

# Assessment Relevance and Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment requires students to draw from course materials and their lives outside of the classroom to apply what they've learned in creative ways to a new, complex circumstance or situation. Authentic assessment measures students' success in a way that is relevant to the skills required of them once they've finished your course or program. They foster disciplinary behaviours and ways of thinking. According to Wiggins (1998), an assessment is authentic if it:

- is realistic.
- requires judgement and innovation.
- asks the student to “do” the subject.
- replicates or simulates the contexts in which adults are “tested” in the workplace, in civic life, and in personal life.
- assesses the student's ability to efficiently and effectively use a repertoire of knowledge and skill to negotiate a complex task.
- allows appropriate opportunities to rehearse, practice, consult resources, and get feedback on and refine performances and products.

Typically, authentic assessments can take one of two forms: real-world assessments that require students to engage in actual situations in their field (e.g. proposals, policy briefs, reports, memos, presentations, creation of public education resources), or realistic assessments that are relevant in nature but have students engage in situations that mimic the real world (e.g. a case study or simulation).

Regardless of the type, authentic assessment is often coupled with opportunities for rehearsal and/or practice. Authentic assessments are often scaffolded throughout a course and allow the instructor to provide feedback that students can then implement in subsequent drafts.

## Examples of Authentic Assessments

Medicine	Provide a case study of a patient and students assess and create a plan of care
Business	Develop a business/marketing/sales plan for an imaginary or real company in a student's area of interest
Computer Science	Troubleshoot a problematic piece of code. Develop a website/app to solve a particular problem and/or meet a set of criteria.
Psychology	Examine/critique a case study from multiple theoretical positions
Service/Experiential Learning Courses	Consider how a community agency might be impacted by a particular challenge (budget cuts, infrastructure outage, public health crisis, etc.)
Music	Performance (instrumental or voice, individual or group)



Biology	Detailed analysis of one's diet and exercise, including data analysis of calories, carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, etc., and creation of an action plan
History	Engage in a role play of a particular event in history. Describe what might have happened if one element of a historical event had changed.
Environmental Sciences	Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper about a community environmental concern
Applied Human Nutrition	Construct a website or public education resource
Child Studies	Create a resource for parents of school-aged children based on research in an area of interest

Adapted from Indiana University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, [Authentic Assessment](#)

**Additional resources:**

- [Authentic Assessment in the Online Classroom](#)
- [Assessing Authentically](#)

