

Evaluating Individual Assessment Instruments

Name of instrument:

I. Descriptive information

Learning focus: *What intended learning outcome(s) is the instrument intended to measure?*

Dimensions: *What aspects of each learning outcome is it intended to measure (e.g., knowledge, attitudes, experiences, behaviors, etc.)?*

Origins: *Who developed it and how?*

Administrators: *Who administers it (company, non-profit, the school itself)?*

Administration context: *Is the instrument embedded within a course, administered centrally, or used in some other way? Are incentives anticipated?*

Sample: *Who can complete it (first-years, seniors, any class, etc.)?*

Item types: *Are items multiple-choice, short-answer, essay, rating scales, performance tasks, or a combination?*

Performance vs. perceptions: *Does the instrument provide direct measures of what students know/can do, or indirect measures based on self-reporting and perceptions?*

Customization: *Can institutions add their own items?*

Technology: *How is it completed (paper, on-line, either)? What platforms are required?*

Completion time: *How long does it take to complete it?*

Testing window: *When and how often can it be administered?*

Cost: *What does it cost per administration?*

Reports: *Who does the scoring? How is it scored? How are results reported (simple frequencies and percentages, indexes, benchmarks)?*

Data files and security: *Are raw data files returned to the institution? Are the data identifiable so a student's results can be linked with other information about that student? To what extent, and how, is data security maintained?*

Comparisons: *Do institutions receive aggregated data from other institutions? Can they request specific comparison groups? Can the instrument be used to track changes in student outcomes over time?*

Additional information:

II. Evaluation criteria

For each of the characteristics listed below, mark the box that indicates your evaluation of the quality of the instrument with respect to that characteristic. If you wish, add comments in the box (or on the reverse) to explain why you evaluated the instrument in this way.

<i>Instrument characteristics</i>	Excellent (2)	Satisfactory (1)	Poor (0)
Mission synergy: The instrument measures outcomes appropriate to the mission of the institution and/or program being assessed			
Conceptual alignment: The definition of the outcome implicit in the instrument fits the definition of the outcome by the institution or program			
Credibility: The instrument answer questions posed by faculty and administrators in ways they are likely to find meaningful and persuasive			
Validity and reliability: The instrument measures what it claims to measure and results are consistent over time when the conditions are consistent			
Manageability: The instrument can be administered with reasonable institutional effort			
Representativeness: Recruitment of participants yields representative data			
Actionability: Faculty can use what is learned from the instrument to improve curriculum and instruction and to strengthen student learning			
Cost-effectiveness: The cost of collecting and analyzing the data is commensurate with the knowledge gained			
Sustainability: There is institutional support (staff, funds, time) to continue this assessment in a reasonable manner.			
Other characteristic(s) (<i>describe</i>):			
Overall quality: Viewed holistically, the instrument supports mission-driven, meaningful, and manageable assessment			

Comparing Multiple Assessment Instruments

I. Summary of descriptive information

	<i>Instrument #1</i>	<i>Instrument #2</i>	<i>Instrument #3</i>
Learning focus			
Dimensions			
Origins			
Administrators			
Administration context			
Sample			
Item types			
Performance vs. perceptions			
Customization			
Technology			
Completion time			
Testing window			

	<i>Instrument #1</i>	<i>Instrument #2</i>	<i>Instrument #3</i>
Cost			
Reports			
Data files/security			
Comparisons			
Additional info			

II. Summary of evaluative information

Complete the table below by entering the score you assigned to each characteristic for each of the assessment instruments you have evaluated using the “Rubric for Evaluating Individual Instruments,” and then summing the results for each column. A characteristic you rated as “Excellent” receives a score of 2; “Satisfactory” a score of 1; and “Poor” a score of 0.

Variation: If your institution places a particularly high value on one or more of the characteristics listed below (e.g., sustainability), you can adjust for that by “weighting” that characteristic. For example, you could double the point value for an “Excellent” or “Satisfactory” rating on that characteristic.

Instruments

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Instrument #1</i>	<i>Instrument #2</i>	<i>Instrument #3</i>
Mission synergy			
Conceptual alignment			
Credibility			
Validity/reliability			

Manageability			
Representativeness			
Actionability			
Cost-effectiveness			
Sustainability			
Other			
Overall quality			

Sum of scores: _____

Comments: