

assessment into greater harmony. This, in turn, will have a powerful influence on learning outcomes.

1.5 Purposes for assessment

There are a number of different reasons for assessing learners' performance. These range from providing information for learner placement purposes through to providing data for accountability purposes.

Brindley (1989; 2001) identifies six main purposes for assessment. These are:

- Certification: e.g. to provide learners with a record of their achievement
- Selection: e.g. to place learners in class
- Accountability: e.g. to provide information to funding authorities
- Diagnosis: e.g. to provide feedback on progress
- Instructional decision-making: e.g. to provide information on learners' strengths and weaknesses for course planning
- Motivation: e.g. to encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning

Reflect

With reference to your own teaching situation, rank order these reasons from most important (1) to least important (6).

Reasons for assessment	Ranking
Place learners in classes	
Provide feedback on progress	
Provide information on learners' strengths and weaknesses for course planning	
Provide information to funding authorities for accountability purposes	
Encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning	
Provide learners with a record of their achievement	

If possible, compare your rankings with a number of other teachers. Do you agree on the most / least important reasons? Can you think of any others?

The major purpose of this package is to promote the idea of assessment for learning, i.e. using assessment to provide useful feedback to learners and teachers to facilitate more effective learning outcomes.