



Principle 3: Ensure that assessment is integrated with learning activities

What the principle means

Assessment activities should not just be stuck on to the end of the learning programme but ideally should be integrated throughout it. Where assessment is constructively aligned with learning outcomes and programme design and delivery (Biggs and Tang, 2011) many would argue that it has higher outcomes in terms of student engagement and achievement.



Questions to consider with your course team and students

- ✓ Do your assignments constructively align with the learning outcomes?
- ✓ Can we see the verbs of the learning outcomes represented in the activities you are asking students to undertake? (see [*Writing better assignments in the Post-Covid19 era: approaches to good task design*](#))
- ✓ Do your assignments assess not just what students know and can do, but also how they have developed and matured personally and professionally throughout the course?
- ✓ Have you looked at how your colleagues in other HEIs assess your kinds of programmes and/or published examples of interesting/authentic assignments to see if there are good ideas you can emulate?

Setting goals for assessment and feedback enhancement

Having reviewed and discussed Principle 3, as a team can you identify areas that you know to be priorities for enhancing your programme assessment and feedback strategy in the coming three years? All areas are important, but selecting too many can make genuine actionable proposals unachievable which is demoralising. Concentrate on what is feasible.

Once you have agreed on the priorities, you may wish to use the table overleaf to record your plans for enhancement under Principle 3.



Principle 3 worksheet - Ensure that assessment is integrated with learning activities

Principle focus	Specific actions you will take:	Responsible leader:	Help/resources needed to make this happen:	Milestones (timescale for implementation):	Performance indicators:
e.g. Authentic Assessment	e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn more about authentic assessment. Identify examples of authentic assessment within the programme. Identify models of good practice re authentic assessment. Consider where authentic assessment might be included in the programme. 	e.g. Dr Jolanta O'Neill	e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional learning on authentic assessment – resources, workshops, sharing good practice across the team, conversations with students, employers etc. Module outlines and programme documentation Support from CTL colleagues Time to work as a programme team Administrative support 	e.g. One academic year	e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater knowledge of authentic assessment across the team, including models of good practice. Document noting examples of authentic assessment. Records of discussions across team.



About this resource

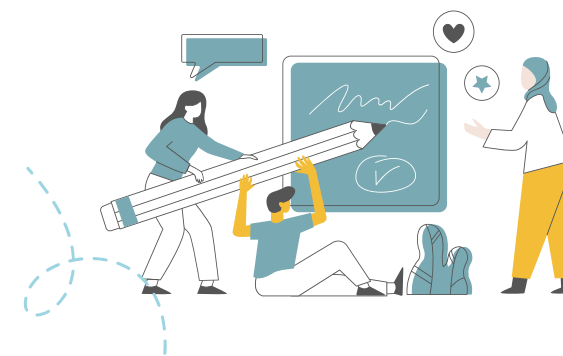
This resource is drawn from the *Principles-based Toolkit for Effective Assessment Design* (Brown and Sambell). This resource focuses on 'Principle 3 – Ensure that assessment is integrated with learning activities'. The resource can be used by teams who wish to review how this principle is enacted in their work, and who wish to plan to enhance their practice regarding this principle. The resource can be used as a stand-alone thinking and planning tool for teams, as well as being considered in the context of the toolkit as a whole.

As part of the Maynooth University 'Assess for Success' project, Professor Sally Brown and Professor Kay Sambell designed a toolkit for effective assessment design. This toolkit has been designed to provide course teams at Maynooth University with guidance on periodical review of their assessment and feedback practices, in support of student success. The toolkit involves twelve principles which were proposed by Brown and Sambell, and shaped and modified by the Maynooth University '[Assess for Success](#)' Advisory Group. The toolkit is available at in the Maynooth University [Assess for Success Hub](#).

The principles and the toolkit taken as a whole set a substantial agenda for action, but Brown and Sambell stress that the toolkit can primarily help local teams to set short- and longer-term prioritised targets to enhance assessment by focusing on activities that would help to ensure that assessment tasks, assignments and feedback could fully contribute to student engagement and positive outcomes.

References:

Biggs, J. and Tang, C. (2011) *Teaching for quality learning at university, 4th edition*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, McGraw-Hill Education.



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Brown, S. and Sambell, K (2022) *A principles-based toolkit for effective assessment design. 'Principle 3 - Ensure that assessment is integrated with learning activities' worksheet*, Maynooth: Maynooth University.



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