

## Compendium of assessment methods

<p><b>Project</b></p> <p>A project is normally an extended and substantial piece of work consisting of a range of activities built up progressively over a period of time. Assessment is taken place at intervals throughout the project to check that the objectives are being met and to ensure that errors are not carried forwards, so that minor errors do not escalate into a failure to achieve the outcomes.</p>			
<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually undertaken after completing a period of knowledge gathering.</li> <li>Used to confirm knowledge and practice new skills, even acting as a simulation of a real world task, with less risk (such as health and safety).</li> <li>Most effective when skills are developed to the point that apprentices can work on projects independently, with reduced need for direct supervision, as would be the case in live working.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Normally a written brief, perhaps a simulated activity based on real work, or a live project.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can assess any aspect of a standard or programme.</li> <li>Not limited to written work, but a combination of written, practical and observed evidence.</li> <li>Can act as a major element of the synoptic end test, or as part of the final grading decision for a standard.</li> <li>Can assess a wide range of practical skills and knowledge.</li> <li>Encourages discipline to undertake work over an extended period of time.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reliable mechanism for assessing competence if well-constructed with opportunities for creativity.</li> <li>Robust form of assessment, if carefully constructed and validated external to the assessor.</li> <li>Only valid if objective evidence of achievement is possible.</li> <li>Most valid when it assesses using a range of tools, such as practical observation, written assignment and interviews recorded on audio and video.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can provide reliable evidence of knowledge gained and offers an insight into behaviours, where care and knowledge have been applied.</li> <li>Highly customisable, flexible and adaptable form of assessment.</li> <li>Can provide opportunities for multiple layers of grading, and separation of excellence from satisfactory.</li> <li>Well respected by employers where a project evidences knowledge and skills in a suitable context.</li> <li>Ideal for independent assessment and external validation, if the evidence collected within the project is consistently presented.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time consuming to create, undertake and assess.</li> <li>Can be resource intensive for apprentice and supervisor.</li> <li>If not well constructed, can consume time and resource without significant evidence of competence.</li> <li>Can be over prescriptive, limiting the ability of an apprentice to demonstrate their own ideas and creativity.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs to be carefully designed to test and assess a range of skills and allow creativity. Projects that link practical work with written work can be highly effective in assessing competence. Projects that are narrow in focus are really just written or practical assignments.</li> <li>Should be constructed at the start of the Apprenticeship, aligned with the content of the training and completed alongside real or simulated work so that they are integrated, rather than seen as a separate or unconnected activity.</li> <li>Assessment should be progressively developed throughout, building on the first principles.</li> </ul>			

## Professional Dialogue

A semi-structured interview with an apprentice. They should be aware that this forms part of an assessment process and the interview notes should be recorded and graded.

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normally used as part of an observed or project assessment.</li> <li>• Particularly useful where other forms of assessment are difficult to administer, or where evidence for assessment is more difficult to quantify. It is a useful “probing tool” to explore depth of knowledge.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervisor and apprentice undertake a structured discussion with key questions asked and responses recorded (text, video or audio).</li> <li>• Questions are designed to explore a full range of responses and approaches.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative interview data primarily assesses applied knowledge and behaviours.</li> <li>• If done alongside a practical, can generate evidence to support skills assessment.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be very reliable, especially when linked to a practical form of assessment or to outputs of the apprentice’s work.</li> <li>• A valid form of assessment, easily qualified, but can be difficult to record.</li> <li>• Verbal evidence is robust, if the questions are sufficiently open.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible form of assessment to cover gaps in evidence from project work, practical assessment or written assignments.</li> <li>• If conducted well, can evidence behaviour developments.</li> <li>• Particularly good at generating evidence for problem solving.</li> <li>• A highly flexible, low-risk, low-impact and low cost form of assessment.</li> <li>• An ideal method for independent or external validation of original assessments.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can provide limited evidence when questions are poorly designed or closed (eliciting a yes/no response), or where repetition occurs and scope is less well defined. Bad assessments are “chats” or mechanical lists of questions, rather than an opportunity to discuss the area of interest.</li> <li>• Can generate a large quantity of evidence that might be difficult to grade or validate. The skill of the assessor is central to the recording of data. The risk is reduced when combined with audio or video assessment tools. If this is the case, it becomes an ideal format for external validation or independent assessment.</li> <li>• Qualitative evidence can be difficult to grade and compare across a peer group.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The discussion should not be contrived (just noting responses to a list of questions). Question structures must permit open responses, but relatively straightforward to administer. Answers should be encouraged beyond one line responses, to explore the depth of applied knowledge and understanding held by the apprentice.</li> <li>• Dialogues should be semi-structured, but there should be a clearly defined set of outputs for the session. Assessment and grading can be difficult, if only positive and negative responses are obtained. A range of extension questions to allow a range of grading outcomes should also be developed.</li> <li>• Where the interviewer or supervisor can lead the discussion, the assessment can validate and assess knowledge and judge behaviours. Where this is undertaken during another form of assessment, such as a practical observation, excellent cross-referenced evidence can be collected. Any part of the standards can be assessed this way</li> </ul>			

