning in group research projects.
Suggested formats: physical or online image, presentation software.

Practical exam `C` `P`

This is an exam which requires students to carry out specific task that involves interpretation, evaluation or application of theories such as analysing a journal article or interpreting a data set.
Suggested formats: event or activity which can be tracked and recorded.

Presentation `An`

Provides the opportunity to assess the way that students structure and communicate their material and how they respond to questions on their presentation. Presentations can be individual, group, face to face, online, behind closed doors or in front of peers. They are usually quite short 10 - 20 minutes -20 minutes for a postgraduate.
Suggested formats: live or recorded event, webinar.

Problem sets `A`

Students solve problems or complete exercises based on taught material, often in STEM subjects. They are usually regular, low stakes summative or formative assessment. Students can collaborate to find solutions.
Suggested formats: written documents or online activities such as quizzes.

Project `U` `C` `P`

This could involve any number of activities (film production, a research project, building design, business start-up etc.) but would enable students to demonstrate their ability to research, collaborate, plan, organise, and manage their time and so on.
Suggested formats: a wide range of media can be used depending on the nature of the project.

Question bank `U`

Students are assessed on their ability to produce a number of questions on a topic. This helps students to recognise what they do and do not understand about a topic and is a useful way for staff to collate a question bank for quick formative quizzes.
Suggested formats: in class contributions, online forums, written documents, email.

Reflective journal `E` `P`

A journal should be well organised and presented, supported by references, personal in tone but backed by evidence.
Suggested formats: portfolio, blog.

Report `An` `E`

Demonstrates the ability to understand and synthesise learning. A report will be written to a specific brief on a particular problem or issue (usually provided with guidelines) and be directed at a particular audience.
Suggested formats: written document, website, video.

Research proposal `E` `P`

Students work to a brief, formulating an original research question around course material of their choice. They will need to write a proposal abstract, carry out a literature review, methodology design, ethics evaluation and so on. This can prepare students for capstone projects.
Suggested formats: written document, proforma, video.

Review (book/film/article/exhibition etc.) `E`

Students could be asked to review a piece from theoretical perspective.
Suggested formats: written, blog, podcast video.

Role play `A` `An` `P`

Particularly useful for assessing students who will need to have a client facing position for example health, consulting, sales or law. Typically, the student will be asked to act out a common workplace scenario / problem in the role of the professional person with their client.
Suggested formats: live or recorded event, web-conferencing.

Simulation `R` `A` `P`

Scenarios (video, virtual reality, case studies) are provided to students who then answer questions, resolve problems, perform tasks etc. according to circumstances within the simulation. Useful for assessing a wide range of skills, knowledge and competencies in a safe and controlled environment.
Suggested formats: live event, supporting documentation, portfolio.

Sketchbook `C` `P`

Sketchbooks are increasingly included in assessments to demonstrate thinking and development of ideas, for example in Art and Design.
Suggested formats: physical notebook, blog, portfolio.

Testing stations `A`

Developed in medicine, students move around a series of testing stations being assessed on a number of learning out   comes, each for a fixed period of time. Useful to assess a wide range of skills and knowledge.
Suggested formats: live or recorded event, web-conferencing.

Work based assessment R A P

Enables learners in the workplace to record, reflect and report on workplace learning and to relate this to the learning they do in class. Assessment is likely to be carried out by both workplace mentors for competencies/skills, and institutional tutors on their ability to relate theory to practice. Both need a shared understanding of assessment criteria and standards.
Suggested formats: video, audio recordings, portfolio.

Write an abstract U C

Demonstrates the students grasp on the relevance of their research area, the problem being addressed, its scope, main claim, methodology, and literature / data sources being used and how it will add to the existing knowledge on this topic.
Suggested formats: written document, website.

Written exam - closed/open book R An E

Traditional exams ask students to provide in-depth answers to unseen questions. Closed book is where they are not allowed access to notes and text books and open book is where they are allowed such access. As a learning outcome, *Remembering* may be better tested through closed book whereas *Analyse* and *Evaluate* may be better tested through open book exams.
Suggested formats: hand written or computer aided.

Writing (creative) C P

Creative writing is a broad category, stylistically different from traditional academic writing, that can include fiction or creative non-fiction such as art writing, life writing, journalism, commentary, poetry and so on. Creative writing can help learners explore different perspectives, experiences and contexts
Suggested formats: written document, blog, portfolio, website.

Video (moving image) A C P

Making film or video demonstrates a students' ability in sense making, storytelling, visual literacy, communicating, documenting and, often, collaboration.
Suggested formats: social media, video sharing platforms. For script writing and project planning: written document, collaboration / planning tools.

Examples in practice

- Annotated Bibliography: https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Assessment-Toolkit/Assessment-methods/Annotated-bibliographies

- Case study: http://lti.lse.ac.uk/lse-innovators-irene-papanicolas-healthy-collaboration/

- Podcasts: https://arthropodecology.com/2013/08/28/hear-this-podcasts-as-an-assessment-tool-in-higher-education/

- Healthcare work placed assessment (five universities collaborated to transform assessment in practice settings through the use of a shared competency map and mobile devices): https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=127&v=c0WkCFlpg9k

- Pebble pad for personal learning development and evidencing skills (Thanet Kent):
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=39&v=Zhz-bBgl56k
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=89&v=bvB8kjbqALI

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- Engage in assessment, Reading University: https://www.reading.ac.uk/engageinassessment/

- LSBU Educational Framework: https://our.lsbu.ac.uk/article/academic-life/lsbu-educational-framework

- Oxford Brookes: Graduate Attributes: https://www.brookes.ac.uk/ocsld/your-development/teaching-and-learning/graduate-attributes/

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