

Assessment Definitions

The units of assessment used in OCN qualifications and within courses, set out assessment activities which are appropriate to be used, depending on the level being undertaken.

This document provides further information and guidance on the types of assessment activity which can be used, providing a definition of the assessment activity, how the learning is assessed and the evidence which could be used.

Developers and centres should refer to the definitions, when developing courses and assessment strategies. Further support can be provided by the OCN Curriculum / Development contact and Quality Reviewers.

Assessment Definitions

Assessing Learning - Descriptors

Assessment activity

1. Case Studies

Consideration of a particular, relevant situation or example, selected by the tutor or by learners, which enables learners to apply knowledge to specific situations. May be used as a collective / group activity and discussed in a group of learners or by an individual learner. **Or** may be used with individual learners as a written activity through case study materials and learner responses.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor observation
- Class discussion
- One to one
- Group tutorial discussion

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation
- Learner notes
- Summary of class discussion
- Tutorial notes
- Audio/video/photographic record

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Case studies should be simple, immediate and familiar to the learner. Discussion should be short, structured and supervised (group or one-to-one). Written work should be short structured and supervised.	Assessment through tutor observation and discussion or tutor assessment of written work.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, summary of discussion, audio / video / photographic record or written work.
Level One	Case studies should be limited in range, familiar and require a narrow range of knowledge. Discussion should be structured and involve a limited degree of judgement (group or one-to-one). Written work should be structured and involve a limited degree of judgement.	Assessment through tutor observation, discussion or tutor assessment of written work.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, summary of discussion, learner notes, audio / video / photographic record or written work.
Level Two	Case studies should allow the application of knowledge in a number of areas and contexts. Discussion should be directed but should allow for a degree of autonomy (group). Written work should be directed but allow for a degree of autonomy (GL ¹ = 500 words).	Assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment, tutor observation, or assessment of written work.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner record, peer checklist, summary of discussion or audio / video / photographic record or written work.
Level Three	Case studies should allow the application of knowledge in a range of complex areas, in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts. Discussion should be guided but self-directed (group). Written work should allow for autonomy, evaluation and reasoned judgements to be made (GL = 1000 words).	Assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment, tutor observation or assessment or written work.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner record, peer checklist, summary of discussion, audio / video / photographic record or written work.

2. Oral Question and Answer

Specific, open or closed questions for immediate response. Can range from quite formal questions, for example, an oral test, to a quick, fun way of finding out where learners are up to, for example, a quiz. Allows response and questioning from learners and immediate feedback from tutor.

The learning may be assessed through:

- Responses by both tutor and individual learners.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record/notes
- Learner notes or log
- Audio / video record

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Process should be informal and non-threatening and questions should cover a narrow range of areas. Learners should be supported in answering and given a number of opportunities to respond.	Assessment by tutor.	Evidence could be; tutor / record notes or audio / video record.
Level One	Process should be informal and should include both open and closed questions covering a narrow range of knowledge. Learners should be encouraged by the use of supplementary questions.	Assessment by tutor.	Evidence could be; tutor record / notes or audio / video record.
Level Two	Open and closed questions should be included, covering a number of topics. Learners should be encouraged to expand on their answers.	Assessment by tutor, with a degree of self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor records, learner log or audio / video record.
Level Three	Questions should cover a wide range of knowledge and contexts. They should allow responses to unfamiliar and unpredictable problems. The process may be time limited and formal, or may be a structured two-way discussion.	Assessment by tutor, with a degree of self-assessment and evaluation of own learning.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner log or audio / video record.

3. Written Question and Answer / Test / Exam

Specific, open and closed questions for immediate response. Can range from formal exams and tests, to a quick, fun way of finding out where learners are up to, for example, a quiz. Allows response and questioning from learners and feedback from tutor.

The learning may be assessed through:

- Responses by individual learners.
- May make use of on-line assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Written questions
- Learner responses
- Tutor feedback

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Process should be informal and non-threatening and questions should cover a narrow range of areas. Possible use of multi-choice questions.	Assessment by tutor.	Evidence could be; written responses.
Level One	Process should be informal and non-threatening. Questions should encourage learners to make use of knowledge rather than just testing recall.	Assessment by tutor or external marker (for exams / tests).	Evidence could be; written responses.
Level Two	Open and closed questions should be included, covering a number of areas. Learners should be encouraged to make use of / interpret knowledge rather than just testing recall. May be time limited.	Assessment by tutor or external marker (for exams / tests).	Evidence could be; written responses.
Level Three	Questions should cover a wide range of knowledge and contexts, and allow responses to unfamiliar and unpredictable problems. Learners should be encouraged to make use of / interpret knowledge rather than just testing recall. The process may be time limited.	Assessment by tutor or external marker (for exams / tests).	Evidence could be; written responses.

4. Essay

A discursive, written response to a question or statement which involves the learner in finding and presenting information and opinion in a structured way, which normally includes an introduction, the information / opinions / evaluation / analysis and a conclusion.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor against clear criteria.

Evidence could include:

- Essay
- Detailed tutor feedback

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	It would be unlikely that an essay would be used as an assessment activity at Entry Level as it would not be appropriate for the learner. However, it could be used in a very simple form to allow learners to demonstrate recall and comprehension in a narrow range of ideas.	Assessment by the tutor through discussion.	Evidence could be; the essay and tutor feedback.
Level One	The essay subject should be simple and the response should be descriptive and not analytical or evaluative. A narrow range of applied knowledge and demonstration of basic comprehension would be expected. Learners should be given detailed information on how to structure the essay and on the criteria for achievement.	Assessment by the tutor.	Evidence could be; the essay and tutor feedback.
Level Two	The essay subject should be familiar and the response should demonstrate the ability to interpret information, make comparisons and apply knowledge and demonstrate comprehension in a number of different areas. Learners should be given information on the expected structure of the essay and criteria for achievement. GL = 500 words.	Assessment by the tutor.	Evidence could be; the essay and tutor feedback.
Level Three	The essay subject should allow the learner to access and evaluate information independently, to analyse information and to make reasoned judgements and demonstrate comprehension of relevant theories. Learners should be given information on possible structures for an essay and for the criteria for achievement. GL = 1000 words.	Assessment by the tutor.	Evidence could be; the essay and tutor feedback.

5. Report

A record of an activity and / or a summary of research which presents information in a structured way. Does not include opinion, but may include analysis or evaluation. May be presented in written or oral form.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor for written report.
- Tutor and / or peers for oral presentation of report.

Evidence could include:

- Written report with tutor feedback
- Notes for oral presentation with tutor and / or peer feedback.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Report should be oral and informal. The information or activity being reported on should be simple and familiar. Learners should be supported in preparing and giving a report and given a number of opportunities to respond.	Assessment by tutor.	Evidence could be; tutor record.
Level One	Report could be presented orally or in written format. Oral presentation should be informal. Information used in the report should be readily available and activities should be in familiar contexts. Learners should be clear on the expected structure and criteria for the report and given support on planning and presentation.	Assessment by tutor.	Evidence could be; a written report with tutor feedback or learner notes of oral presentation with tutor feedback.
Level Two	Report could be presented in orally or in written format. Oral presentation should be to a familiar audience. Information should be from a range of sources and activities, should be from familiar or unfamiliar but predictable contexts. Learners should be clear on possible structures for the report and the criteria for achievement. GL = 4 minutes for oral / 500 words for written. Learners should be given guidance on planning and presentation.	Assessment by tutor and / or peers for oral presentation.	Evidence could be; written report with tutor feedback or learner plan for oral presentation with peer and / or tutor feedback.
Level Three	Report could be presented orally or in written format. Oral presentation should be formal and could include a range of methods. Information should be from a wide range of sources and should be evaluated. Activities should be well defined but could be unfamiliar or unpredictable. Learners should be clear on the criteria for achievement but would be expected to decide on the format and structure of the report. GL = 8 minutes for oral / 1000 words for written	Assessment by tutor and or peers for an oral presentation.	Evidence could be; written report with tutor feedback or plan for oral presentation with peer and / or tutor feedback.

6. Project

A specific task involving private study and research for individuals or groups. Normally involves selection of a topic, planning, finding information and presenting results orally or in writing.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor, learner or peers, during and at the end of process through discussion and observation.

Evidence could include:

- Notes, plans, record of project process.
- Tutor record.
- Peer records.
- Learner log.
- Audio / video / photographic record.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Task should be simple, familiar, informal and supervised. It should involve repetitive and predictable processes.	Assessment through tutor observation and questioning during and at end of process.	Evidence could include, tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log or audio / video / photographic record.
Level One	Task should be selected with support from tutor to allow the demonstration of knowledge and skills in a range of predictable, structured and familiar contexts.	Assessment through tutor observation and questioning during at the end of the process.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log or audio / video / photographic record.
Level Two	Task should be selected with tutor guidance to allow the demonstration of knowledge and understanding in a range of areas and contexts, and the interpretation of information. The project should be completed within an agreed timescale.	Assessment through tutor / learner discussion during and at the end of the process, and through self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log or audio / video / photographic record.
Level Three	Task should be selected with tutor guidance to allow the demonstration of knowledge and skills in a range of areas and contexts, and to show the use of reasoned judgements. The project should be planned and completed within an agreed timescale.	Assessment through tutor / learner discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log or audio / video / photographic record.

7. Production of artefact

Production of a relevant artefact selected by the tutor or by learners, which enables learners to demonstrate skills and to apply knowledge.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor / peer observation.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.
- Self-assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutor lesson plan.
- Tutorial notes.
- Audio / video / photographic record.
- Learner log.
- Completed artefact.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Artefact should be simple, familiar and informal. Its production should be supervised and involve repetitive and predictable processes.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion, self-assessment and questioning during and at end of process.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log, audio / video / photographic record and completed artefact.
Level One	Artefact should be selected with support from tutor to allow the demonstration of skills and apply knowledge in a range of predictable, structured and familiar contexts.	Assessment through tutor, peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion, self-assessment and questioning during and at end of process.	Evidence could be, tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log, audio / video / photographic record and completed artefact.
Level Two	Artefact should be selected with tutor guidance to allow the demonstration of skills and the application of knowledge in a range of areas and contexts. A degree of learner autonomy should be encouraged within the scope of the demonstration. The artefact should be completed within an agreed timescale.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion, self-assessment and questioning during and at end of process.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log, audio / video / photographic record and completed artefact.
Level Three	Artefact should be selected with tutor guidance to allow the demonstration of skills and application of knowledge in a range of areas and contexts. Production of the artefact should be guided but self-directed. Production of the artefact should be planned and completed within an agreed timescale.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion, self-assessment and questioning during and at end of process.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log, audio / video / photographic record and completed artefact.

8. Role Play / Simulation

Use of a situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practice and apply skills and to explore attitudes.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor / peer observation.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.
- Self-assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutor lesson plan.
- Tutorial notes.
- Audio / video / photographic record.
- Learner log.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Role-plays should be simple with scenarios that are familiar to the learner. Role-plays should be short, structured and supervised.	Assessment through, tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record or learner log.
Level One	Role-plays should be limited in range, be familiar and require a narrow range of skills. Role-plays should be structured and involve limited degree of learner choice.	Assessment through, tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record or learner log.
Level Two	Role-plays should allow the application of skills in several areas and contexts. Role-plays should be directed, but allow for a degree of learner autonomy.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record or learner log.
Level Three	Role-plays should allow the application of skills in a range of complex areas and in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record or learner log.

9. Written Description

Consideration of a particular subject, situation or example selected by the tutor or by learners, which enables learners to apply knowledge to specific situations and to present them in written format.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutorial notes.
- Completed report.
- Charts.
- Plans.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Subjects should be simple and familiar to learner. Written work should be short, structured and supervised.	Assessment through tutor assessment and discussion.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation and feedback, summary of discussion or completed work.
Level One	Subjects should be limited in range, be familiar and require a narrow range of knowledge. Written work should be structured and involve limited degree of judgement.	Assessment through tutor assessment and discussion.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, summary of discussion and feedback or completed work.
Level Two	Subjects should allow the application of knowledge in a number of areas and contexts. Written work should be directed but should allow for a degree of autonomy. GL = 500 words.	Assessment through self-assessment and tutor assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner record, summary of discussion and feedback or completed work.
Level Three	Subjects should allow the application of knowledge in a range of complex areas, in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar context. GL = 1000 words.	Assessment through self-assessment and tutor assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner record, summary of feedback or completed work.

10. Practical Demonstration

A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor.
- Peer observation.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.
- Self-assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutor lesson plan.
- Tutorial notes.
- Audio / video / photographic record.
- Learner log.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Practical demonstrations should be simple with situations that the learner is familiar with. They should be short, structured and supervised.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record and learner log.
Level One	Practical demonstrations should be limited in range, be familiar and require a narrow range of skills and knowledge.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record and learner log.
Level Two	Practical demonstrations should allow the application of skills and knowledge in several areas and contexts. A degree of learner autonomy should be encouraged within the scope of the demonstration.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record and learner log.
Level Three	Practical demonstrations should allow for the application of skills and knowledge in a range of complex areas and in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.	Assessment through tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record and learner log.

11. Group Discussion

Discussion of a topic or situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to share knowledge and thoughts and to assess their learning.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor.
- Peer observation.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.
- Self-assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutor lesson plan.
- Tutorial notes.
- Audio/video/photographic record.
- Learner log.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Discussions should be simple with subjects that are familiar to the learner. The discussion should be short, structured and supervised.	Assessment through tutor, peer observation, one to one tutorial discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video record and learner log.
Level One	Discussions should be limited in range, cover topics that are familiar to the learner. These should require a narrow range of skills. The discussion should be structured and involve a limited degree of learner choice.	Assessment through tutor, peer observation, one to one tutorial discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video record and learner log.
Level Two	Discussions should allow for consideration of several topics covering a number of contexts. The discussion should be directed, but allow for a degree of learner autonomy.	Assessment through tutor, peer observation, one-to one tutorial discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include; tutor record observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video record and learner log.
Level Three	Discussion should allow for consideration of a range of complex topics and in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.	Assessment through tutor, peer observation, one to one tutorial discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include; tutor record observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video record and learner log.

12. Performance / Exhibition

A performance or exhibition of music or drama with an audience, or a rehearsal or learner demonstration for individuals or groups.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor, learner or peers, at end of performance through discussion and observation.

Evidence could include:

- Notes.
- Plans.
- Audio/video/photographic record of performance/exhibition.
- Tutor records.
- Peer records.
- Learner log.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	The performance / exhibition should be simple, informal and supervised.	Assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment and / or tutor observation.	Evidence could include; tutor record, notes, plans, audio / video / photographic record of performance / exhibition, peer records, learner log and summary of feedback.
Level One	The performance / exhibition should be limited in range, familiar and require a narrow range of knowledge.	Assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment and / or tutor observation.	Evidence could include; tutor record, notes, plans, audio / video / photographic record of performance / exhibition, peer records, learner log and summary of feedback.
Level Two	The performance / exhibition should be chosen with tutor guidance to allow the demonstration of knowledge and understanding in a range of areas. Provide the opportunity for interpretation of the chosen piece.	Assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment and / or tutor observation.	Evidence could include; tutor record, notes, plans, audio / video / photographic record of performance / exhibition, peer records, learner log and summary of feedback.
Level Three	The performance / exhibition should be chosen with the tutor to allow for the application of knowledge in a range of complex areas, in a variety of contexts. Performance should be guided but self-directed.	Assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment and / or tutor observation.	Evidence could include; tutor record, notes, plans, audio / video / photographic record of performance / exhibition, peer records, learner log and summary of feedback.