## Multiple Choice

A set of questions, where the candidate selects the correct responses from a range of answers presented. The number and complexity of possible answers is used to increase the degree of difficulty for the assessment.

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often used at the end of a topic or course as part of a suite of assessments.</li> <li>• Can assist with the understanding of behaviours (such as psychometric tests).</li> <li>• Used where a numerical score or grade is desirable, but it can be prone to statistical error and reliance on grade boundaries that are not based on extended performance evidence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A question has a range of answers provided. Candidates select the response they believe is correct. The greater the number of potentially correct responses, the more difficult it may be to select the correct response. The composition of potential answers can also be used to improve complexity.</li> <li>• Generates numerical and comparable data that must be statistically adjusted to remove probability effects.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge generally, although some are used to test behaviours, but these are regarded as less reliable, used only as a guide to behaviours and skills.</li> <li>• The MCQ can assess breadth and depth of knowledge, validate (but not directly assess) practical skills, unless taken within a practical assessment. It can help to formulate judgments on behaviour. It is ideal where a rapid numerical score is desirable (perhaps where a topic is a pre-requisite), or to offer confidence in performance judgments elsewhere.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depends on the quality of questionnaire design. High quality versions have a range of plausible responses in a narrow range of possible answers and question complexity requiring some manipulations of data or thinking to obtain. Will be significantly less valid, where low quality or leading response options are provided.</li> <li>• Absolute numerical scores are not reliable, but overlapping boundaries of performance can be reliable, especially where supplemented by other forms of assessment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generates numerical scores that can be mapped to a grading profile - although many use arbitrary boundaries, rather than using a statistically valid approach.</li> <li>• Can provide a rapid “check” score that can rank candidates across a peer group, or provide supplementary evidence of performance as part of a range of assessment topics.</li> <li>• Easy and cost effective to administer.</li> <li>• Easy to automate grading and marking.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be time consuming and difficult to construct a valid and reliable suite of questions. The range of responses needs to be plausible and the correct responses should not be immediately obvious. Choices for responses should be sufficiently numerous to reduce the impact of random chance.</li> <li>• Assessments will need to be regularly updated.</li> <li>• Can be susceptible to random chance. Even in complex questionnaires, up to 15% of the final achievement can be attributable to chance, which should be accounted for in the grading.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This form of assessment depends completely on the quality of questionnaire design. The number of responses from which to choose, coupled to the plausibility of answers, can make a test highly sophisticated. Alternatively, it can also be the weakest form of assessment, where the correct answer is presented within a suite of responses that are clearly unlikely. This form of assessment is prone to statistical error and inherent chance, so grades should be adjusted accordingly.</li> <li>• This form of assessment lends itself to independent testing, ideal for remote and online testing regimes.</li> </ul>			

## Synoptic Assessment

A large, complex, often multi-tool, form of assessment that draws from all aspects of a programme of study, across the range of assessable material in a standard. Administered either in one discrete element, or split into a series of smaller activities over a period of time.

