

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: A FRAMEWORK

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October 2023

The purpose of this document¹ is to **define the key concepts of assessment for learning at the UOC**. It provides a framework to back the decisions to be taken by the UOC's AFIA (Assessment, Feedback and Artificial Intelligence) group.

The context in which the proposals in the document were made is the UOC, a university that has a fully online educational model and where communication between teachers and students is mostly asynchronous. **There must be interaction between these two figures in order to build learning.**

Taking this contextual premise into account, **assessment** means:

- **Learning** (Gibbs & Simpson, 2009). In other words, assessment is seen as simply part of the learning process. Assessments help students learn. Assessment activities, in their more general sense, are the main tool available to the university to help build students' knowledge. They must necessarily be supported by aids that facilitate the gradual achievement of learning objectives. Mistakes are a source of learning. With appropriate support and help from teaching staff, students should learn from their mistakes.

- **A process**. This consists of:
 - A **formative process** (Black & William, 2009; Gikandi et al., 2011). Formative assessments take place gradually and continuously. In practice, this means that assessment activities must be linked together so that, in order to carry out an activity, students must have understood the contents of the previous one. Feedback on how learning is taking place is required to guarantee a formative assessment process (Carless et al., 2011). However, not all feedback fulfils this

¹Two documents already in existence at the UOC were used for reference to prepare this document (in addition the bibliographic references included at the end of the document):

- Assessment at the UOC. Teaching staff support guide designed by the eLinC and revised in March 2023. Available at: <https://kit.elc.uoc.edu/quia-davaluacio-dels-aprenentatges/>
- [UOC Online Assessment Model](#) (produced by the Planning and Quality department)

formative function. For this to be the case, it must fulfil the following conditions (for more details, see [UOC feedback: Teachers' guide](#)):

- It must provide **students with information about what they have done well, what they need to improve** (the mistakes they have made) and, above all, how they can fix these mistakes and **implement improvement**. Therefore, it must be a type of feedback that corrects but also includes actions/suggestions for improvement that the student can put into practice to improve the activity carried out. The more tailored these suggestions or actions for improvement are to each student's learning needs (personalized feedback) the better, thus avoiding feedback that is too general.
- In this process, **students must play an active role** and know what they are expected to do with the feedback received from teaching staff. For example, if feedback is given based on showing students the solution, it must guide them on how to carry out the self-assessment based on this solution.
- A **planned process** (Carless, 2019) that includes opportunities for students to show improvement. Times must be planned when students can expressly state that they have fixed the mistakes made in previous activities and have therefore improved their learning process. These opportunities to show improvement can be planned in various ways. For example:
 - Within a single assessment activity, students could submit a draft, receive feedback and then submit the final version incorporating the improvements suggested in the feedback.
 - In an assessment activity, the improvement made to the previous assessment activity could be shown.
 - An assessment activity showing the improvement made to all previous activities could be set at the end of the course.

In the above three examples, these opportunities for improvement must always be accompanied by feedback that meets the conditions explained above.

- **A reflective process** (Panadero et al., 2018). In other words, encouraging students to be aware of their own learning process. This takes the form of activities that lead students to think about what they have learned by doing a given activity, what competencies they have acquired, etc. To promote and facilitate this reflection, students must be given high-quality feedback (as explained above) that can be applied to future activities.
- **Digital:** the assessment is tech-based, with no need to travel. Its key characteristics are its ubiquity and flexibility. This means that the technology should enable the

assessment processes to be conducted anywhere, always in accordance with the conditions specified by the UOC.

- With **support from Artificial Intelligence (AI)**: AI opens the door to new assessment scenarios and greater personalization of questions and instructions for activities, while also making it necessary to take its availability into account when designing assessment activities. In addition, it must be ensured that students are able to make critical and effective use of Artificial Intelligence tools in their academic and professional work.
- **Certification**: teaching staff must have evidence of students' learning so that they can certify that learning objectives have been achieved and competencies acquired. For assessment to be certifying, it must also integrate measures to guarantee each student's identity and the authorship of the activities. This involves:
 - Establishing **measures to certify students' identity** both during the continuous assessment process and during final assessment tests. To ensure the fulfilment of this condition, measures must be incorporated, which can be based on facial recognition, synchrony or the design of oral assessment tests.
 - Putting in place the **necessary measures to guarantee students' authorship**, both during continuous assessment and in the final assessment. To ensure the fulfilment of this condition, it is recommended that the questions and instructions for the activities and/or tests given to students be rethought, encouraging a more reflective, personalized and applied assessment that allows the use of different resources to carry out the tasks set. The widespread use of plagiarism identification tools is also necessary.
- **Authentic and competency-based** (Ajjawi et al., 2023; Nieminen et al., 2023): in the sense that assessments must be based on activities that are as real as possible so that students can put into practice the competencies they will later have to use in the world of work. Authentic assessment moves away from the approach of activities based on the repetition of exercises, activities based solely on questions and answers, and activities that require students to read a text and take part in a discussion based on it, etc.
- **Inclusive and ethical**: where the diversity of students is and feels respected (in accordance with the principles of a universal design of learning and the gender perspective). All matters relating to data protection and students' liability for plagiarizing or committing fraud in assessments must also be taken into account.

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