## 

## STAGE 1 - TOOL 2: Choosing assessment methods

This tool will help you understand the benefits and drawbacks of implementing different assessment methods and will help you to evaluate the feasibility of developing the decisions you made when using *Tool 1: Where are we now?* regarding existing assessment practice and where you might develop innovative approaches.

Before you start work on determining an indicative assessment approach for your Apprenticeship standard, recognise that:

* your assessment approach must provide sufficient evidence that will enable assessors to judge ‘beyond reasonable doubt’ that an apprentice is competent;
* the assessment methods used should reflect application to the workplace and working practice as closely as possible;
* each assessment method has its place and is not intrinsically better or worse than any other;
* as long as each assessment method is appropriate to what it is supposed to be assessing, using more than one method to assess each component of a standard improves assessment reliability;
* all decisions about the detail of the assessment approach involve a consideration of risk – this normally takes the form of making each assessment point only as precise as it needs to be for:
  + the stage and level of the Apprenticeship;
  + the importance of this assessment to the requirements of the standard;
  + the risk of incompetence to the community;
* the more important an assessment point, the higher the cost (usually) as a greater volume or diversity of evidence will be needed;
* all assessment will require moderation (to ensure consistency) which is an additional cost and requires a third party for independence.

**How to use the tool**

1. Review the overview table of different assessment methodsprovided overleaf. The comments and scores reflect experience from across a wide range of sectors including some research on assessment in Apprenticeships.

* Each assessment method is described more fully in the *Compendium of assessment methods* – how the method works, what the challenges are and the issues to be addressed when using that type of assessment.
* The assessment scores indicate the relative value of each method when used to assess knowledge, skills, and behaviours. A score of 8-10 suggest that the assessment method is ideal to assess this type of element.
* The cost is estimated relative to other forms of assessment and ranges from £ (indicating a low cost) to £££££ (indicating a very expensive, resource intensive method).

1. Complete the blank template for your own assessment processes (existing or planned). Rough estimations are fine at this stage as the intention is to provide an overview that will inform later assessment development work in stage 2.

You may wish to adjust the scores in the template to reflect assessment practice within your sector.

To help you, a worked example of the grid has been provided based on the *Initial Police Learning and Development Programme case study*.

**After using the tool**

Once you have completed the grid, you will have an implementation overview of the assessment methods that you might utilise within your proposed assessment approach that highlights the risks and challenges to implementation, such as indicative costs, complexity to develop, suitability for independent assessment, and the implications of grading. For example, if the overall trend in the grid is to ‘hard’, ‘difficult’ or £££££, then this may indicate a need to develop a different assessment approach, perhaps with new partners or processes.

**Implementation overview of different assessment methods**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Score (max 10)** | | | **Implementation** | | | | |
| **Assessment method**  *For explanations of the different assessment methods, see the Compendium of assessment methods.* | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviour | **Cost** | | **Complexity** | **Independence & impartiality** | **Grading** |
| Project | 9 | 7 | 5 | Low for research and some written projects. Practical projects can be more expensive | **££** | Medium | Good | Difficult |
| Professional dialogue | 9 | 6 | 9 | Very low cost | **£** | Low | Very Good | Subjective |
| Multiple choice | 9 | 5 | 6 | Very low cost, once designed | **££** | Medium | Very Good | Quantitative |
| Synoptic assessment | 9 | 9 | 9 | Moderate cost, most cost is in the design and testing | **£££** | High | Very Good | Difficult |
| Practical observation | 7 | 9 | 9 | Very low cost, if a practical is already planned  High cost if sessions have to be arranged ad hoc | **£**  **£££** | Low | Moderate | Subjective |
| Observed assessment | 9 | 7 | 8 | Very low cost | **£** | Low | Very Good | Subjective |
| Expert panel | 9 | 4 | 6 | Moderate cost, can be resource intensive to arrange, or expensive if fees have to be paid | **££** | Medium | Very Good | Difficult |
| Viva interview | 9 | 5 | 5 | Very low cost | **£** | Medium | Very Good | Subjective |
| Written assignments | 9 | 5 | 5 | High cost to create, test, and validate | **£££** | Medium | Poor | Hard |
| Evidence portfolio | 8 | 6 | 6 | Low cost to create, moderately expensive to moderate | **££** | High | Poor | Difficult |
| Audio-video recording | N/A | N/A | N/A | Can be cheap to set up if new technology is implemented (smart-phone/app) | **£** | Low | Good | Subjective |
| Recognition of prior learning (RPL) | 8 | 4 | N/A | Low cost as responsibility for evidence lies with the apprentice | **£** | Low | Moderate | Difficult |

