

Assessment methods suitable for online distance programmes

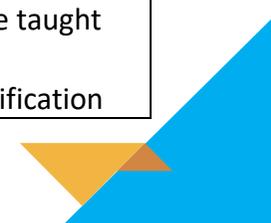
(where assessment is included within the weeks of delivery) *

Assessment method	Practice	Applications
Portfolio of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A collection of pieces of short work – short essays, reports, literature reviews, reflective statements, theoretical application tasks, short exam practice. ● Students would be set these tasks throughout the duration of the course (perhaps one per week, or one per fortnight), or could be set the whole portfolio of tasks at the outset and make their own choices about which order to carry out tasks. ● These could be collected in an e-portfolio or in a multiple assignment submission. ● Various grading options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every piece of work - A selection chosen by the student (two best pieces, two preferred pieces) - A sample selection chosen by the lecturer. ● Early pieces could be used as formative assessment, particularly if there is a repeat of the format (e.g. a short formative essay, followed by a short summative essay). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence of knowledge development. ● Evidence of skills development ● Evidence of professional development ● <i>Analyse, explain, identify, illustrate, demonstrate*</i> <p><i>*Example learning objective verbs</i></p>
Reflective portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A collection of artefacts, combined with a reflective statement. ● ‘Artefacts’ can be defined by the discipline being studied. For instance, these may be artefacts of evidence of professional practice; evidence of research; real-world observations (news items, images or descriptions of life events; collections of company policies/practices/challenges, etc.); or artefacts relating to a particular incident, event, context or case study (other types of artefact are feasible). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate of self-awareness and self-analysis ● Recognition and development of personal and professional development skills ● <i>Analyse, justify, critique, explain, demonstrate</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The students' reflection, through application of theoretical understanding developed in studying the module, leads to the writing of a reflective statement that summarises their statements. ● The reflective statement is graded at the end of the module – not the artefacts – though the statement must cross-reference the artefacts. 	
Quiz/Exam (auto- marking/feedback)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Closed question quizzes ● Short answer quizzes ● A series of quizzes taken across the duration of a module. ● Suitable for outcomes where knowledge is to be developed. ● May be used in combination with other assessment, e.g. a series of quizzes to test knowledge attainment combined with a short essay in which the knowledge is applied through application or critical evaluation. ● Has the advantage of being capable of grading by computer, and grades can be made immediately available to the student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstration of knowledge gained ● <i>Understand, identify, recall, define</i>
Quiz/Exam (manual marking/feedback)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open question quizzes ● Essay questions ● Multi-stage problem sets (marks given for partially correct answers) ● Exam-style questions posted at regular intervals throughout the course. ● Short answers may be graded throughout the running of the course so that students have a sense of their own level of achievement (and may have the motivation to apply themselves more fully to acquire a higher grade). ● Early questions may be used as a formative assessment. ● Early questions may be put forward for peer evaluation. ● Another possibility is that the full quiz is made available at the start of the unit and students are given x number of attempts to complete and submit it before the end of the module, allow them to critically review their own early work as their understanding develops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstration of knowledge gained ● Application of theory ● <i>Understand, describe, analyse, develop</i>
Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students answer questions related to course content ● Answers are aggregated and response data can either be shared with students or visible only to faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gathering student opinions ● Checking student experience related to a given topic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May be informal (i.e. to stimulate and track student engagement and comprehension) or formal (e.g. to allow students to commit to a given topic, project or group) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Identify, recognise, define, express</i>
Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Closed questions with “branching” (i.e. learning path depends on students’ answers to questions, used for practice). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interactive Case Study ● Simulated dialogue or decision-making exercise
Strategic plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developed accumulatively across the duration of the module. ● To solve an issue/situation; requires analysis of information, interviews with stakeholders, application of lessons, readings, etc.; could be individual or group work). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investigate/Evaluate an issue/situation. ● <i>Evaluate, investigate, assess, justify, recommend</i>
Reflective journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The students are provided with a journal within the learning management system. ● The lecturer sets reflective tasks throughout the module. ● They are graded on their accumulative diary. ● The grading rubric and effective reflective practice must be introduced early in the module. ● Alternately, the reflective journal may be an entirely formative element of the unit in which the students are set reflective tasks that help them move towards an understanding that enables them to better complete the chosen final summative task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are applying a Kolbian reflective cycle on their own experience and practice. ● Having students developing their own understanding and application of theories as applied to their personal experience and practice. ● <i>Evaluate, appraise, relate, explain</i>
Reflective statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An alternate way to assess the work of a journal is for students to write a reflective statement that draws on the content developed in their journal. ● A structure or template for the expected reflective statement is helpful in enabling the students to recognise what this piece of writing should look like. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analysis of own reflective practice. ● Application of theories as applied to the student’s own experience and practice. ● <i>Evaluate, appraise, relate, explain</i>
Practice journal / Case study journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students continuously contributed to a journal in which they record their ongoing professional practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluation of professional practice