13. Reflective log or diary

A description, normally in writing but may be oral, by the learner reflecting on how and what they have learned. Often completed at regular intervals during the learning process thus allowing discussion on individual progress and how further learning could be supported.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Learner, often supported through tutorial discussions with tutor.

Evidence could include:

- Log / diary (however this may be confidential and therefore not available for moderation).
- Tutorial notes.
- Tutor record.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	The reflection process should normally be oral and supported. It may be supplemented by the use of drawings or diagrams. Learners should be asked to describe simply what they have learned with direction from the tutor.	Assessment by learner with tutor support.	Evidence could include; drawings, diagrams and tutor record.
Level One	The reflection process should be written and may be in the form of brief, structured notes. Learner should be asked to record what they have learned at regular intervals and advised on what information to include. Learners should make limited judgements on what has been learned in terms of, for example, usefulness or interest.	Assessment by learner supported by tutor through tutorials.	Evidence could include; log / diary, tutorial notes and tutor record.
Level Two	The reflection process should be written in a structured format that allows some autonomy in recording. Learners should be asked to record regularly what they have learned and to make judgements on the learning in terms of, for example, usefulness, interest, how it has extended their knowledge / skills, what else they need to learn.	Assessment by learner supported by tutor through tutorials.	Evidence could include; log / diary, tutorial notes and tutor record.
Level Three	The reflection process should be written and learners given guidance on appropriate methods. Learners should be asked to record regularly what they have learned and to make judgements on how effective the learning process has been in terms of, for example, usefulness, interest, extension of knowledge / skills, their own learning style and what else they need to learn.	Assessment by learner, discussed with the tutor.	Evidence could include; log / diary and tutor notes.

14. Practice File

A structured collection of documents from real situations such as work or voluntary activity, which evidence the application of knowledge and / or skills. The documents should be mapped to specific learning outcome/s in a unit of assessment. May need a short explanation of how the particular document evidences achievement of a specific learning outcome.

The learning may be assessed through:

- Discussion with the tutor.

Evidence could include:

- Form mapping to learning outcomes, plus explanation if necessary and the documents, for example, minutes, reports, brochures, plans, witness statements, letters or e-mails.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Entry Level	Practice evidence should be simple and specific. Learners should be directed on what to include. The tutor should map the evidence to specific learning outcome/s.	Assessment through discussion with the tutor.	Evidence could include; document/s and tutor notes.
Level One	Practice evidence should demonstrate the application of a narrow range of skills and / or knowledge. Learners should be given detailed guidance on what documents would be appropriate, how the evidence should be presented, and on mapping to learning outcomes.	Assessment through discussion with the tutor.	Evidence could include; documents, learner notes and tutor comments.
Level Two	Practice evidence should be chosen from a number of possible contexts to demonstrate application of a range of skills and / or knowledge. Learners should receive guidance on the type of document which could be appropriate, for example, a list, and advice on how to ensure the documents evidence specific learning outcomes, for example, highlighting sections, notes and on how the file should be presented.	Assessment through discussion with the tutor.	Evidence could include; structured file with tutor feedback.
Level Three	Practice evidence should be chosen to demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills in a range of complex activities. Learners should be expected to select appropriate and relevant evidence with minimal guidance, and to present the evidence in a structured format with sufficient information to demonstrate achievement.	Assessment through discussion with the tutor.	Evidence could include; structured file with tutor feedback.