**Implementation overview template for your own assessment approach**

|  | **Score (max 10)** | | | **Implementation** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment method** | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviour | **Cost** | | **Complexity** | **Independence & impartiality** | | **Grading** |
| Project | 9 | 7 | 5 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Professional dialogue | 9 | 6 | 9 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Multiple choice | 9 | 5 | 6 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Synoptic assessment | 9 | 9 | 9 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Practical observation | 7 | 9 | 9 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Observed assessment | 9 | 7 | 8 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Expert panel | 9 | 4 | 6 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Viva interview | 9 | 5 | 5 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Written assignments | 9 | 5 | 5 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Evidence portfolio | 8 | 6 | 6 |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Audio-video recording | N/A | N/A | N/A |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Recognition of prior learning (RPL) | 8 | 4 | N/A |  |  |  |  |  | |

**Analysis of the implementation matrix**

**Implementation overview – A worked example for the *Initial Police Learning and Development Programme* case study**

|  | **Score (max 10)** | | | **Implementation** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment method** | **K** | **S** | **B** | **Cost** | | **Complexity** | **Independence & impartiality** | **Grading** |
| Project | 9 | 7 | 5 | Low – integrated with real police work | £ | Medium – needs to be integrated and not in conflict with the role | Good – a variety of officers can input into the assessment via testimony and references | Hard – need to ensure consistency of decisions across a range of individuals |
| Professional dialogue | 9 | 6 | 9 | Low | £ | Medium – occurs frequently, recording outputs complex | Good – a range of officers data captured | Difficult – capturing a range of data and assessing it objectively |
| Multiple choice | 9 | **4** | **5** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Synoptic assessment | 9 | 9 | 9 | Low | £ | Medium – final written knowledge tests used throughout | Good – a wide range of opinions integrated | Difficult – limited opportunities to undertake the tests |
| Practical observation | **5** | 9 | 9 | Low | £ | Low – continuous observation part of the assessment | Good – a wide range of sources used | Hard – subjective and qualitative |
| Observed assessment | 9 | 7 | 8 | Low | £ | Low – used as part of routine training plan | Good – multiple opportunities for assessment by a range of officers | Hard – challenge to tease out progress elements for reporting |
| Expert panel | 9 | 4 | 6 | Low | £ | Medium – used at the end of each grading stage. Varies in complexity based on need | Good – a range of officers | Difficult – due to the range of officers employed |
| Viva interview | 9 | 5 | 5 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Written assignments | 9 | 5 | 5 | Medium | ££ | Hard – used frequently and on a needs basis | Low – assignments contain judgments and competence assessments | Moderate – grading uses a range of measures |
| Evidence portfolio | **7** | **7** | **7** | Medium | ££ | Moderate – a core element of the assessment process used to monitor and assess progress | Good – used and assessed by a range of officers | Difficult – due to the complex range of evidence used |
| Audio-video recording | N/A | N/A | N/A |  |  |  |  |  |
| Recognition of prior learning (RPL) | 8 | 4 | N/A | Low | £ | Low – based on Pre-Join Certificate and/or training as Special Constable or PCSO | Good – prior assessments are part of accepted learning system. | N/A |

**Analysis of the implementation matrix**

* The IPLDP uses several modes of assessment (this is judged as the best way to produce occupationally competent police officers).
* Although there is no end testing (required by the Apprenticeship reform), assessment is conducted throughout probationary training with a series of assessments at the end of each stage, which relate to occupational milestones.
* The range of continuous assessment is seamless and produces high levels of competence.