

Opportunities & Challenges for Continuous Assessment at UCT and Contributing to Vision 2030



Teaching & Learning Conference 2022

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Thinking about Purpose

Purposes of Assessment

assessment

the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about a learner's achievement in order to:

- (a) assist the **learner's development** and improve the **process of learning and teaching**; and
- (b) **evaluate** and **certify** competence in order to ensure qualification credibility.

(DHET, 2021, p. 22)

Assessment as learning (<i>formative purpose</i>)	Types of assessment that allow students to assess and monitor their progress through, for example, self-assessments that allow diagnostic and practice testing (retrieval practice)
Assessment for learning (<i>formative purpose</i>)	Types of assessment that <ul style="list-style-type: none">• allow instructors to make inferences about student progress to inform their teaching and• help students to improve their learning through the provision of feedback
Assessment of learning (<i>summative purpose</i>)	Types of assessment that provide evidence of student learning in order to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards

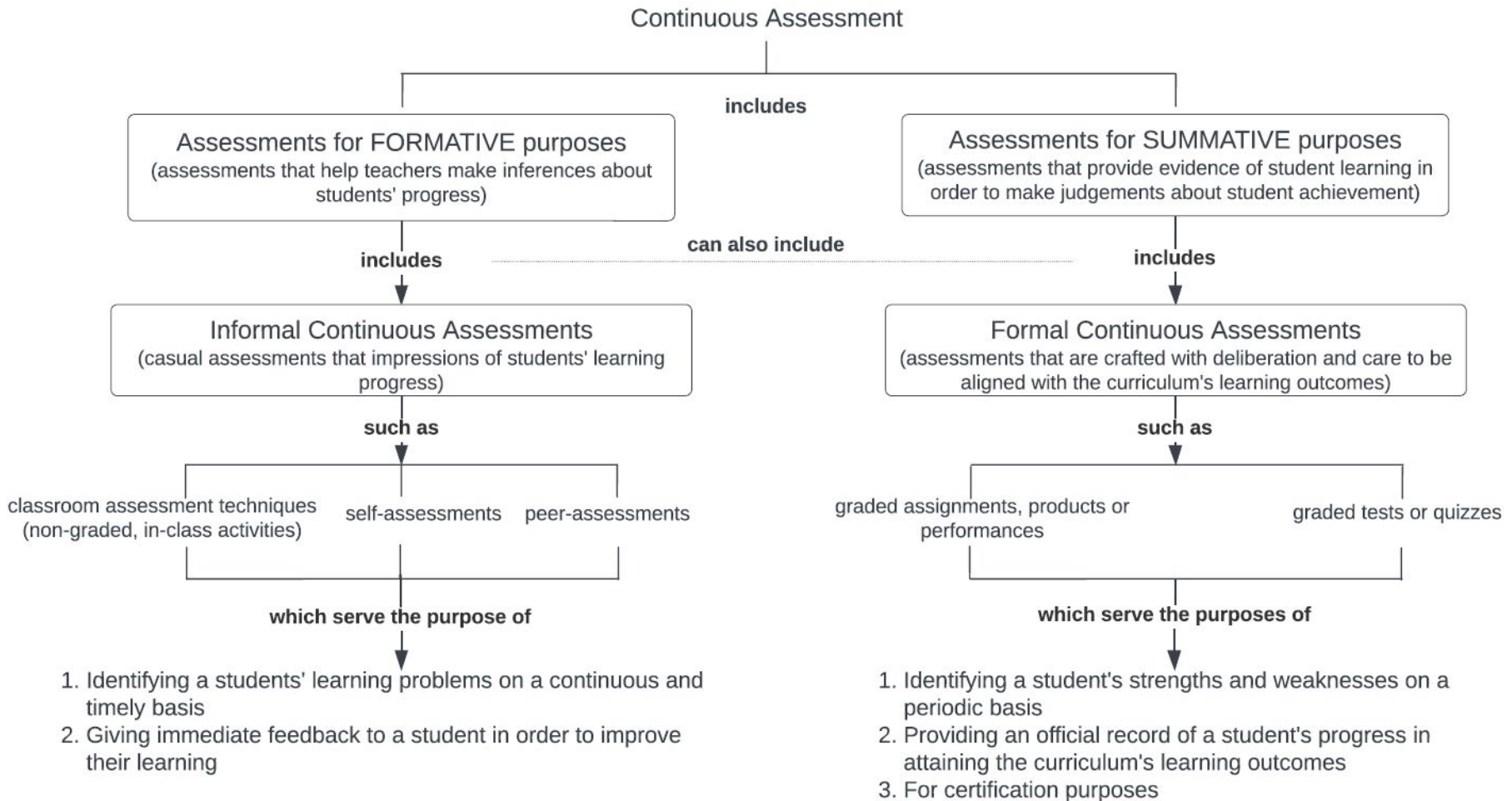
Continuous assessment

A component of assessment that is **ongoing** and which is used to determine a student's achievement **during** the course of a particular level. It **integrates assessment** into teaching and development of a student through **ongoing feedback**.

(DHET, 2021, p. 33)

A framework for curriculum-based continuous assessment

(Adapted from Nikto, 1995, p.326)



Ways of conceptualising continuous assessment

Incorporate formative assessment moments

- Both formal and informal assessments (emphasising opportunities for feedback etc.):
 - Classroom questioning and other techniques
 - Self-assessments at key “moments” where reflection could contribute
 - Peer-assessments – both as “collaborators” and as “assessors”

Unpack assignments / projects and divide into smaller chunks

- Identify “discrete” steps in the process that students will need to follow in order to complete an assignment (or aspect of an assignment).
- Develop separate assessments based on these steps that either become preparation for or contribute a component to the larger project (formerly the assignment).

Add exercises that probe comprehension / reasoning / argumentation / conceptual understanding

- Create assessment tools that target:
 - Comprehension of source materials, examples, scenarios, assignment instructions, related terminology or visual representations.
 - Reasoning and reflecting, inferencing and extrapolation.
 - Articulating an argument and evaluating presented arguments.
 - Conceptual understanding (before application), as well as linking knowledge to foundational knowledge.

Ways of conceptualising continuous assessment (cont.)

Incorporate formative assessment moments

You may already be using some of these assessment tools (or techniques that serve a similar purpose) in your pedagogy or assessment practice!

Unpack assignments / projects and divide into smaller chunks

Using this approach would allow you to make the things that are happening implicitly when doing a task more explicit and add opportunities for feedback/guidance earlier in the “process” without adding too much.

Add exercises that probe comprehension / reasoning / argumentation / conceptual understanding

These activities could be as “hands-off” as you would like it to be by incorporating them as self-directed activities into your assessment structure or just adding one or two questions to existing assessment tools that help surface these things.

You won't necessarily use elements of all three approaches to develop your continuous assessment structure, but they could allow you to make this transition without adding too much to the workload of the students or the lecturer(s)!

Discussion Questions

Do you draw on any of these approaches - which is most useful to you?

How could you incorporate them?

Do you see any challenges in using them?

How can continuous assessment contribute to Vision 2030?