

Core Assessment

Core Assessments are a vehicle to assess key skills, knowledge and competencies. They differ from traditional summative assessment in that students are allowed to take multiple attempts within the module to achieve a pass threshold or improve their score. They are recorded as pass/fail but must be passed as they are summative and credit bearing. The marks that students achieve are not utilised in the calculations for award classification, this is based on the other summative assessments they take (these are referred to as “Applied Core”). Core Assessments allow us to test students abilities and for them to develop through repetition if required. Core assessments can also help to automate feedback and reduce student/staff workload and bunching of assessment. Although many courses use Core Assessments already, others have not embedded this method of assessment within their strategies.

The nature of Core Assessment is assessment as learning, this is:

- Pre-cursor to the applied core assessment.
- To establish learning needs.
- To build in timely feed-forward feedback opportunities.
- To identify students at risk.
- Resit opportunity within the module, to support first-time-pass practices.

Within the new curriculum for undergraduate courses (September 2023) Core Assessments have been defined as the only option for summative, mid module assessment at level 4.

Basics (from Regulations)

ASSESSMENT Credit / Definition	Permitted credit components	Pass mark	Weighting	Reassessment
CORE COMPONENT Core competencies/ skills	5 or 10	Pass threshold (set by Module leader but could be between 40% and 100%)	P/F only	Defined number of attempts (minimum of two) to meet pass threshold or improve outcome up to determined closing date within the semester in which the module is being delivered. The overall result is P/F for module mark purposes. Should the pass threshold not be met by the determined closing date, the student may resit the component at the next available opportunity

Summary

- Core Assessment assess key skills, knowledge and competencies
- Core Assessment has to be defined in the Module Descriptor & Course Specification
- Students have at least 2 attempts (if required) to pass
- Students must achieve a PASS mark to successfully pass the module.

Examples where Core Assessment may best be implemented include:

- Assessing key principles, knowledge concepts, skills or competencies
- Assessments where students can have multiple attempts
- To implement a series of short assessments over a module

Potential methods of implementation:

- Completion of practical tasks, e.g. OSCEs in Health Courses.
- Multiple choice questions – tests, can be TCAs.
- Short answer quizzes – can be TCAs.
- Quizzes, games... can be in class or online. Can be tests under exam conditions in class.
- Portfolio assessment using tools, such as Padlet, OneNote (OneDrive), WordPress, Adobe SPARK pages, etc.
- Interactive orals (vivas), can be recorded using various tools, Zoom, MS Teams, Screencast-O-Matic, etc.
- Can be CU Ethics applications (as these go through due process by the Ethics Committee)
- Short reflective reports (500 words max) for Level 4 students (as they begin to understand how to reflect at the start of their learning journey)
- Academic poster (because marking 'design' is too subjective for Applied)
- CV – first CV for level 4 or 5 students

Example Core Assessment tasks:

- A key practical task - Competency and skills assessment.
- Testing core subject knowledge, terminology, etc. as learning unfolds, e.g. MCQs or short answer tests.
- Portfolio evidence of engagement, participation in activities or tasks, etc.
- Reflective component bringing learning together.
- Interactive orals (vivas), etc.
- Create an annotated bibliography in preparation for Applied Component Assessment. Allows for feed-forward feedback prior to undertaking the graded task.
- Research proposal and (can include an outline prepared for ethical approval) Can be a Mock grant application
- Portfolio of work showing development of planned output.
- Reflection on a (virtual) field trip
- Concept map

Process for implementing Core Assessment

- Decide what you want to assess and which module learning outcomes it will cover
- Decide on the method of assessment you will use
- Decide the pass mark and credits to be associated with the Core Assessment
- Complete details in the module descriptor, including number of attempts
- Include in Course Specification (part B, Assessment Strategy and Assessment Table)