



E-Assessment

What is e-assessment?

The term 'e-assessment' literally means using technology to assist tutors and students with the assessment process. This can happen in a number of ways, both in and out of the classroom. The online environment also provides a range of new opportunities for tutors to keep track of their students' involvement and understanding of course materials.

As with any other aspect of your teaching, the use of technology should be driven by pedagogical concerns. Any choice of assessment method or content should be appropriate to the learning objectives you set in your course, and it is important that the aims of the assessment and the criteria for grading are made clear to the students. This site will help you to identify ways in which technology can support your assessments.

Advantages of using technology in your assessments include:

- Providing more timely feedback to students, so making assessment an important part of a continual learning process. Feedback can also be enhanced by the addition of automated tools, e.g. for plagiarism detection
- Saving staff time in marking - some forms of assessment can be marked entirely by computer, thus also ensuring consistency and facilitating the production of statistics for reviewing and reporting
- Saving time and money in the long run, as effective assessments can easily be adapted and re-used
- Increasing flexibility in terms of location and timing, allowing students to personalise their learning agenda. This can also be a benefit to staff, particularly in managing courses with a high student to staff ratio.
- Providing more varied stimuli than those available in the traditional paper-based exam. Technology can enable you to use audio, video and simulations within your assessments. This can also help you to cater to a variety of learning styles.

There are a number of tools available to you for use in assessing your students. You can opt for traditional essay style questions, simply submitted online or completed as part of an online test. You can also choose from a variety of methods of objective testing, tools for which are supplied through your institution's VLE. You can also opt to use any of the 'web 2.0' tools in your VLE, including wikis, blogs and discussion boards. For more ideas on how these tools can be used, take a look through some of the case studies provided.

One more thing you must consider when using technology in your assessment. It is important to make sure that you and your students are familiar with the tool(s) being used before the assessment occurs, and that you have the necessary IT skills to use it confidently. Your Learning Technology team can help you organise any training or equipment necessary.