OUR LADY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Our lady Nagar, Maduravoyal, Chennai-600 095.

NAAC – DVV

Criteria – 2

2.4.4. Evolving indicated assessment tools

Guidelines for Oral Assessments and Exams

Oral assessments gauge students' knowledge and skills based on the spoken word, typically guided by questions or small tasks. Oral assessments can take on different formats, including:

- Presentation on a prepared topic (individual or group, live or recorded)
- Interviews or discussions to assess a student's knowledge or skills
- Simulations or demonstrations of skills individually or with others (e.g., client or patient)

Oral assessment is ideal for assessing:

- Higher-order thinking and synthesis
- Applied problem solving
- Application of theory to practice
- Depth of knowledge (rather than breadth)
- Students' ability to think on their feet
- Interpersonal competence and professionalism (e.g., in mock interactions with clients or patients)

Oral assessment should not be used:

- Solely for preventing academic dishonesty or to proctor students
- As a direct replacement for a written assessment or as a high-stakes assessment
- If it does not suitably assess the learning outcomes of a course

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Advantages of Oral Assessments

- Can assess **depth of knowledge and skills**, allowing for a more comprehensive view of students' abilities, cognitive processes, and conceptual misunderstandings.
- Opportunity for **interaction**, leading to a greater sense of connection for instructors and students, particularly in the remote environment.
- More **authentic** form of assessment if students are solving problems, demonstrating skills, and communicating using disciplinary language and scenarios.

- May increase **learning**, as students often spend more time preparing for oral exams.

- Opportunity for **clarification** of ambiguous questions in the moment.

- Can **prevent some academic integrity issues** because follow-up questions can be asked to clarify students' thinking and understanding.

Disadvantages of Oral Assessments

- More **time** to administer than written exams and not typically suitable for larger classes.

- Often more **stressful** for students, which can interfere with their performance. Students may be unfamiliar with the format, leading to fear and anxiety. Oral exams may be particularly stressful for students with mental health concerns.

- Potential for **issues with reliability** and fairness if students are asked different questions.

- Potential for **bias and subjective grading**, as grading cannot be anonymous. Students' articulateness, shyness, speed of thought, gender, ethnicity, language skills, accent, etc. can influence judgments about their knowledge and skills.

- Potential for **academic integrity issues** as students can pass on questions to others who are taking the exam later.

Considerations when Designing and Implementing Oral Assessments

Step 1: Decide on Appropriate Assessment Strategies for your Learning Outcomes

- Decide which learning outcomes should be assessed through this method.

- Decide how you will use oral assessment to complement other assessments of those learning outcomes (e.g., take-home assignments, group or individual reports). Oral assessments are best suited to probing depth of knowledge or skills.

- Decide what alternative assessment options will be available for students who may be disadvantaged by, or less comfortable with, oral assessment (e.g., students with hearing or speech impairments, anxiety, non-native speakers).

Step 2. Create Questions and Structure of the Assessment

- Design appropriate questions for each learning outcome. Focus on depth rather than breadth. Include potential follow-up questions and prompts based on different types of answers (e.g., asking students to clarify an unclear point or provide more detail).

- Standardize the number of questions, difficulty of questions, and the time allotted.

- Decide on the order of questions and any tasks students must perform (e.g., whiteboard drawing, screen sharing). Start with an easier question to ease students into the exam.

- Determine how and when you will vary the questions across students (e.g., use of different scenarios).

Step 3. Create a Grading Scheme

- Create a rubric or scoring guide with explicit criteria/standards, weighting, and model answers for each question. Often with oral assessments, answers are not necessarily right or wrong, but demonstrate different levels of mastery. The scoring guide should be straightforward enough that you can fill it in during the oral assessment.

- Decide if prompting means that points will be deducted.

Step 4. Prepare Students and Create Practice Opportunities

- Provide clear information to students about the content to be covered, the process and structure of the oral assessment, the material they can have available, and the grading criteria. Give students opportunities to ask questions about the assessment.

- Provide opportunities for practice. Students are often not experienced in expressing themselves orally within the discipline. Build in informal opportunities for speaking in class and short presentation activities with time for discussion and feedback.

- Share a recorded video demonstrating a typical oral assessment. Model relevant questions and answers, and how they would be graded.

Step 5. Conduct the Assessment

- Decide whether to use multiple examiners, which can be helpful for managing time, taking notes, solving technical issues, and grading reliability.

- Some students will need more encouragement as they may be shy or nervous. Shyness should not affect your perception of what the student knows.

- Consider recording the assessment in case of grade appeals and to share with students if they want to debrief or request feedback on their performance
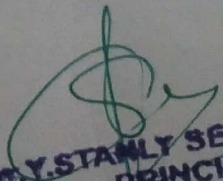
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What is a Rating Scale?

Rating scales are among the most common survey question types used for online and offline surveys. They are close-ended questions with a set of categories as options for respondents. Rating scales help gather information on qualitative and quantitative attributes.

The most common examples of rating scales are the Likert scale, star rating, and slider. For example, when you visit an online shopping site, you see a rating scale question when it asks you to rate your shopping experience.

It is a popular choice for conducting market research. It can gather more relative information about a product or certain aspects of the product. The scale is commonly used to gain quantifiable feedback. It can be used to gain insight into a product's performance, employee satisfaction or skill, customer service performance, etc.