

# TRANSFORMING ASSESSMENT

## STRATEGIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

### Introduction to this Workbook

This workbook is designed to complement and support your learning in the associated e-course, Transforming Assessment: Strategies for Higher Education. This course was developed by [Queen's Assessment and Evaluation Group \(AEG\)](#) in partnership with the [University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education \(OISE\)](#) and funded by [eCampus Ontario's Virtual Learning Strategy](#).

This self-paced professional learning e-course provides higher education instructors with the opportunity to transform their approach to assessment—building on existing assessment knowledge and skills, reflecting on foundational assessment principles, exploring contemporary assessment strategies, and creating new assessments to support students' learning and achievement across a variety of teaching contexts.

### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Apply foundational assessment principles and e-tools to the design of an assessment plan
2. Apply alternative assessment strategies to ensure alignment, authenticity, and transparency in assessment
3. Apply assessment principles to practically and critically address dilemmas in student assessment
4. Create “good” assessments for a variety of teaching contexts (in-person, blended, online) and students' needs
5. Integrate *Equity, Diversity, Decolonization, and Indigeneity* (EDDI) strategies in assessment planning and decisions

To align with the course, this workbook is divided into five modules:

- Getting Started: Approaches to Classroom Assessment
- Module 1: Grounding Assessment
- Module 2: Exploring Alternative Assessments
- Module 3: Creating Alternative Assessments
- Wrapping Up: Revisiting Approaches to Classroom Assessment

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You may work through the modules and workbook activities in any sequence; however, the course has been designed to progress in sequence from Getting Started through Wrapping Up. Throughout the course, you will be prompted to complete workbook activities with the following icon:



Completing these activities in the workbook allows you to document and save your responses for future reference. There are a total of 44 activities in the course:

- Getting Started Module: Activities 0-1 to 0-2
- Module 1: Activities 1-1 to 1-11
- Module 2: Activities 2-1 to 2-18
- Module 3: Activities 3-1 to 3-12
- Wrapping Up Module: Activity 4-1

By the end of the course, your workbook will provide evidence of your new and expanding assessment knowledge, skills, and habits of mind and can be used to inform your future instructional practice and ongoing professional learning about assessment.

**Let's get started!**

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### Getting Started

#### Activity 0-1

As your first workbook activity, take a moment to think about the course learning outcomes we shared at the start of this module. For each learning outcomes, fill in the first two columns of the KWL chart.

*Note: You will revisit this KWL chart again in the Wrapping Up Module to fill in the third column.*

<b>1. Apply foundational assessment principles and e-tools to the design of an assessment plan</b>		
K What I <b>know</b> ...	W What I <b>want</b> to know...	L What I <b>learned</b> ...
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>2. Apply alternative assessment strategies to ensure alignment, authenticity, and transparency in assessment</b>		
K What I <b>know</b> ...	W What I <b>want</b> to know...	L What I <b>learned</b> ...
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>3. Apply assessment principles to practically and critically address dilemmas in student assessment</b>		
K What I <b>know</b> ...	W What I <b>want</b> to know...	L What I <b>learned</b> ...
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>4. Create “good” assessments for a variety of teaching contexts (in-person, blended, online) and students’ needs</b>		
K What I <b>know</b> ...	W What I <b>want</b> to know...	L What I <b>learned</b> ...
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>5. Integrate <i>Equity, Diversity, Decolonization, and Indigeneity</i> (EDDI) strategies in assessment planning and decisions</b>		
K What I <b>know</b> ...	W What I <b>want</b> to know...	L What I <b>learned</b> ...
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### Activity 0-2

After watching the video on assessment orientation, take a moment to respond to the following questions.

- What is your current orientation toward assessment?
- What is the dominant orientation toward assessment in your field?
- What is the dominant orientation toward assessment in your context of practice?

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### Module 1: Grounding Assessment

#### TOPIC 1: ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

##### Activity 1-1

##### *Attitudes*

Which approach(es) to Assessment Purposes did you prioritize most? Least? Or were your priorities equally distributed? Were you surprised by your results?

Click or tap here to enter text.

##### *Impacts*

To what extent is your approach to Assessment Purposes influenced by your educational experiences, discipline or field, course delivery mode, course learning outcomes, and institutional policies?

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### *Goals*

In what ways might your approach to Assessment Purposes impact your students' learning experiences and outcomes your course(s), whether in-person, blended, or online?

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### Activity 1-2

#### *Ideas*

In your current courses, do you use any assessments for both formative and summative purposes? Are there any summative assessments that you could also use for formative purposes?

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### *Connections*

How might you enhance the current balance between formative and summative assessment purposes in your courses to better inform your practice? To better support your students' learning and achievement?

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### *Extensions*

Does balance look different in in-person, blended, and online learning contexts?

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### TOPIC 2: ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

#### Activity 1-3

##### *Attitudes*

Which approach(es) to Assessment Processes did you prioritize most? Least? Or were your priorities equally distributed? Were you surprised by your results?

Click or tap here to enter text.

##### *Impacts*

To what extent is your approach to Assessment Processes influenced by your educational experiences, discipline or field, course delivery mode, course learning outcomes, and institutional policies?

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## STRATEGIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

### Goals

In what ways might your approach to Assessment Processes impact your students' learning experiences and outcomes your course(s), whether in-person, blended, or online?

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### Activity 1-4

#### Thinking about how you use feedback in your courses...

- How do you currently incorporate feedback in your courses?
- Which sources of feedback do you leverage most?
- Do you use feedback differently in in-person, blended, and online learning?
- How does your approach to feedback differ in small or large classes?
- What opportunities have you identified to enhance how you offer feedback opportunities to support students' learning in the courses you teach?

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### Activity 1-5

#### *Ideas*

What approach to Assessment Processes intrigued you most as you listened to our Experienced Practitioners?

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#### *Connections*

What assessment approach are you interested in trying in one of your courses?

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### *Extensions*

What contextual limitations might you need to address before trying this assessment approach?

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### TOPIC 3: ASSESSMENT FAIRNESS

#### Activity 1-6

##### *Attitudes*

Which approach(es) to Assessment Fairness did you prioritize most? Least? Or were your priorities equally distributed? Were you surprised by your results?

Click or tap here to enter text.

##### *Impacts*

To what extent is your approach to Assessment Fairness influenced by your educational experiences, discipline or field, course delivery mode, course learning outcomes, and institutional policies?

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# TRANSFORMING ASSESSMENT

## STRATEGIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

### *Goals*

In what ways might your approach to Assessment Fairness impact your students' learning experiences and outcomes your course(s), whether in-person, blended, or online?

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### *Activity 1-7*

After responding to the assessment scenarios in the course, reflect on an assessment dilemma you have experienced in your own classroom. How did your response to the real-life scenario align with the fairness principles and tips?

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### Activity 1-8

#### Thinking about a course you are currently teaching or may teach in the future...

- How will you support assessment fairness principles?
- How does your approach to assessment support your institutional EDDI strategy?
- How will you promote an equitable approach to assessment?
- How might a personalized approach to assessment address the realities in your classroom?
- How can we think beyond boxes when it comes to promoting fairness?

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### TOPIC 4: ASSESSMENT THEORY

#### Activity 1-9

##### *Attitudes*

Which approach(es) to Assessment Theory did you prioritize most? Least? Or were your priorities equally distributed? Were you surprised by your results?

Click or tap here to enter text.

##### *Impacts*

To what extent is your approach to Assessment Theory influenced by your educational experiences, discipline or field, course delivery mode, course learning outcomes, and institutional policies?

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### Goals

What are your current professional learning goals with respect to Assessment Theory?

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### Activity 1-10

- Can you think of an example of an assessment that is valid but not reliable?
- Can you think of an example of an assessment that is reliable but not valid?
- What do you value most in your assessment practice - reliability or validity? Why do you think that is? How does your context influence your values?

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### Activity 1-11

#### Thinking about a course you are currently teaching or may teach in future...

- What contextual barriers might compromise reliability, and how will you navigate these?
- How might you triangulate assessments to enhance validity?

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### Module 2: Exploring Alternative Assessments

#### ACTIVATION

##### Activity 2-1

##### **Think about your past experiences as a learner...**

- Think about your best experience with assessment (not necessarily the assessment you got the best mark on, but the assessment that best enabled you to demonstrate your learning). What characteristics of this assessment made it your *best* experience?
- Now, think about your worst experience with assessment (not necessarily the assessment you got the worst mark on, but the assessment that did not enable you to demonstrate your learning effectively). What characteristics of this assessment made it your *worst* experience?
- What are you coming to realize about the characteristics of “good” assessment?

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### TOPIC 1: FEEDBACK IN ASSESSMENT

#### Activity 2-2

#### **Thinking about the Feedback Sandwich, RISE feedback model, and feedback dialogues:**

- Do you currently use any of these strategies in your classroom?
- Are there other feedback strategies you currently use?
- Which strategy will you try moving forward?

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### Activity 2-3

#### Thinking about these instructors' examples of scaffolded assessments...

- How do you connect with their examples and experiences?
- Are there any strategies that you might try or adapt for your own classroom?
- What challenges do you anticipate, and how might you navigate these challenges?

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### Activity 2-4

#### Thinking about these examples of technology-enabled feedback...

- Do you currently use any of these strategies in the classroom?
- Are there other technology-enabled feedback strategies you currently use?
- Which strategy will you try moving forward?

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### Activity 2-5

- How do these strategies and instructors' stories influence your thinking about instructor feedback?
- Based on what you've learned, how might you change your approach to instructor feedback?

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Activity 2-6

*Let's revisit a scenario from the ACAI.*

### Large Class Feedback

You are teaching a large enrolment course with limited TA support. The students will be submitting assignments every two weeks (i.e., bi-weekly), a midterm exam, and a culminating assignment all designed to support their learning.

### Based on what you've learned about feedback:

- How will you provide feedback to your students?
- How will you incorporate peer feedback and self-assessment in your course?
- Will feedback serve formative or summative purposes or both?

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### Activity 2-7

While it can feel challenging and overwhelming to shift classroom culture from a grade focus to a learning focus, transforming one traditional assessment to an alternative assessment can mark an important first step in fostering this shift.

Designing an alternative assessment task provides inherent opportunities for ongoing formative feedback (instructor, peer, and self-assessment) regarding performance and learning, which begins to focus classroom activities and assessments on enhancing growth and learning through feedback versus judging and measuring learning through grades.

**What is one thing that you could change right now?**

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### TOPIC 2: STUDENT-CENTRED ASSESSMENT

#### Activity 2-8

**Think about an assessment you have designed or may design in the future:**

- Could you write (or have you written) a clear purpose statement for the assessment? How did you share the purpose statement with your students?
- Would you be able to argue for the relevance of what the assessment is asking students to do? Can you explain how this assessment connects to professional practices or thinking beyond the post-secondary environment?
- How will students know and understand the criteria for success in the assessment? Have you included any tools to guide students, such as a checklist, rating scale, or rubric? Do you plan to co-develop success criteria and grading tools with your students?

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### Activity 2-9

**Consider the student-centred alternative assessment strategies below. Self-assess the extent to which you use each of the strategies in the courses you teach. What do you do well? What could you improve?**

- Engage with students.
- Provide clear information on assessment in a learning cycle or course at the outset.
- Ensure students understand what is expected of them from the outset.
- Include multiple opportunities for formative assessment through instructor feedback, peer feedback, and self-assessment.
- Offer students choice in assessment with guiding parameters.
- Use a variety of assessment strategies.
- Support students' active engagement in the assessment process.

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### Activity 2-10

#### Reflecting on the UDL tips in the course:

- Record 2-3 ways that UDL in assessment supports your students and your teaching.
- Upon reflection, might you be inadvertently excluding members of your class from demonstrating their learning through assessment?
- Which UDL assessment tips will you commit to using in the future and why?

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### Activity 2-11

**We encourage you to explore your institution's EDDI strategy and reflect on the following questions...**

- How does student-centred alternative assessment support your institutions EDDI strategy?
- How might the UDL Tips for Assessment help you enact your institution's EDDI strategy in your assessment practice?
- Who can help you ensure that your assessment practice aligns with institutional EDDI strategies and upholds provincial accessibility requirements (e.g., AODA)?

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Activity 2-12

*Let's revisit a scenario from the ACAI.*

### Online Group Work

A core assignment in your course involves students working in groups online.

**Based on what you've learned about fairness and inclusivity in assessment, including principles of UDL, your institutional EDDI strategy, and accessibility in online contexts, consider the following questions.**

- How would you design the assignment to ensure it is fair and inclusive for all students?
- Provide an example of how you would incorporate opportunities for feedback from instructor, peers, and self-assessment to support students' learning and performance on the assignment.
- Explain how you would grade students' performance on the assignment.

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### Activity 2-13

#### Thinking about the matching activity you just completed in the course:

- Which learning outcomes and alternative assessments were easiest to match? Why?
- Which learning outcomes and alternative assessments were most challenging to match? Why?
- Which alternative assessments may inadvertently pose barriers to students? How might you mitigate these barriers?
- Which alternative assessments will you adapt into your own classroom?
- What degree of choice within and between assessments will you offer your students?

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### TOPIC 3: FRAMEWORKS FOR ASSESSMENT

#### Activity 2-14

*“There is clear evidence that, whether intentional or not, assessments influence both how educators teach and how and what students learn.”* (Boud & Associates)

**Consider this quote and reflect on the following questions:**

- Have you ever designed a final assessment that influenced how you taught a course?
- How did your students engage in the course?
- Did the assessment limit or promote meaningful learning? Why do you think that was the case?

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Activity 2-15

**Reflecting on these instructors' experiences with cognitive frameworks:**

- How might you use the ICE Model in a course you teach or may teach in the future?
- What benefits, if any, do you anticipate from using a cognitive framework in your classroom?
- What challenges, if any, do you anticipate from using a cognitive framework in your classroom?

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### Activity 2-16

**Now that you've explored some instructors' and students' experiences with authentic assessment in higher education, consider the following questions:**

- What examples of authentic assessment were most applicable or inspiring to you? Why?
- What authentic assessments will you try in a course you are currently teaching or may teach in the future?
- Do you anticipate any barriers to trying these authentic assessments in your context? What supports might help you navigate these barriers (e.g., Library, IT, Centre for Teaching and Learning)?

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### TOPIC 4: TRY IT!

#### Activity 2-17

**Take a moment to think about an assessment in a course you teach (or may teach in the future).**

- Briefly describe the assessment.
- How might you change the assessment so it is more feedback-driven? Student-centred? Authentic?
- How might this revised assessment better support teaching and learning in your course?

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- How would the revised assessment better promote fairness and inclusivity?
  - e.g., UDL principles, institutional EDDI strategy, accessibility requirements
- What influence will the revised assessment have on your students' engagement?
  - e.g., with course content, you, their peers

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- Would there be challenges associated with revising the assessment? If so, how might you navigate these challenges?
- Would the revised assessment be different for in-person, blended, or online courses? Synchronous or asynchronous courses? If so, how?
- Could any of your colleagues provide helpful feedback on your revised assessment? If so, whom?

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### Activity 2-18

You've reached the end of Module 2. We have one more activity for you.

- **What is one thing that you could change right now?**
- **How will you begin to create your students' best experiences with assessment?**

*As you consider these questions, remember that best experiences are not necessarily the assessments they get their best marks on, but the assessments that best enable them to demonstrate their learning.*

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### Module 3: Creating Alternative Assessments

#### ACTIVATION

##### Activity 3-1

**Think about the assessment scheme in a course you teach or may teach in the future.**

**Now identify *one* assessment in that course that you would like to modify or recreate to make it more feedback-driven, student-centred, and authentic.**

- What are the purposes of the assessment?
- What learning outcomes does it assess?
- What are the associated assessment criteria and grading tools?
- What are common student needs and interests in this course?
- Will you modify the current assessment or create new one?

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### TOPIC 1: AN ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

#### Activity 3-2

**Begin to think about the assessment you are modifying or creating for your course.**

- How will your assessment reflect the characteristics of alternative assessment?

*As you answer this question, follow along in the course for prompting questions and links to earlier modules.*

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### TOPIC 2: ASSESSMENT PLANNING FRAMEWORK

#### Activity 3-3

##### Reflect on the following:

- What are the purposes of your modified or new assessment?
- What is your rationale for these assessment purposes?
- How do these purposes support teaching and learning in your classroom?

