

Testing and Assessment

What is testing?

A test is used to examine someone's knowledge of something to determine what that person knows or has learned (grammar tests, driving license tests, etc.). It measures the level of skill or knowledge that has been reached. It is an evaluative device or procedure in which a sample of an examinee's behaviour in a specified domain is obtained and subsequently evaluated and scored using a standardized process (The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, 1999).

What is an assessment?

Assessment is the process of documenting knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs, usually in measurable terms. The goal of assessment is to make improvements, as opposed to simply being judged. In an educational context, assessment is the process of describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about learning. In short, it is the systematic process of documenting and using empirical data on the knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs. By taking the assessment, teachers try to improve student learning.

The difference between “a test” and “an assessment”

Test and assessment are used interchangeably, but they do mean something different. A test is a “product” that measures a particular behaviour or set of objectives. Meanwhile assessment is seen as a procedure instead of a product. Assessment is used during and after the instruction has taken place. After you've received the results of your assessment, you can interpret the results and in case needed alter the instruction. Tests are done after the instruction has taken place, it's a way to complete the instruction and get the results. The results of the tests don't have to be interpreted, unlike assessment.