**Assessment Inspiration List**

The following list is meant to offer ideas and inspiration. The list is not exhaustive, and the classification is somewhat arbitrary. The descriptions are sometimes a bit sketchy.   
TIP: For ideas don’t look just only under a particular 'heading', ideas can also be combined or adapted to your situation. And please send in your ideas or examples, so we can add them.   
  
Notes:

1. What to choose is most of all based on aligning the assessment with the intended course learning objectives. Although other factors, like practicality and efficiency, will play a role.
2. The assessment scheme for a course shows how students will demonstrate what they have learned and can consist of different assessment methods with weighs and conditions.
3. Most of the mentioned methods can be used in a summative (for a grade) and formative (to stimulate and guide the learning process) way.
4. Peer- and self-assessment activities or peer-instruction, can combined with a lot of the mentioned assessment methods. Although in general more for formative purposes; for stimulating and guiding the learning process. Providing peer feedback helps the feedback provider also to get a better idea about what is required and it deepens their understanding. To make peer- en self-assessment effective, guidelines, practice and criteria (or a rubric) are needed for the students.

**Overview of all kinds of (academic) assessment strategies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Annotated Bibliography** | A list of citations to literature followed by a brief (usually about 150 words; one paragraph) descriptive and evaluative paragraph. Meant to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. Annotations are descriptive and critical and can be evaluated based on a certain viewpoint or focus (e.g. methodology used). Students develop skills in locating literature, analysing articles, understanding arguments, summarizing and gain knowledge about the topic. Example with guidelines: [Annotated Bibliography Assignment: ENGL1A: College Composition: Section 8377: Nahas L (santarosa.edu)](https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/15109/pages/annotated-bibliography-assignment?module_item_id=249124) or [Home - WGS 100 & 200 Prof. Fisher Annotated Bibliography - LibGuides at Hostos Community College Library (cuny.edu)](https://guides.hostos.cuny.edu/annotatedbibliog) |
| **Bids for research grants (simulated)** | Requires problem analysis and a literature review. Good practice for the future. Result: structured and brief. Can be used in a competitive way (simulation). A committee reviews the bids and chooses and ‘awards’ the best ones. |
| **Review for an article (or more articles)** | Requires critical reading and thinking, evaluation skills, writing skills.  Can be concise (e.g. 1 A4) and supposedly for an academic journal, so that students also learn about examples of reviews and requirements for academic publications. Guidelines can be given. |
| **Add part of a book or article** | E.g. give students a book and let them add a chapter with current developments. Give students an article without the conclusion/discussion part and let them write that part. Requires critical reading, writing skills, applying knowledge they’ve learned or dived into. |
| **Poster + short presentation (pitch)** | Poster and presentation can be both assessed. A “gallery walk” (reviewing and discussing successively by walking past it all) or conference setting can be simulated. Advantage: concise information. Can be for almost every kind of topic.  Development (also) of poster creation and presentation skills. |
| **Fact sheet related to a theme and purpose** | Students search the relevant databases, evaluate material, and present it in a concise, factual, readable way. |
| **Reflective paper – relation with theory** | Can be about experiences. The key is to make them tie experiences to theory or themes in the course. |
| **Diagram construction (or other visualization of processes)** | To construct a diagram of how a process works, requires thorough insight in the process. For some people visualizations provide more insight. |
| **Create an infographic** | An infographic is a visual representation of information. It can include charts, diagrams, pictures, icons, text to convey that information in a way that makes it easy for viewers to understand. The information is concise, requires analyzing and synthesizing information, attractively formatting. It shows understanding of a concept or topic. Students may like the creative aspect. The infographic can be submitted alone or along with an explanation about some research they did for it.  Example: Infographic about [study\_tips.pdf (weebly.com)](https://ederprojects.weebly.com/uploads/1/4/9/0/14908434/study_tips.pdf) |
| **Examine/critique a case study from multiple theoretical positions** | Requires evaluative, critical thinking. A certain knowledge base is needed and should be applied. Guidelines can be given to help students focus on the relevant aspects. |
| **Substantiate and present opposite points of view.** | E.g. ask students to present facts and statistics that support both sides of a viewpoint. May require that a student explore topics, do some research. Requires to be well informed and critical. Stimulates evaluative thinking and thinking about different perspectives. Results can be shared in oral or in written form. |
| **Podcast on a (research) topic** | Needs research activities to prepare (e.g. literature, interviews). Ability to summarize and make things clear for an academic or broader public. Several podcasts of students can be combined into a series about a (research) topic. Students can learn from the different podcasts. |
| **Video – short documentary** | May requires in-depth research beforehand. Requires to structure the information well and visualization of the information. Development of digital and communication skills also. |
| **Video lectures** | Let students create a video lecture, explaining for instance theoretical concepts in a short video for peers or an academic public. Shows understanding, ability to distinguish main issues from side issues. Development of digital and communication skills. |
| **Press releases/ news articles (investigative journalism)** | Requires research or exploration of a topic beforehand. Forces to explain knowledge clearly to a wider – not academic - audience. Requires breaking down complex concepts and arguments into more clear and simple wording Shows understanding. Can be related to sustainable and/or actual topics. |
| **Role-play reporting** | E.g. let students play a reporter, analyst, media critic or any kind of professional, for a news organization, reporting on a current or historical event (product could be written, audio, or video). Requires diving into and understanding of a topic, critical thinking, thinking about perspectives, communication skills. [Assessing with Role Plays and Simulations | UNSW Teaching Staff Gateway](https://www.teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-role-play-and-simulation) |
| **Role-play stakeholders** | E.g. let students play a CEO, an employee, an activist …. To present perspectives on a certain topic. Learns students to see issues from different perspectives. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Standalone Powerpoint / multi-media presentation (visuals + audio)** | The presentation can be viewed on its own and addresses a particular topic. It can be related to a certain goal and target group. Stimulates the development of digital and communication skills. Requires preparation (research). Requires breaking down complex concepts and arguments into structured, clear language and visual images. Shows understanding. |
| **TED Talk (video or live)** | Short TED talks can be organized live, online or as video. A video-script or presentation outline can be asked beforehand based on some guidelines. Content can be substantiated by research. Skills like oral presentation can also be assessed. |
| **Commentary on a podcast** | Critical, substantiated commentary on podcasts of peers or existing podcasts related to certain themes. Stimulates critical thinking. Requires some knowledge of the topic at hand (based on research, reading articles, theories discussed in class etc.). |
| **Blogposts** | Students can use blogs as reflective journals to write about their learning experiences, challenges, and achievements. This encourages self-reflection and critical thinking. May involve substantiated views or personal perspectives. Target group can be specified.  Blogposts can also be about expert topics e.g. a new technology or software, including its applications and potential impact. Students can review the blogs of peers. |
| **Opinion editorial for a newspaper** | Op-ed is a narrative, substantiated essay. It presents the writer's opinion or thoughts about an issue. It can raise awareness or aims to persuade others and can substantiate the writer as an expert on a subject. They are typically short, 600–700 words or shorter. [Op-Ed Guidelines | Smith College](https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/college-relations/news-office/op-ed-guidelines) |

