

Planning effective assessment

Assessment expert, Professor Mary Richardson, shares her tips for planning effective student assessment.

Speaker: Professor Mary Richardson of Educational Assessment at IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society

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Planning effective assessment – what do you think about when you are planning the assessment for a module or course?

Usually, we think about the mode of assessment – for example an essay or a test, but this isn't actually the right place to start – to create effective assessment there are three questions to ask yourself:

1. What do I want to assess? [That is, what do I want to know about the students]
2. What is the best way to assess this thing? [What's the best way to allow them to demonstrate the knowledge, or skill etc.]
3. Has this assessment done what I need it to do? [Was it right – if not, what will I do differently in future?]

So look at a module you are currently revising or planning to teach soon – can you answer each of the questions? Your answer to question one needs to be understood by the students because you should be sharing it with them, your answer to question two needs to be justifiable to the students and to you. Your answer to question three is time taken to reflect and revise – all teachers need to do this to keep improving assessment practice.

Assessment isn't what happens at the end of learning, it's a part of effective teaching and learning – you can read more about this in the [UCL Good Practice in Assessment](#) (or the blue book) available free to download on the UCL website.