

Microcredential Skill-Based Assessments

What is competency-based/skill-based learning?

Competency-based education is an approach to learning that emphasizes what people can do, not the amount of time they spend in a classroom ([Competency-Based Education Networks](#)). This learning approach ensures that learners learn at their own pace and focus more on mastery of knowledge and valuable skills.

Compared to traditional education, competency-based/skill-based learning differs in:

- outcomes generally aligned to college- and/or career-ready standards
- achievement is based on mastery of required knowledge and skills (in a specified context)
- learners completing experiences in varied timelines (personalized)

What are competency-based/skill-based assessments?

Competency-based assessments focus on evaluating a learner's achievement of specific knowledge and skills under certain conditions, as opposed to a purely knowledge-based outcome often found in traditional education.

Assessments focus on what a learner is able to **do** (performance) and to **what extent** (criterion) and in **what setting** (condition). Since competency-based assessment is often associated with professional learning, assessment of knowledge and skills should be tied to specific work tasks/roles/contexts.

When, where, how

- **When:** A skill-based assessment could take place at the end of a learning experience (one session or at the end of the micro-learning unit), as a method to collect and verify evidence that a learner could perform the skill.
- **Where:** Depends on the skills to-be-measured; this could be in a lab/simulation, classroom, online, or real world setting
- **How:** By creating authentic, often project-based assessments to demonstrate evidence (and mastery) of specific knowledge and skills.

Questions to Consider for Micro-Learning Unit (MLU)

1. *Performance, Criterion, Condition:* What, specifically, will the learner be able to know and do at the end of the session or MLU?
 - a. Are there performance requirements or levels that need to be achieved?

- i. To what extent does the learner have to master the task?
 - b. Under what circumstances does knowledge and skills need to be implemented?
 - i. Are there specific criteria (e.g., time requirements, setting, place)?
 - c. Does the criteria describe one concise, observable task? Does the criteria describe a large task that combines several skills?
 - i. Are all of these skills taught within the MLU or a previous one? Are they communicated as a prerequisite?
2. *Measurement:* How will you know if learners have met each learning criteria?
 - a. What evidence will learners need to provide?
 - i. What is an appropriate many forms (see examples below)?
 - b. What evidence and/or feedback will be provided to affirming that learners met the criteria?
 - i. How will learners know how they are doing and what needs to be done?
 - c. What happens if learners do not meet the learning outcomes?
 - i. Do learners have an opportunity to try again to meet whatever outcome they failed to achieve before?
 - ii. What feedback is needed in helping learners know what to address or fix?

What are a few examples?

- Skills-based assessments can include:
 - **Work Samples:** Evidence of something they would have to create or produce while at a job. Be sure to specify context to focus outcomes. Learners could store these work examples in a portfolio to show potential employers.
 - Ex: Building a component of a specific technology, writing a piece of code to do a certain task.
 - **Simulation Exercises:** Complete a task within a narrow, specific context with controlled variables.
 - Ex: Achieving a task with a simulator instead of the real program, e.g., CPR test
 - **Writing Piece:** Analysis of a scenario, case study, or data that is collected by the learner or provided by the instructor.

- Ex: Analyzing data and identifying correct patterns, verbalizing their reasoning and feasible recommendations
- **Demonstration/Observation:** Observe a learner completing the task. Use a checklist or rubric to record how they do.
 - Ex: Completing steps in the right order, using equipment properly

What are helpful resources?

Competency-Based Learning:

- What Are The Key Concepts Of Competency-Based Learning? ([eLearning Industry](#))
- Description and Resources ([Competency-Based Education Networks](#))
- What is Competency-Based Education? ([American Association of Colleges of Nursing](#))

Relevant LTH Quick Reference Guides (QRGs):

- [Bloom's Taxonomy](#)
- [Backward Design](#)
- [Rubrics](#)

Assessment Resources:

- [Creative Methods of Assessment in Online Learning](#)
- [Real-World Assessment Definition](#)
- [Articulation of Criteria for Assessment](#)

Micro-credential Toolkits:

- [BC Micro-Credential Toolkit for B.C.](#)
- [Micro-Credential Toolkit, University of Milwaukee](#)