**Assessment strategies related to the professional practice**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Information leaflet** | It requires concise writing, synthesizing information, attractively formatting. Often aimed at a specific audience. Research for content and getting insight in the characteristics of the target group precedes it. |
| **Policy memo or advice memo addressed to a certain body** | Requires study to prepare and problem and context analysis. Requires concise, convincing writing, proper substantiation, knowledge of the target body, stakeholder analysis etc. Instruction and guidelines for how to write a memo can be provided, so students learn also how to draft a memo. |
| **Briefing for an official** | E.g. a CEO has to defend in public why he/she took a certain decision. The student writes the text to prepare the official. Can for instance be done in duo’s and as a simulation (one plays the CEO). Other students – as public or in a special role, like the employees who will be affected - assess the plausibility of arguments, how convincing it is, produce counter arguments etc. Stimulates critical thinking, taking perspectives and interests into account. |
| **Pitch for certain aim and target group** | For instance, to persuade a certain target group to take action. Guidelines can be given for the form. Stimulates structured, persuasive and purposeful communication. Needs a knowledge base. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Create a (board) game about ….** | Designing a board game requires students to think critically about rules, objectives, and strategies, enhancing their problem-solving skills. It stimulates creativity and is often motivating. Creating it in a group, fosters teamwork and communication skills. A knowledge base or insight in a subject is needed. By testing the game and getting feedback, students learn the role of iteration and refinement. |
| **Create an app for …** | Aimed at a particular purpose and target audience. Research precedes the product (purpose, target group etc.). Requires digital skills. |
| **Develop a business/ marketing/sales plan for an imaginary (or real) company** | Authentic, business-oriented. Guidelines can be given so students learn what a plan entails and how it is set up. Can also focus on certain aspects, such as financial aspects. Can be presented to the company representatives (can be simulated or played by peers or teachers). Students learn different skills, e.g.: strategic thinking (business goals, market positioning, long-term planning), research Skills (conducting market research, analysing competitors, look into industry trends), financial literacy, problem-solving (identifying potential challenges and developing strategies to overcome them). It cultivates an entrepreneurial mindset and being creative and Innovative. It fosters communication Skills. If done in teams: teamwork, project management. |
| **Troubleshoot** | Provide a real-life problem and ask students to analyze the problem and look at conditions and criteria and produce a plan or create something (e.g. intervention, product) to solve this problem and meet a set of criteria. Fosters critical thinking, problem solving and analyzing skills. |
| **(Digital) Brochure for a certain purpose and target group.** | Students need to dive into a topic. Choices for the content should be substantiated (based on design guidelines, research, target group characteristics etc.). |
| **Impact analysis** | Let students consider how a certain agency or body might be impacted by a particular challenge (budget cuts, infrastructure outage, public health crisis, etc.). Substantiate findings. Requires analyzing skills and critical thinking. |
| **What if…** | Let students analyze a situation that has happened. Describe what might have happened if one element of a certain event had changed.  Requires analysis and a certain knowledge basis. |
| **‘Creative swiping’** | Coined by management expert Tom Peters (1989). Use an idea from someone else and adapt it for your own use c.q. own situation or case. |
| **Write a how-to manual or guidelines for…** | Shows understanding of a subject. Requires the ability to explain concepts or needed actions clearly to a specific target group. |
| **Imaginary interviews** | Conduct an imaginary interview, for instance: What would the CEO of company X say when asked about …. Reflect: What could (s)he say? What should (s)he say? What are the considerations or consequences? what interests are at stake. This helps to see something from different angles. |
| **Interviews with experts or employees in an organization** | Experts can provide practical insights and real-world examples that enrich theoretical knowledge. They can also provide additional context and depth to the topics addressed in a course and present different viewpoints. A certain angle can be chosen, e.g. marketing issues. Requires good preparation by the students. Reporting and reflection afterward. Often very motivating for students. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity after guest lecture** | A guest lecturer can be someone from industry or an expert in a certain field. Students are asked to write a short summary of the lecture and relate this e.g. to addressed topics in class or to provided materials. Or they give their substantiated opinion on what was addressed. Or ask to take an interesting point from the lecture and elaborate on this based on research. It fosters understanding of materials, engagement, critical thinking, reflection, literature search. |
| **Persuasive letter addressed to a particular official or body** | Requires concise, structured writing. Requires arguments and substantiation. Also, insight into the interests of stakeholders. |
| **Case analysis** | A real case or simulated case can be used. The case can be described, on video, presented by e.g. someone from a company. Guidelines can be provided how to work on the case and requirements (e.g. use theory or model X). Requires application of knowledge, analyzing and problem solving skills. The results can be presented in different ways (report, presentation, video etc.). |
| **Simulation** | Can be textual, role play, virtual computer-based simulations. Students are required to answer questions, resolve problems, perform tasks and take actions etc. Useful for assessing a wide range of skills, knowledge and competencies. NB. It talks time to develop one. Sometimes - looking on internet - relevant simulations might already be available. [Assessing with Role Plays and Simulations | UNSW Teaching Staff Gateway](https://www.teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-role-play-and-simulation) |
| **Gamified assessment** | This assessment may include: A series of short tests to assess specific skill sets; complex games to evaluate reactions in complex scenarios; job simulation experiences; quizzes. It can assess different kind of skills and knowledge areas. It might take a lot of time to develop it. Sometimes relevant “games” are available (have a look on internet). |
| **Student-Proposed Project** | Present the learning objectives and let students come up with a plan to show their competence. Recommended: Approve the plans before execution to ensure potential success. |
| **See also in previous box: Roleplay,**  **Substantiate and present opposite points of view.** | |

