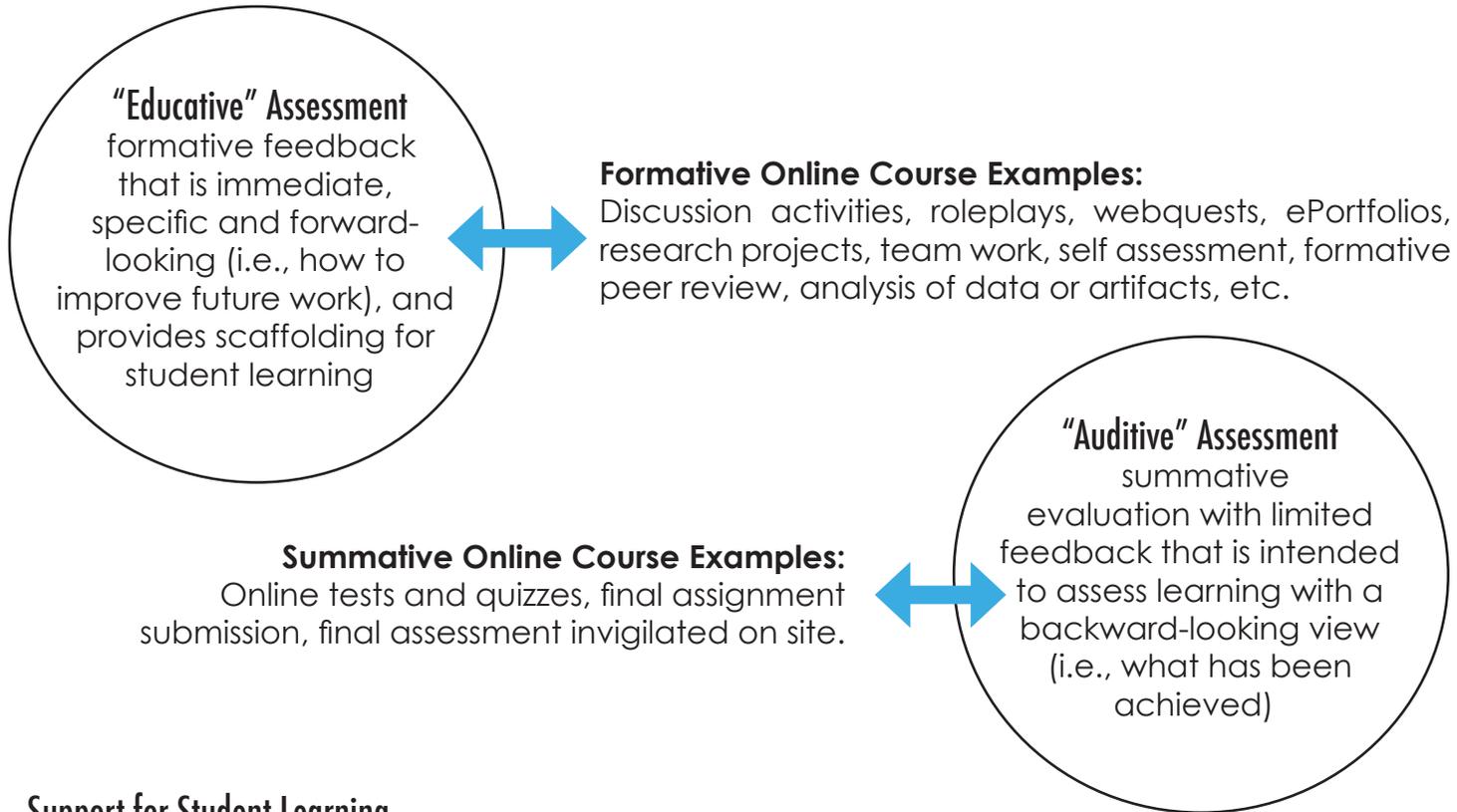




Types of Assessment & Examples

As in a face-to-face class, within your online course there is a range of approaches to assessmentⁱ:



Support for Student Learning

When most people imagine assessment in an online course, they first think of auditive examples, particularly multiple choice tests and the on-site final exams that are still commonly required for many distance courses. Given that students will always orient themselves to success in assessment components of a course, our best efforts to facilitate a student-centred and engaging online course necessitate a corresponding re-thinking and re-alignment of assessment processes to match learning outcomes.

How can you scaffold the learning process and help your students develop higher order thinking skills that require reflection, application and integration? Rather than thinking of instruction and testing as two separate processes, consider assessing your students on actual learning tasks facilitated within the online environment in a manner that is authentic and relevant. Online courses provide particularly fertile ground for improving digital literacy, a critical skill for tomorrow’s graduates. Educative assessment opportunities integrate learning and evaluation for an engaging, student-centred experience.

Academic Integrity

Maintaining academic integrity can occur at multiple points within the online course life cycleⁱⁱ:

1. Course assignment and assessment design

- engage students in a variety of activities
- weight course assessments to decrease stakes on any single component
- reflect a process that incorporates scaffolding or sequential work
- design open book or collaborative assessments

2. Orientation for students

- highlight policies and academic support resources
- create a culture and awareness of issues

3. During assessment processes

- monitor student performance across multiple assignments
- use plagiarism deterrents such as Turnitin.com
- ensure online term tests and quizzes, using LMS features such as randomization and time limits

4. Exam/final assessment time

- on-site final exam invigilation is supported within the University of Toronto definition of a fully online course

Infrastructure – Ensuring Success

Moving into online assessment requires the instructor to consider a range of issues to ensure everyone is supported in the process. This may include:

- organizing divisional *help desk* or *TA support* for learners who are experiencing difficulties
- ongoing course *website maintenance* to ensure that the online resources are kept up to date
- ensuring appropriate *technical infrastructure*
- having a process for *feedback and issues*
- having adequate *back up processes* for students, TAs and instructors to avoid loss of data or documents

Plan ahead, consult with your divisional educational technologist and test the technology and processes before you begin! For more advice on online assessment contact CTSI at:
ctsi.teaching@utoronto.ca

i Wiggins, Grant. (1998). *Educative Assessment*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

ii Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education. Rep. UT Telecampus, WCET, and Instructional Technology Council, June 2009.