

Insight Care Training



Lesson 2



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Types of Assessment

Assessment can be split into different types. These are Initial, Formative and Summative.

Initial Assessment

Initial assessment is crucial. It provides the information an assessor can use to decide a learner's starting point. It is the benchmark from which learner progress and achievement can be measured.

The initial assessment can take the form of questions as part of icebreaker activities or open group discussions of previous knowledge. Alternatively, individually completed tests or paperwork at the start of a course or qualification, can be undertaken as a form of initial assessment.

Initial assessment may start during enrolment to establish a learner's interests and experiences. It may also be used as part of a "getting to know you" activity, during induction.

Using a range of initial assessment activities will enable an assessor to capture a learner's starting point and current level of knowledge.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing. Its purpose is to provide feedback on how learners are performing, how well they are learning and what they are achieving. Formative assessment is useful as it can identify learner achievements and highlight areas for further improvement. It is a useful tool for assessors, as it identifies areas a learner needs to improve on, going forward.

Summative Assessment

Summative Assessment is often undertaken as the final assessment of a course or qualification. It may take the form of a final exam or a submitted portfolio. Summative assessment is what learners tend to focus on. It is usually undertaken at the end of a qualification or unit.

Methods of Assessment

Within each *type* of assessment (Initial, Formative, Summative) there are different *methods* of assessment.

Methods of assessment include;

- Observations
- Professional Discussion
- Witness Testimony
- Work product
- Learner Statement
- Case Study
- Recognised Prior Learning
- Tests
- Questioning (written or verbal)
- Assignment.

Observations take place when an assessor observes a learner undertaking an activity, such as observing a learner in their workplace. When undertaking an observation of a learner, there are strengths and limitations that an assessor must consider. The strength of using observations as an assessment method is that an assessor can observe a learner undertaking an activity that they do regularly; this means an assessor gets to observe a learner in a real-life situation. An assessor can record what they observe and relate it directly to the assessment criteria.

A limitation of an observation is that a learner may be nervous when being observed. This can be off-putting and may not reflect how a learner usually performs in a situation. Using observation as an assessment method can meet the needs of an individual learner. Observations can be undertaken in a learner's workplace, which means learners are not required to leave work.

Professional Discussions take place between a learner and assessor. An assessor can record a professional discussion either on a form or using a tape recorder/smartphone. A strength of this form of assessment is that it is a structured interview that can explore the key aspects of a learner's understanding of a particular area, practice or procedure.

A limitation of using Professional Discussion is that this form of assessment may not be suitable for all learners, if they are in a work environment that does not lend itself to a discussion, or a learner prefers to write their evidence, rather than speak verbally.

Witness Testimony can be obtained from a learner's colleagues or line manager and used as evidence, often in the place of an observation from an assessor. The Strength of using this form of method is that an assessor can obtain information regarding a learner's performance from another person, especially if a learner works in a restricted area that would make it difficult for an assessor to observe. A limitation of this, however, is that the witness may miss elements of the assessment criteria during their



testimony, that perhaps an assessor may have identified, had they been there.

Work products are any work or evidence that is produced from actual work activities undertaken by a learner, such as a letter, report, email etc. A strength of this method of assessment is that it demonstrates a learner's competency by producing something from a real work situation.

A limitation of using a work product is that it may be confidential, which can impact whether or not it can be used as evidence for a learner's qualification.

A Learner Statement is a document a learner completes which explains how they believe they have met a specific assessment criteria. A strength of using this assessment method is that a learner can identify how they have achieved an assessment criteria or learning outcome. They can include a detailed explanation.

A limitation of using this assessment method can be that a learner does not include enough detail in their statement. A Learner Statement is also not a valid assessment method to confirm a learner's competency or skill.

Case Studies can be based on an actual event a learner may have been involved with. A learner may be able to explain how they met specific assessment criteria by putting it into the context of a real-life situation they have come across. A case study may also use a hypothetical example to encourage a learner to explain how they would deal with a particular situation. A strength of using a case study is that learners can apply their knowledge in a particular context. A limitation of using case studies may be that the outcome a learner discussed does not meet the assessment criteria.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is when an assessor reviews assessment evidence a learner has already completed. A strength of using this assessment method is that learners may have already achieved learning outcomes or assessment criteria of a qualification, in their job role or when undertaking another qualification, before starting their current qualification. A limitation of this is that it can be time-consuming for an assessor to assess the evidence. An assessor must ensure the learner's evidence is both authentic and current.

Tests are undertaken by learners, generally in a formal situation. The strengths of undertaking a test include the ability to test a large number of learners at one time. Some tests can also be undertaken remotely, using technology. A limitation of using tests as an assessment method can be that some learners do not perform well under test conditions.

Questioning can be direct, indirect questions, open or closed. A strength of using questioning, either verbal or written is that a learner can record their answer/ evidence straight away. A limitation of using questioning is that an assessor must ensure their questions are clear and easy for a learner to understand, to ensure they can respond.

Assignments are often used for a learner to show their knowledge and understanding. A strength of using an assignment is that the evidence can cover several assessment criteria or learning outcomes in one go.

Planning Assessment

There are a range of factors to consider when planning assessment activities with learners. These include identifying what assessment criteria or learning outcomes are to be assessed, the assessment method to be used, when and where the assessment is to take place and any resources required to undertake the assessment.

When planning assessment activities, an assessor should ensure that they are making the best use of time, that they can cover as many units and assessment criteria as possible (holistic assessment), that they get the most evidence out of each session with their learner and that they can minimise any disruptions to the learner's work environment.

Holistic Assessment

Holistic assessment occurs when a learner achieves several assessment criteria or learning outcomes (from the same or different units) at the same time, during one assessment activity. The benefit of using holistic assessment is that it can save time for both the assessor and the learner.

When planning assessment activities, it is important that an assessor:

- Ensures a learner is ready for assessment activities to take place. Assessing too early can be de-motivating for a learner if

they are unable to meet assessment criteria due to a lack of knowledge or understanding.

- Ensures assessment activities take place at a suitable time, both for the learner and the learner's employer (if applicable).
- Liaises with all parties involved in the assessment process, such as a learner's employer.

An assessment plan details:

- ›Where and when the assessment is to take place
- ›The activity being assessed
- ›The units, learning outcomes and assessment criteria to be covered
- ›The assessment method or methods to be used
- ›Any resources required to undertake the assessment

Involving learners and others in the assessment process

It is important to involve other people such as an employer, colleagues, managers or peers in the assessment process. Learners may need to take time away from their workplace and colleagues may be required to act as an expert witness or support them in the assessment process.

Types of information that should be made available to learners and others involved in the assessment process include:

- The criteria assessed against
- When the assessment is due to be undertaken
- When feedback from assessments is to be given



Peer and Self-Assessment

Peer assessment is used when learners assess one another on their knowledge, skills or performance. Self-assessment is undertaken by a learner on their performance. A learner will reflect and assess their performance or skills.

There are several benefits to using peer and self-assessment. They both promote learner involvement in the assessment process.

Self-assessment and peer assessment develop analytical skills, as a learner has to be able to analyse what they did well at and what they could improve upon. Self-assessment can also improve learning. To self or peer-assess, a learner must have an understanding of exactly what is being assessed.

Peer assessment also develops the skills of giving constructive feedback, as a learner may have to suggest areas for a peer to improve upon.





Insight Care Training, 89 Merridale rd, W-
ton Wv3 9SE

info@insightcaretraining.co.uk
www.insightcaretraining.co.uk

01902 420 200