**Examples of group work with individual (combined) parts**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Journal/magazine** | Together students create an academic journal or magazine for a broader public on a certain topic or relating to a relevant issue or problem. Different roles possible: editor, author, reviewer etc. |
| **Podcast on a (research) topic** | Several podcasts of students can be combined into a series about a (research) topic or problem. Podcasts may include information such as   transcripts, additional resources, and additional commentary. Needs research activities to prepare. Requires ability to summarize and make things clear for an academic or broader public. |
| **Substantiate a certain point of view** | Ask some students to present facts and theories that support one side of a viewpoint. Other students present the other side. Let them discuss or reflect on each other’s work. Requires to be well informed and critical, evaluative thinking, communication (argumentation) skills. The essence is: Are students able to think critically and substantiate viewpoints based on what they have learned (theories). |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Website on a (research) topic or issue** | Together students create a website for a broader or targeted public on a certain topic or relating to a relevant issue or problem. Different roles possible: designer, editor, author, reviewer, etc |
| **Organizing a talk show** | Needs research into a problem or issue. Different roles. Simulated (students play interviewed persons) or real (external people are invited) |
| **Blogposts** | Series of blogs under a common theme.  NB. Can also be a more collaborative projects, when students collaborate on posts, share research, and provide feedback to each other. |
| **YouTube channel related to a certain topic.** | Let students create a YouTube channel related to a certain topic. Individual video contributions (from different perspectives for instance). |
| **Seminar / webinar** | Student-led seminars - planning and delivering a seminar together on a certain topic. |

