

# EVALUATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES IN EDUCATION

*You can find out more about learning outcomes in other resources on the Learning and Teaching Centre website, and in the Evaluation Resource: Developing.*

Assessment resources and processes signify in non-trivial ways what an institution delivers—variations in assessment imply variations in education and graduates. Several such schemes have been launched in Australia, including a Quality Verification System and a Learning and Teaching Standards Project, both of which involve peer review and moderation across disciplines Marshall et al. Broadly, Tuning involves supporting collaboration among academics with the aim of generating convergence and common understanding of generic and discipline-specific learning outcomes. Like the qualification frameworks, however, the work usually stops short of advancing assessment resources, and tends to focus instead on advancing case studies or best practice guidelines. Two subsequent sections help channel future energy. The evaluator summarizes the points of consensus for the entire class and also clarifies points of disagreement. The one minute manager. Of course this is an accentuated and overly negative picture, and innovative and excellent practice abounds, but elements of such practice remain regrettably rife across all fields, including those which are subject to professional accreditation. More specifically, good learning outcomes: Are very specific, and use active language— and verbs in particular— that make expectations clear. Assessment projects have been initiated Coates and Richardson ; Edwards et al. This work travels deeper than qualification- or discipline-level specifications, for it involves the collation and sharing of evidence on student performance, often in ways that engage faculty in useful assurance and development activities. The instructor then has a listing of what students consider to be the key concepts discussed in that class period, which can be used Angelo and Cross, Changing this dynamic typically involves developing and managing more collaborative forms of academic practice. Second, there are strategic institutional rationales for finding innovative ways to assess student learning. Focus on the application and integration of acquired knowledge and skills: good learning outcomes reflect and indicate the ways in which the described knowledge and skills may be used by the learner now and in the future. Collecting this kind of information from a number of teaching assistants from different courses, from sections within a course, and over an extended period of time can also enable departments to determine which concepts need to be reinforced in several courses or which misconceptions persist as students advance through the curriculum. The assessment of student learning outcomes provides information that puts student learning at the forefront of academic planning processes. Through one lens, current assessment arrangements can be seen as standing in the path of broader productivity improvements in higher education. With a focus on individual or organisational rather than resource development, such training can tend to fall short of creating clearer articulation of outcome or task specifications, though it may result in diverse forms of applied work, and possibly even instil a milieu for benchmarking and other shared interpretative activities. Standardised assessments are also promulgated via commercial textbooks Pearson It can ask students to demonstrate understanding or skills acquisition through writing, the creation of a product or presentation, or the ability to successfully accomplish some task. Science and Quantitative Reasoning Goal: University of Maryland undergraduates should understand and be able to apply basic scientific and mathematical reasoning to their research efforts and critical analyses. Through projects such as OECD AHELO Coates and Richardson governments signalled that conventional assessment approaches were not delivering required or sufficient information on what students know and can do. Evaluate and justify arguments? Are focused on the learner: rather than explaining what the instructor will do in the course, good learning outcomes describe knowledge or skills that the student will employ, and help the learner understand why that knowledge and those skills are useful and valuable to their personal, professional, and academic future. As picked up in the conclusion to this chapter, the lack of a professional assessment community is an obvious impediment to change. Are realistic, not aspirational: all passing students should be able to demonstrate the knowledge or skill described by the learning outcome at the conclusion of the course. Inherent security and confidentiality constraints play an obvious role in constraining assessment reform. The evaluator then provides an oral or written summary for the instructor Clark and Redmond, This can create an ownership or agency problem, rendering change problematic. It is helpful to take evaluative stock of the field

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to showcase recent work and ground the analyses that follow. It is possible that this reflects the pinnacle of assessment, but given the lack of reflective technological advance over an extended period, this seems unlikely. Such work is impressive as it tends to involve the most extensive forms of outcome specification, task production, assessment administration, analysis and reporting, and at the same time develop faculty capacity. In essence, what is the assessment supply and value chain, and how can it be improved? Inasmuch as academic autonomy, in its various encapsulations, provides faculty with a sense of private ownership over assessment it can be a significant impediment to change. The goals for these elements are not exhaustive, and not every student will necessarily master each goal. Through conversations with and direct observation of students in the course, teaching assistants can tell an instructor what aspects of the course readings, assignments, and presentations are causing problems for students. This technique allows teachers to see what students consider to be the main points presented and whether there is misinformation or confusion about various topics. Articulate those learning goals to your students. Anyone working in or around higher education recognises that these reform pressures play out in varying ways at different moments, that assessment is only part of a very much larger story, and that the above analysis is inevitably broad and incomplete. This informs students of the standards by which they will be assessed, and ensures that student and instructor goals in the course are aligned.