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Normally at the end of a course or programme to assess across all the knowledge, skills and behaviours developed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be a range of activities, including interview, practical observation, dialogue and a programme of written tests or activities that collectively assess from all aspects of a programme.</li> <li>Traditionally weighted towards assessment forms that generate numerical data, rather than peer-led judgments of performance.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Normally, synoptic assessments are knowledge and skills assessment tools. However, there is no reason to limit responses to written recorded evidence. Good assessments may include elements of audio/video evidence and records of professional dialogue.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is deemed reliable where it replicates real work.</li> <li>Robust and valid, where design has been tested and weighted according to the requirements of the standard.</li> <li>Where it contains a range of tools, it can provide secure and reliable evidence of competence and performance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can cover existing and new knowledge and skills and replicate real work, in a lower risk environment.</li> <li>Can validate any aspect of a standard, to any level of breadth or depth</li> <li>Can be tailored to different learning and communication styles.</li> <li>Elements may be ideal for independent and remote assessment.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be very challenging to design effectively to ensure a suitable range of activities are included from all potential areas of assessment and to separate the weighting of individual components.</li> <li>Can generate both numerical and qualitative data making grading a more complex process.</li> <li>Complexity and depth can be subject to variation and care must be taken in ensuring a fairness of assessment across all aspects.</li> <li>The difference in candidate performance for a single assessment event versus that over assessments that take place over an extended period can be significantly different (for example, such as between examinations at A level compared to continuous coursework).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decisions over the timing and content of synoptic assessments need to be made early to enable the necessary resources to be identified. This form of assessment can have a wide resource requirement depending on the sector. Overall, it is more resource intensive than all other forms of assessment.</li> <li>Careful design of synoptic assessment is required to develop and evidence craft skills, or problem solving skills. The balance of written/observed/practical is critical in ensuring that all learner types can be accommodated to achieve a valid outcome.</li> <li>Elements of assessment can be graded. Care should be taken where grading boundaries are set, that they are valid and meaningful.</li> </ul>			

## Practical Observation

A practical activity is set up where the apprentice is required to complete a defined set of work tasks. The apprentice is observed, the supervisor noting performance and recording achievement using a qualitative and quantitative preformed. The apprentice should be given performance checkpoints so that error is not compounded, leading to an inability to achieve, due to earlier mistakes.

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally used for assessing skills and behaviours. Works best where the task is "live" and as close to the real world as possible.</li> <li>• Can be used as a partner to other forms of assessment (for example as part of a synoptic assessment).</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The supervisor or assessor observes the conduct of an apprentice, looking for a pre-defined set of performance criteria.</li> <li>• The tasks are defined and the practical is controlled (differing from an observed assessment), but the outcome is more flexible than an observed assessment.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally, behaviours and practical skills. Well designed assessments can assess a full range of skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reliable form of assessment, producing tangible outputs that can be compared to a peer group, or against an agreed competence level.</li> <li>• Valid and robust, where outputs can be assessed against an agreed baseline.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable and with clearly visible outputs and outcomes.</li> <li>• Clear evidence of skills and behaviour performance, as well as evidencing underpinning knowledge.</li> <li>• Recording of data is straightforward and this form of assessment is judged as reliable by employers.</li> <li>• Ideal for remote assessment, or the use of video data, links to professional dialogue and as part of a synoptic assessment.</li> <li>• Ideal for independent assessment, although can be prone to subjective judgements.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can have limited objectives and candidates can suffer an escalation of underperformance where tasks are linked (errors compounded/carried forwards).</li> <li>• Some judgements can be subjective, or opinion based.</li> <li>• Difficult to grade meaningfully other than as a binary grade – competent or not competent.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be resource intensive, but ideal for remote assessment by an independent agent.</li> <li>• Good planning of all eventualities is very important, particularly where this forms part of a synoptic assessment.</li> </ul>			

## Observed Assessment

This can be any form of activity where the main assessment tool is the judgment of the assessor. Usually during the course of a project, but not limited to a single assessment (practical observation). Can be a continuous process to assess the development of behaviours.

