

# When you think of ASSESSMENT, what is the first thing you think of?

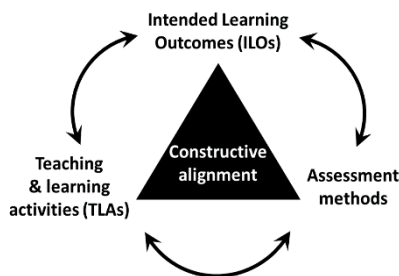
# A+

As educators, we may have certain assumptions about assessment. Think about it! Examples could be that:



- Standardised tests & grades (such as multiple-choice tests) are specific, precise and objective.
- Assessment helps to discriminate between students since not every student in a course should pass with 9/10.
- The quality of student learning is reflected directly in the quality of their assessments.

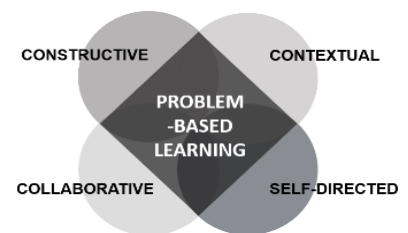
However, from our own daily practice and research, we also know that every assessment format has flaws in terms of reliability and validity, and we know that grades alone are a poor form of feedback. We also want our graduates to start their careers as competent novice professionals, able to continuously develop, use feedback and set goals. For that, we know that not everything that we (the university, our students or society) value highly, such as a professional attitudes, collaborative and communication skills and more, can be measured merely with grades and modular courses alone. **So we need to use our assessments to do much more!**



And assessment *can* be much more! Well-designed assessment can **stimulate learning** as well as providing us, as teaching staff, with information about the effectiveness of education in order to make **improvements**. In order to achieve this, we cannot rely merely on grades (or pass/fail decisions) from summative examinations at the end of each course as the leading form of feedback. Rather, assessment should provide opportunities for students to reflect on and learn from their assessments by using timely and specific feedback to steer their own learning process (known as **assessment as learning**).

This also only works if assessment is well aligned with the **Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)** employed and when assessment relates directly to the **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)** of the full, overarching degree programme. Think of assessment design more as being longitudinal, with diverse assessment formats, opportunities to learn and remediate and less as modular components with single pass-fail decisions.

At Maastricht University (UM), we pride ourselves on inclusive, small-group, student-centred Problem-Based Education. This is built upon the principles of **Constructive, Collaborative, Contextual & Self-Directed (CCCS) learning**. That's why our **Vision on Assessment** focuses on creating more meaningful assessment that reflects these principles.



**Assessment at UM should therefore...**



This means: **Designing assessment** as part of overall course and curriculum development; **Creating assessment moments** that provide information (feedback from various sources) to students and teachers to improve long-term (longitudinal) learning; **Using authentic assessment instruments** that align to ILOs and final qualifications and promote the development of competences that students require to successfully complete their studies and transition into the world of work. To help achieve this, UM offers a range of activities and support.