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#### Activity 3-4

##### Reflect on the following:

- What do I want my students to know and be able to do?
- How will I know my students have learned?
- What activities will help my students learn?

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### Activity 3-5

#### Reflect on the following:

- Which alternative assessment strategies best align with the learning outcomes I am assessing?
- Which alternative assessment strategies would be most authentic for my students?
- How, if at all, will I offer students choice in the assessment they complete?
- Will students complete the assessment individually or in groups?

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### Activity 3-6

#### Reflect on the following:

- Which feedback sources will I incorporate in my assessment?
  - instructor, peer, self-assessment
- When will feedback occur?
- How will I use technology to support feedback?
- Will I use any new feedback strategies? If so, how?
  - ghost grading, grade withholding, ungrading, self-grading
- How, if at all, will peer feedback and self-assessment contribute to students' grades?
- How will I ensure feedback is effective?

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### Activity 3-7

#### Reflect on the following:

- How will I use cognitive frameworks to guide my assessment design? (e.g., Bloom's Taxonomy, ICE Model)
  - Which cognitive framework would best support my instructional approach?
  - Which cognitive framework would best support my students' learning?

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### Activity 3-8

#### Reflect on the following:

- Which grading tool(s) will I use to support formative feedback and grading of this assessment?
- How well do these grading tools reflect the integration of the knowledge and skills I want to assess (learning outcomes)?
- When will formative feedback and grading occur in this assessment?
- How, if at all, will I involve students in the co-creation of grading tools for this assessment?

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### Activity 3-9

#### Reflect on the following:

- How will I ensure fairness in my assessment?
  - Fairness strategies
  - UDL tips
  - EDDI strategies
  - AODA requirements

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### Activity 3-10

#### Reflect on the following:

- How will I triangulate assessment evidence to enhance the reliability and validity of this assessment?
  - multi-stage assignment, multiple sources of feedback, other course assignments

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### TOPIC 3: ENSURING “GOOD” ASSESSMENTS

#### Activity 3-11

#### **Reflect on the following:**

The UDL Tips for Assessment provide a guide for revising and refining your assessment. In your workbook, respond to the following reflection prompts to self-assess and further develop your assessment.

*Use the review questions in the course to self-assess the assessment you have modified or created using the UDL Tips for Assessment.*

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### TOPIC 4: MOVING FORWARD

#### Activity 3-12

**Congratulations!** You have begun the process of creating a “good” assessment for your course using our assessment development process and *Assessment Planning Framework*. Over time, you will adapt and refine our process and framework to support your creation of “good” assessments and establish new ways of thinking about and approaching assessment in your classroom.

**Now it’s time to set some professional goals for your future assessment learning and practice!**

Based on your experience with our assessment development process and *Assessment Planning Framework*, identify **3 goals** you have for your future assessment learning and practice.

Be sure to use the SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

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### Wrapping Up

#### Activity 4-1

As you reflect on your pre- and post-ACAI Assessment Profiles, we invite you to complete one final reflection and goal-setting activity.

**For each dimension of assessment (Purposes, Processes, Fairness, and Theory) respond to the following questions:**

- How, if at all, has my approach to this dimension changed?
- What is one new thing I will commit to learning or doing in relation to this dimension?

#### *Assessment Purposes*

How, if at all, has my approach to Assessment Purposes changed?	What is ONE new thing I will commit to learning or doing in relation to Assessment Purposes?
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#### *Assessment Processes*

How, if at all, has my approach to Assessment Processes changed?	What is ONE new thing I will commit to learning or doing in relation to Assessment Processes?
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### *Assessment Fairness*

How, if at all, has my approach to Assessment Fairness changed?	What is ONE new thing I will commit to learning or doing in relation to Assessment Fairness?
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### *Assessment Theory*

How, if at all, has my approach to Assessment Theory changed?	What is ONE new thing I will commit to learning or doing in relation to Assessment Theory?
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Thank you!

You have reached the end of Transforming Assessment: Strategies for Higher Education. Thank you for taking this assessment journey with us. To continue to learn with us and contribute to research on assessment in higher education, visit [queens-aeg.ca](https://queens-aeg.ca).