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A highly variable form of assessment, based on observing an activity, linked to a workplace context or an element of the standard. The nature of the observation and the work completed is wide in scope, to allow for “gap” assessment and additional evidence of performance.</li> <li>• Not usually a single activity, but spread over time, with certain key tasks clearly defined, and a definite output and outcome expected.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The assessor observes a portion of a practical, project activity, interview, theory session and coaching activity and records the development of knowledge and behaviours and practical skills if possible. Less defined outcomes are acceptable is part of a longer assessment process.</li> <li>• Evidence from the assessor on the competence in completing the task, is recorded against a predetermined standard of performance.</li> <li>• Progress and achievement is recorded in a ‘record of achievement.’</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The full range of elements for a standard can be assessed. Ideal as a "catch-all" or to evidence activities that are difficult to otherwise record (such as where issues of confidentiality or proprietary licensing exist).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable where the activity is more real than simulated. Judgements must be evidence based, and not just commentary on what took place.</li> <li>• A valid form of assessment where an agreed performance threshold is widely understood. Otherwise, this form of assessment is prone to subjectivity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can assess cross-referenced evidence. Offers candidates an opportunity to be assessed in all aspects of a programme.</li> <li>• Flexible, allowing for a range of settings and needs.</li> <li>• Relatively low cost when compared to other forms of assessment.</li> <li>• Ideal for independent and remote assessment, but internal validation is recommended.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependent on the skill and quality of the assessor to obtain valid judgments and outcomes.</li> <li>• Can be highly subjective, prone to bias and weak judgements.</li> <li>• Grading is challenging as it is difficult to compare performance against a peer group or across a standard so is useful only as an assessment of competence.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective evidence recording is needed.</li> <li>• The record of assessment is the only resource specifically required for this form of assessment</li> </ul>			

## Expert Panel

A structured and deliberately higher pressured interview and dialogue between the apprentice and a small team of peers, supervisors and invited members. Differs from a professional dialogue as this form of assessment is more structured and not usually undertaken in conjunction with any other form of assessment. Interview data is recorded.

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At key points in an assessment cycle. Used to confirm knowledge and to judge behaviours.</li> <li>• Can be a 'ceremonial' end of apprenticeship assessment, perhaps as a significant part of the synoptic assessment process, to confirm a competence judgment, or to agree whether an apprentice is deemed competent.</li> <li>• Could also form part of a registration process with a professional body.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate and assessor meet in isolation (interviews are undertaken away from the work context). The session is led by the assessor, with the candidate responding accordingly.</li> <li>• Questions are structured, requiring extended responses and administered across all candidates internally and externally to permit a valid assessment of competence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normally this form of assessment assesses knowledge and measures the development of behaviours.</li> <li>• It is less suitable for assessing skills, but it is possible to implement a skills assessment within a panel (such as the skills show or competition).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable, but assessor dependent.</li> <li>• Considered reliable and valued by employers as it is not unlike an interview process for employment. Some subjectivity is inevitable but this is partially mitigated by considering wider opinions.</li> <li>• Valid, particularly where a range of judgements from a variety of assessors can be included and recorded. Additionally, the performance of the apprentice is necessarily scrutinised due to the pressure of such a panel, whether it be knowledge or skills based.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective panels must be well-planned, but can be simple to administer and record.</li> <li>• Can generate evidence that can be compared across a peer group.</li> <li>• Ideal for independent assessment and remote sampling of achievement.</li> <li>• Ideal where specific knowledge and progress is to be tested in a low-risk environment.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can have limited outcomes, and can be biased and steered by the assessor inadvertently (for example, responses can be assessor-led)</li> <li>• Grading can be difficult to achieve objectively but performance thresholds can be developed which are reliable.</li> <li>• Some apprentices may under-perform as this is a public speaking assessment.</li> <li>• Can be viewed as artificial, stressful and less effective if it is administered and conducted as a "ceremonial" form of assessment.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing evidence indicates that this form of assessment works best when taken in a group setting, or as part of a suite of other assessment activities (in this case within a synoptic assessment process).</li> <li>• The range of responses needs to be anticipated and a grading matrix, or weighting, needs to be developed alongside the interview scheme.</li> <li>• Panels can be resource intensive particularly if organised as a competition or other group assessment activity.</li> </ul>			

## Viva Interview

An end of apprenticeship holistic, synoptic and structured interview that can take any aspect of the programme and analyse the knowledge and skills of apprentices.

