

TOOL: HOW AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS SUPPORT ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGY & RESOURCES AT KPU

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

This resource explains why and how authentic assessments support anti-racism, anti-oppression, and Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) practices in teaching and learning.

Reflective Pause

Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.

Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Understand how authentic assessments can support anti-racism and anti-oppressive teaching practices.
2. Building awareness and capacity of instructors for sourcing additional tools to create authentic assessments from an anti-racism and anti-oppressive lens.

Description

What is Authentic Assessment?

Kwantlen Polytechnic University has adopted the following definition of Authentic Assessment based

on the work of Wiggins (1998). It has six facets to be inclusive and representative of all programs. Not all facets will be applicable to all programs.

Authentic assessment...

- involves messy, realistic situations
- requires application, judgement, and innovation
- asks learners to do (produce or perform)
- replicates or simulates workplace/real world contexts
- assesses the use of knowledge, skills, and professional judgement
- allows for research, rehearsal, collaboration, practice, and feedback (Wiggins, 1998)

*Based on Wiggins, G. (1998). Education Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance. San Francisco: Joey-Bass Publishers.

Authentic Assessment Principles at KPU

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Authentic Assessment Principles at KPU	
Realistic	Involves messy, realistic situation
Applicable	Requires application judgement and innovation
Contextual	Simulates real-world contexts
Iterative	Allows for support through research, rehearsal, collaboration practice, and feedback
Using	Assess the use of knowledge, skills, and professional judgement
Doing	Asks learners to do (produce or perform)

Learners demonstrate understanding if they can explain, interpret, apply, relate perspectives, show empathy, and self-reflect.

Context & Background

Authentic assessments are good for anti-racism, anti-oppression, and JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion) practices because they allow for a more holistic evaluation of a person's knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs), rather than relying solely on standardized tests or assessments that may be biased or discriminatory.

Authentic assessments are designed to evaluate a person's KSAs in real-world contexts, such as in solving problems or completing tasks that are like those they would encounter in their daily lives

or in their future professions. Examples such as problem-based and project-based learning (PBL), ePortfolios, and reflective journals, are all types of authentic assessments. This approach can help to mitigate the effects of systemic biases and discrimination that can potentially arise from traditional assessments, which may be designed with a more narrow or homogeneous view of what constitutes “correct” knowledge or skills, as well as who is responsible for making that determination.

In the context of anti-racism, anti-oppression, and JEDI, authentic assessments can also help to highlight and value a diversity of perspectives and experiences, rather than privileging certain ways of knowing or doing (or maintaining it because it is the “status quo”). This can lead to more equitable and inclusive evaluations of people’s abilities and potential, which can in turn support greater opportunities for advancement and success across a range of fields and industries.

Furthermore, authentic assessments can provide opportunities for individuals to showcase their strengths and talents in ways that may not be captured by traditional assessments. This can be particularly important for individuals from historically marginalized or underrepresented and equity-denied groups, who may have unique skills or knowledge that are not well-represented in traditional assessments. By providing a more accurate and inclusive picture of a person’s abilities and potential, authentic assessments can help to support greater equity and justice in our society as a whole.

Brookfield (2018) notes that traditional forms of assessment, such as multiple-choice tests, tend to measure only a narrow range of skills and knowledge and can be biased against students from equity-denied groups. Authentic assessments, on the other hand, require students to apply their learning in real-world situations that reflect the complexities and diversity of society. By designing assessments that are culturally relevant and inclusive, educators can help promote JEDI and challenge dominant narratives that perpetuate inequality.

Brookfield (2018) also emphasizes that authentic assessments can help students develop critical thinking skills and empower them to challenge systemic oppression. By providing opportunities for students to analyze and critique societal issues, educators can help foster a sense of agency and activism among their students. Authentic assessments, therefore, play a crucial role in creating a more just and equitable society by promoting JEDI and empowering students to become agents of change.

Considerations for Implementation

How do I make my assessments more authentic?

Check out the Academic Hub Authentic Assessments page for more resources and supports, including:

- The Faculty Rubric Guide on Authentic Assessments (Check out the antiracism and universality rubrics p.2 – 5)
- Explainer Videos
- Promising Practices (Examples of authentic assessments)

Reflective Action Point

As an instructor, you are encouraged to reflect on your assessments using the [Faculty Rubric Guide on Authentic Assessments](#) to reflect on questions such as:

- Who benefits from this assessment? Who does not?
- What are the reasons behind my choices in assessment practices?
- Is there another way?
- Am I falling back on “the way it has always been?”

Instructor Resources

Website: [Anti-racist Pedagogy \(in Critical Theory Paradigm\)](#)

Blog: [Embracing the Chaos: The Power of Authentic Assessments and the Beautiful Messiness of Learning](#)

Website: [Anti-Racism WordPress](#) (site)

Website: [Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression LibGuide](#)

Website: [Story Articulates Authentic Design WordPress](#)

Asynchronous Course: [Foundations in Teaching Excellence: Learning Assessment \(asynchronous course\)](#)

Asynchronous Course: [Foundations in Teaching Excellence: Inclusive Teaching Practices](#)

Article: [Talking Circles: A Culturally Responsive Evaluation Practice](#)

Website: [Georgetown University CNDLS Inclusive Pedagogy Toolkit – Assessments](#)

References

- Brookfield, S. D. (2018). Teaching for equity, diversity, and social justice. *In Teaching race: How to help students unmask and challenge racism* (pp. 1-21). John Wiley & Sons.
- Wiggins, G. (1998). *Education Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

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