

# Educational Assessment Australia

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# **Writing Good Assessments 2009**

## **The Purposes of Assessment**

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# Wherefore testing?

- Teaching and testing
- Testing: a conundrum – to test or not to test?
- A necessary pain?
- The **whys**, the **wherefores** and the **wherewithals**

# Assessing Performance

1. the **need** for tests,
2. The **purposes** of testing,
3. **teaching** and **testing** – the effects of **backwash**,
4. **types** of tests.

# The need to 'know'

**Institutions need a common 'yardstick' to measure:**

- ✓ **ability**
- ✓ **suitability**
- ✓ **potential**

# Teaching and Testing: can they be decoupled?

1. The aim of **teaching** is to **train and develop** in students the necessary skills and abilities
2. The aim of **testing** is to **find out** whether learning has taken place and whether the skills and abilities required have been acquired

# Teaching and Testing

3. Assessment of students provides the teacher/interested parties with **feedback** on the effectiveness of techniques, strategies, materials, etc. that have been used.
4. Teaching and testing should have a **symbiotic relationship** – mutually beneficial to each other

# Teaching and Testing

A **sympiotic relationship**:

- **Good tests should provide beneficial backwash – effects on teaching**
- **Teaching should determine what is tested but also allow tests to enhance what is taught – beneficial backwash**

# Types of assessment

## According to juncture and purpose (1)

<b>Juncture</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>Beginning of program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Placement tests</li><li>*Selection tests</li><li>*Language proficiency tests</li></ul>	<b>to place learners at appropriate levels for instructional purposes</b>

# Types of assessment

## According to juncture and purpose (2)

Juncture	Type	Purpose
During a program	<b>*Progress/ *Formative tests</b> based on a series of clear short-term objectives	to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning materials used to evaluate individual learner's progress
	<b>*Diagnostic tests</b>	to evaluate individual learner's strengths and weaknesses

# Types of assessment

## According to juncture and purpose (3)

<b>Juncture</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
End of a program	* <b>Summative/ Achievement tests:</b> based on a program of study	to evaluate how far students have achieved the <b>OBJECTIVES (NOT just CONTENT)</b> of a course; to evaluate the overall effectiveness of teaching methods and instructional materials.