

# PLANNING & DESIGNING ASSESSMENT

Assessment is not simply a process of checking what learners have learnt but rather a powerful means of directing teaching and improving learning in the classroom. In planning a learning topic or unit, the teacher needs to integrate their assessment strategy with their teaching or lesson plan to maximise the development of understanding in their learners. While informal assessment is usually ongoing, formal assessments should also be conducted before the learning activity, during the learning activity and after the learning activity. Each planned assessment should have a clear purpose.

## PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

### 1. Baseline Assessment

Baseline assessment establishes what knowledge and understanding the learner already has and identifies the starting point of new learning for each learner.

It is always timed as a Pre-Learning assessment and the data gathered is used by the teacher to design and plan their instruction for their particular group of learners. The results of a baseline assessment may or may not be shared with the learners and are **never** used summatively in a term or year mark. These results are primarily for the teacher and are used before they plan their lessons to direct their teaching practice. Well-designed baseline assessments can create excitement and anticipation in the learners for what lies ahead and can build an environment that stimulates learner interest and motivation.

### 2. Formative – Diagnostic Assessment

Formative assessment is assessment that is embedded in the learning process. The teacher uses the assessment **as** a learning activity and as a result of completing the assessment, the learners gain knowledge and understanding.

Diagnostic assessment is a specific kind of formative assessment. A diagnostic assessment “diagnoses” particular misconceptions that learners may have formed either from their prior learning experiences or from the teaching and learning so far. Diagnostic assessment can also identify a learner’s strengths and weaknesses. It is usually timed as a Mid-Learning assessment and the data gathered is shared with the learner to provide valuable feedback on their present knowledge and understanding and learning progress. Diagnostic assessment can play an important role in developing meta-cognition – helping learners understand how they learn and what they need to learn more effectively. This engages learners in their own learning – they become more active participants and take more responsibility for their own learning.

The results of a formative assessment should not be used summatively unless it may be a repeated assessment specifically for summative purpose.

### **3. Formative – Developmental Assessment**

Formative assessment is assessment that is embedded in the learning process. The teacher uses the assessment **as** a learning activity and as a result of completing the assessment, the learners gain knowledge and understanding.

Developmental assessment is a specific kind of formative assessment. A developmental assessment extends a learner along a learning path. The learner simply by participating in and completing the assessment, gains knowledge and understanding and makes progress in learning. It is almost always used as a Mid-Learning assessment and the data gathered is shared with the learner to provide valuable feedback on their advances in learning. Developmental assessment can play an important role in improving a learner's self-efficacy (their belief in themselves and in their ability to succeed). This can result in improved motivation. Motivation can be defined as the extent to which a learner is involved in trying to learn. A motivated learner is an active participant in their own learning process and takes responsibility for improving their learning.

The results of a formative assessment should not be used summatively unless it may be a repeated assessment specifically for summative purpose.

### **4. Formative – Consolidative Assessment**

Formative assessment is assessment that is embedded in the learning process. The teacher uses the assessment **as** a learning activity and as a result of completing the assessment, the learners gain knowledge and understanding.

Consolidative assessment is a specific kind of formative assessment. A consolidative assessment has the directed purpose of consolidating a learner's knowledge and understanding. It provides an opportunity, through the assessment, to merge the learner's new learning with their prior learning and to bring together the strands of new learning to create a solid and cohesive understanding. It is almost always used as a Mid-Learning assessment and the data gathered is shared with the learner to provide valuable feedback to reinforce the security, strength and depth of their learning. Consolidative assessment can play a powerful role in building self-confidence in learners and attributing value to what they have learnt.

The results of a formative assessment should not be used summatively unless it may be a repeated assessment specifically for summative purpose.

## 5. Summative Assessment

Summative is assessment **of** learning. It establishes what has been learnt by each learner and the extent of this learning.

It is always conducted at the end of a learning topic or programme but it should be constructed right at the start when the teacher designs and plans the learning activities. It should be based on the planned learning targets but it may still be modified through the learning process as the teacher uses the formative assessment results to redirect their teaching. Summative assessments certify the learning achieved and the results are used to produce term marks and year marks for grade promotion, placement in classes, choice of subjects and the conferring of honours and awards.