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Journal entries are structured through questions or tasks set by the lecturer. ● Typically, the student will apply theory or models introduced in the module to their own professional practice. ● The accumulative work in the journal may be graded at the end of the module. ● Alternatively, a final reflective statement drawing together the learning made in the completion of the journal may be used as the final submission (this would allow for the lecturer to provide formative feedback on the work in the journal throughout the running of the module). ● Students who are not currently practising professionals in the field of study may be provided with a case study or company research task in order to follow a similar line of development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identification of student's own professional practice ● Contextualisation of professional practice in theoretical frameworks ● <i>Analyse, apply, discover, evaluate</i>
Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A case study is introduced at the beginning of the module. ● As the module progresses, the students are set tasks to evaluate the case in relation to introduced theories, or in comparison to other worked examples. ● Students may be graded accumulatively on the various aspects of the case study; ● Or graded on a final task that brings together their understanding drawn from an analysis of the case study. ● Early case study tasks may be used as a formative assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Application of theory and theoretical frameworks to practical examples. ● <i>Evaluate, analyse, apply, illustrate</i>
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whole class or small group discussion within an online forum. ● Tasks set by the lecturer in order to ● Ideal for formative work in which the students are given the opportunity to engage with the learning content and constructively develop their own understanding and application of it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discursive and collaborative engagement with the taught content. ● Questioning and clarification ● <i>Discuss, compare, conclude, relate</i>
Practice discussion / Case study discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group based discussion forum activity in which the students put forward examples of practice (their own, from research, or from a provided case study). ● Students asked to discuss, argue, evaluate, analyse or investigate a particular case study, with multiple submissions a requirement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discursive and collaborative engagement with the taught content. ● Questioning and clarification



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Design of the task is crucial in enabling discussion, rather than reporting. ● Students may be asked to comment on, provide feedback on, or grade their peers' contribution to the discussion. In this case, the lecturer's feedback is in response to the peer comments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Discuss, evaluate, analyse, apply</i>
Peer review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A formative version of assessment tasks is put forward early in the module delivery. ● This early form is put forward into an appropriate learning tool (forum or peer assessment tool) for other students to apply a grade to. ● This requires a clear feedback rubric for students to apply to their peers work. ● If the peer evaluation rubric is modelled closely on the rubric used for final summative assessment, then they have the advantage of developing a practical understanding of how their grading criteria are applied. ● Students are encouraged to respond to the feedback, either accepting or evaluating why they do not accept the grade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comparative analysis of a given topic, theory or area of practice. ● Students evaluate what equates to a good piece of work. ● Engagement with the marking rubrics. ● <i>Compare, evaluate, judge, apply</i>
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are creating, recording and submitting video-based presentations of their work. ● The development of the presentations is seeded throughout the module. ● Presentations may be based on other work carried out during the module. For instance, if students have been evaluating a case study during the module, they may present on their findings as their final summative submission. ● Presentation based assessment allows for the grading against objectives relating to skills development such as communicating complex ideas in effective ways. ● A variety of presentation submission methods are available within the LMS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstration of knowledge gained ● Demonstration of experience or practice ● Application of theory ● Development of personal and interpersonal skills ● <i>Demonstrate, illustrate, evaluate, design</i>
Group presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topics and groups are established in week 1. ● Group members are assigned separate roles and/or tasks in the development and delivery of the presentation. ● Presentations may be made via web conferencing software. ● Presentations may also be put forward in segments – each posted by a separate group member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstration of knowledge gained ● Application of theory ● Development of collaborative, communicative and negotiation skills

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group members are invited to grade each other on group contribution levels prior to the lecturer's grade being provided on the individual students' work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Demonstrate, illustrate, evaluate, design</i>
Accumulative report writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A report writing task is established at the beginning of the module, along with the required report structure. ● The actual writing of the report is split up across the weeks of the module (perhaps at fortnightly intervals). ● Each section of the report can be marked in isolation, and at each point of delivery, allowing an accumulative grade. ● Early sections may or may not be treated as formative assessment, e.g. the grade for the module may sit in only the Discussion and Recommendations sections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate understanding an application of theory ● Demonstrate research practice ● Enable students progressive development of report writing skills ● <i>Analyse, interpret, summarise, relate</i>
Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An essay question is put forward on the first day of the module. ● In an ideal provision, multiple essay questions are provided so that students can support peers without risk of collusion. ● Students encouraged to formulate their initial essay plans/drafts within the first weeks of the module, with an understanding these will be revised. Group work may be incorporated in creating an essay outline. ● Students have an opportunity to submit an essay <u>section</u> for feedback (this could as a formative assessment at a midpoint in the unit). Also encouraged to submit early through plagiarism detection software in early drafts to assist in correct referencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate understanding an application of theory ● Demonstrate understanding of the context and literature around the area of study ● <i>Argue, evaluate, justify, analyse</i>

*Please note that this is an indicative, and not exhaustive, list. Please discuss with your HEPSA colleagues if you would like to investigate further assessment methods.



Sample Activity & Assessment Distribution (8-week delivery cycle)

While the table above merely maps the current assessment types to analogous assessments that HEP SA typically employs in 8-week delivery cycles, the figure below provides a graphical depiction of a sample 8 week module delivery cycle and a typical distribution between student time devoted to formative assessment (discussions and low-stakes practice activities designed to reinforce key concepts), summative assessment (in which students demonstrate their mastery of the subject(s) as learned throughout the module and programme), and time devoted to receiving instruction and engaging with their peer community of enquiry:

The figure graphically depicts several aspects of HEP SA's methodology. Our goal is to balance authentic assessment and learning activity with instruction and community engagement. A typical module would front-load formative activities to give students opportunities to practice and receive feedback early and often, but tapering formative assessment in later weeks in favour of summative assessment. Summative assessment deliverables, however, would be introduced early, as early as Week 1, and interspersed throughout the entire module, so that students can begin working toward the goal of final cumulative assessments (projects, essays, etc.) from day 1. Finally, students spend more time receiving instruction and building community upfront, in the early weeks of the module, with a greater focus on synthesising material and preparing for their final assessment as the module wears on.

While each of the elements of the chart above represents decisions made collaboratively between the academics and instructional designers who are creating the module (decisions which vary depending on the subject matter and style of the academic(s) involved), we have found that a model like this can successfully deliver the requisite instructional content and allow for rigorous assessment within a self-contained 8-week delivery cycle.