<b>When it is used</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At the end of the programme, or where uncertainty as to final competence exists.</li><li>• Also used to compare candidates of equivalent attainment.</li></ul>	<b>How it works</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Based on an interview, where specific knowledge, skills and behaviours are probed, perhaps linked to project work or the outcomes of a synoptic assessment activity.</li><li>• A highly structured assessment, but where questions and responses are intentionally flexible.</li><li>• Grading is based on the depth and complexity of responses.</li></ul>	<b>What it assesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All aspects of a standard, but is usually focused on knowledge, at the level of a competent employee.</li></ul>	<b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reliable where externality is included, as well as a suite of questions that probe the complexities of the knowledge. Better examples occur where a range of breadth and depth are integrated.</li></ul>
<b>Advantages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can validate earlier assessment judgements.</li><li>• Peer group, experts and others can contribute to ensuring that standards are met and grading decisions achieved are reliable.</li><li>• Good for where programmes are more practically based and do not favour apprentices who perform well in written tests.</li></ul>		<b>Disadvantages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subjective and qualitative assessment outcomes can make grading less robust and more arbitrary.</li><li>• Does not assess skills, but the process.</li><li>• Responses can appear coached where planning for assessment is less thorough. Some responses can be binary, led by poor question structure.</li><li>• Can provide artificially poor outcomes where candidates respond poorly to interview situations.</li></ul>	
<b>Implementation notes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A focus on structuring the process and interview questions will provide better outcomes.</li></ul>			

## Written Assignments

Briefs are designed to lead apprentices to complete a series of written responses to process, scenario or research topics. Grading is based on the quality and content of responses and can be small or large scale, discrete or holistic. Tasks are set, aimed at receiving written responses, usually using IT skills at the same time.

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At any point in a programme.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written briefs are prepared setting the requirements for depth, length and breadth of responses.</li> <li>Highly structured assessments, but the range of responses can be wide and varied.</li> <li>Generates numerical assessment scores.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally, this form of assessment is limited to assessment of knowledge and the skills of preparing written activities (use of IT, research skills, conducting interviews of others).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliable if authenticity assured and assessment briefs are constructed with the desired outcomes in mind at the outset.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideal for remote and independent assessment and in providing a quick reference of achievement.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource intensive.</li> <li>Some programmes can become over-reliant on this form of assessment.</li> <li>Not all assessment briefs can allow 'cut and paste' knowledge, unless coupled to another form of assessment to validate this.</li> <li>Can favour candidates who respond well to written responses. Candidates who choose apprenticeships because of poor examination performance may struggle if assessment is skewed to written responses.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used best in conjunction with another form of assessment (observed, interview or within a larger project).</li> <li>Careful design is needed to ensure that reliable data is obtained.</li> </ul>			

## Evidence Portfolio

A collection of written assignments, recordings, prime marking and grading decisions.

<b>When it is used</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To record evidence and to signpost an external agent to validate or verify judgments and assessment decisions.</li></ul>	<b>How it works</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Takes the form of a paper-based folder, or e-portfolio of evidence.</li><li>It contains a copy of every assessment undertaken and forms the totality of evidence. This can include recordings and transcripts, A/V data and copies of interviews and outcomes of remote assessment.</li></ul>	<b>What it assesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It is the recording mechanism for all other assessment types.</li></ul>	<b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Depends on the reliability of the individual components. If well organised, laid out progressively and comprehensively completed it is a highly respected assessment vehicle for evidencing competence.</li></ul>
<b>Advantages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Single location, uniform presentation permits peer and independent validation.</li><li>Tangible evidence that can be sampled and analysed at any time. Can be used to validate a grading decision or as the basis for competence confirmation (perhaps as part of an employment interview).</li></ul>	<b>Disadvantages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Evidence may need to be contrived to fit a portfolio, such a photograph of practical outputs, rather than natural - as might be the case in the real world.</li><li>Can be a large volume of 'impenetrable paperwork'. Modern portfolios are slim and much evidence is electronic. Paper folders are less common, but employers still tend to favour a printed output (perhaps trusting electronic recording less due to security issues)</li></ul>		
<b>Implementation notes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Good organisation and careful indexing is critical.</li><li>The quality depends on structure, keeping elements up to date and assessment decisions being recorded contemporaneously.</li><li>It is important to understand who owns the evidence. This is a formal record, so should be centrally administered and not used as a working folder for ongoing work.</li></ul>			

