

# Identifying Assessment Methods

Assessment methods are tools used to gather meaningful evidence about the effectiveness of a program, service, or unit. These methods clarify whether intended outcomes are being achieved and offer insight into how practices can be strengthened. Whether focused on student learning, service delivery, or operational performance, assessment methods support a culture of reflection, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

## Administrative and Academic Support Units

Assessment methods for administrative and academic support units evaluate the quality, efficiency, and impact of services. Common approaches include usage tracking, turnaround times, completion rates, and stakeholder feedback. Effective methods align with the unit's mission and provide actionable insights for planning and improvement. A balanced approach includes both direct (quantitative) and indirect (qualitative) measures.

Assessment methods for Administrative and Academic/Student Support units should:

- Include 1-3 measures to assess each outcome.
- Summarize the process to collect information, including details of the assessment instrument.
- Include both direct and indirect measures.
- Include a threshold for success that specifically aligns with measures and outcomes.
- Represent a reasonable “stretch” to emphasize quality.

## Academic Programs

Educational programs typically adopt assessment methods that focus on student learning and development. The selection of assessment methods should align with the unit's mission and outcomes and be appropriate to the context and population served.

Assessment methods for educational programs should:

- Include 1-3 measures of identified signature assignments.
- Summarize the process to collect information, including details of the assessment instrument.
- Include both direct and indirect measures. Direct measures include exams, portfolios, presentations, or other student-produced work that demonstrate learning. Indirect methods, such as surveys or self-assessments, capture perceptions and experiences.
- Include both formative and summative assessment methods. Formative assessments provide opportunities for feedback to students and for improvement in student performance. Summative assessments generally consist of course-level comprehensive final exams and external licensure/certification board exams.
- Include a threshold for success that specifically aligns with measures and outcomes.
- Represent a reasonable “stretch” to emphasize quality.