**To assess knowledge and understanding (variation on/in a written exam)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MC + Explanation** | Students must explain why the answer they chose is correct, or why the alternative answers are wrong. |
| **Meaningful paragraph** | Given a list of specific terms, students must use the terms in a paragraph that demonstrates that they understand the terms and their interconnections. |
| **Create (or fill in) a concept map** | A concept map visually represents relationships between concepts and ideas. Test students’ understanding. Analyzing skills. |
| **Take along notes** | Students can take along their own study aids: Crib sheets, flash cards, chapter summaries. You may provide formats. |
| **Gather/provide evidence of concepts in everyday life – relate to theories** | If a test on Campus – the gathering of real-life examples can be asked to do beforehand. Questions answered during the exam. |
| **Knowledge + case applying** | First ask for knowledge (Define …, Explain…, Give an example of …), to check what they know, then ask for applying the knowledge based on a case (Identify for this case which…, Explain with evidence why…; Evaluate…), to check whether they can apply the knowledge correctly. |
| **Critique (or substantiate) a viewpoint or article** | The viewpoint/article is provided during the On Campus exam. Students use what they have learned. Different cases or topics (choices) can be used. Some practice and guidelines are needed to make sure students know what is expected and what to focus on. |
| **Let students’ create a table to show relations or differences based on criteria** | A chart with text on it  Description automatically generated  <https://www.researchgate.net/figure/1-Criteria-for-vertical-assignment-of-competencies_tbl1_256042315> |
| **Analyze a chart, graph, or diagram, explain** | Related to a case and learned theories. Shows insight and ability to apply what is learned. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Create a chart, graph, or diagram, explain** | Based on a case description and learned theories and methods. |
| **Find the error or flaw** | Use e.g. solved calculations or problem-solving questions which contain an error or flaw. Ask students to identify the error, substantiate their answer and possibly correct the error. Requires analysing, critical thinking, problem solving, applying what is learned. |
| **Two stage exams** | Also called tiered exams, pyramid exams, group quizzes, collaborative testing, cooperative exams, and team-based tests. Students first take a test individually and then work in groups or teams as a second step in the exam process. Grades are provided for the individual test as well as the team test. [Two-Stage Exams | Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning Through Research (northeastern.edu)](https://learning.northeastern.edu/two-stage-exams/) |
| **Oral exam** | Structured, to check for understanding. |
| **Written + oral** | A few exam questions (e.g. calculations or factual knowledge) followed by a short oral to check for understanding. |
| **Oral exam in duo’s related to deliverables.** | Peers (duos) are involved in asking questions and providing feedback. The quality of feedback can also be assessed. |
| **Collaborative testing** | Students discuss answers in a group. They may choose the group answer or their own (deviating) answer. Can also be: first answer alone (for X points) – then group discussion – then answer again (X points). |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Reflection activities** | (external sources): A nice list of reflection activities, which might be useful for formative and summative assessment too:[**reflection-activities.pdf**](https://media.clemson.edu/otei/documents/reflection-activities-r2.pdf) |

**---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

**Some used and useful resources:**

* [Online & Alternative Assessment Ideas - Centre for Teaching and Learning - Western University (uwo.ca)](https://teaching.uwo.ca/elearning/studentassessment-elearning/alt-assessment-ideas.html#concept-maps)
* [Alternative Online Assessments | Resource Library | Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning | University of Calgary (ucalgary.ca)](https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/alternative-online-assessments)
* About authentic assessment: [Authentic Assessment: Assessing Student Learning: Teaching Resources: Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning: Indiana University Bloomington](https://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources/assessing-student-learning/authentic-assessment/index.html)
* [Engagement in assessment – A-Z of assessment methods (reading.ac.uk)](https://sites.reading.ac.uk/curriculum-framework/wp-content/uploads/sites/35/2022/03/A-Z_of_Assessment_Methods_FINAL_table.pdf)
* [Compendium Of Assessment techniques: from students’perspectives (leeds.ac.uk)](https://teachingexcellence.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/89/2018/10/PUGHcompendiumcomplete.pdf)
* [Choosing-and-using-fit-for-purpose-assessment-methods.pdf (hw.ac.uk)](https://lta.hw.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Choosing-and-using-fit-for-purpose-assessment-methods.pdf)
* [Selecting Assessment Methods | UNSW Teaching Staff Gateway](https://www.teaching.unsw.edu.au/selecting-assessment-methods)

*This list was originally drawn up for a workshop offered by the* [*Teaching Academy*](https://www.utwente.nl/en/bms/teachingacademy/) *– BMS (UT)  
Authors: Helma Vlas & Francesca Maria Frittella Last update: Oct.. 2024*