## Audio/Video Recording

Recording evidence for assessment remotely, or after the event. Ideal for evidence portfolios and as a substitute/enhancement for written assessment records. Almost any form of assessment can be recoded in this way.

<p><b>When It is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At any stage, for any assignment type (except written),</li> <li>• Used as a secondary source of assessment evidence in some tools.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate activities are recorded using camera or microphone, perhaps using a smart-phone or small device.</li> <li>• The recording acts as a source of primary evidence that can then be assessed after the event, by a range of practitioners.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any aspect of the programme as this is an evidence recording technique, rather than an assessment tool in its own right.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validity and reliability depends on the quality of the assessment activity that has been recorded.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used to reduce subjectivity, confirm a judgement, or to validate an assessment through review by panel or peer scrutiny.</li> <li>• Unequivocal evidence that can be reviewed indefinitely or repeatedly to assess or confirm progress, competence, including an objective assessment.</li> <li>• Can be completed with low resource requirement using modern technology.</li> <li>• Can be a highly useful mechanism for remote and independent assessment.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can create artificial behaviours –recording devices may alter behaviours. Care in administering the assessment can be negated by issues of technology if poorly implemented.</li> <li>• Can be complex to set up, requiring external equipment (although modern technology is rapidly mitigating this issue).</li> <li>• Not recommended to rely on a recording as the sole evidence base as the recording may prove unfit due to poor preparation or technological difficulties.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplicity of recording is preferable, as well as assessor and assessee familiarity with the equipment to prevent technology issues deflecting from the assessment.</li> <li>• Permission should be sought to record, particularly for those under 18 apprentices and in premises where proprietary techniques or commercial sensitivity exists.</li> </ul>			

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is a process to accredit learning gained or skills acquired prior to entry to the Apprenticeship programme. Every assessment system should take account of prior learning because it is sound training practice as apprentices will not be forced to 'learn' things they already know. Also called accreditation of prior learning (APL)-

<p><b>When it is used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On entry to the Apprenticeship programme.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How it works</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assesses what an apprentice already knows or can do against the requirements of the Apprenticeship programme.</li> <li>Apprentice is responsible for identifying, demonstrating and claiming prior learning based on prior qualifications or formal/informal learning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What it assesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formative recognition allows for in-programme placement and helps the apprentice make connections between previous learning and the further learning and development within the Apprenticeship programme.</li> <li>Summative recognition involves giving credit towards or exemption from some part of the training programme.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Validity, reliability and robustness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance must be provided for the potential apprentice and the assessor that determines whether the evidence presented is sufficient, authentic, and current.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduces duplication of learning.</li> <li>Reduce the cost and duration of training.</li> <li>Allows for more appropriate learner placement in the Apprenticeship programs.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RPL claims may be assessed on basis of whether direct match, rather than broad comparison, which is difficult to demonstrate</li> <li>Potential difficulty of providing individualised training programmes.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognition is given for learning <b>not</b> experience.</li> <li>Learning that is recognised should be transferable and not just context-specific.</li> <li>Needs a formal process of recognition and evidence gathering that is suitable for all sector contexts. Will need to include IAG.</li> <li>Need to determine the type and balance of direct and reflective evidence that will be accepted.</li> <li>Issue of extent to which prior learning needs to map to training requirements – will there be an: expectations of 100%? Differences in context of achievement of prior learning may lead to difficulties in terms of recognition, transition and progression.</li> <li>Need to be highly selective in choice of evidence and to cross reference evidence to more than one learning outcome.</li> <li>All RPL processes should be quality assured to make sure of consistency, transparency and accessibility</li> </ul>			