



Performance Assessment (PA) is...

the demonstration & evaluation of applied skills that can be taught and learned

High Quality Performance Assessment (HQPA) is...

- eliciting evidence of learning that matters
- tight on its criteria for success
- open to different learner approaches
- authentic
- a learning experience in and of itself

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<i>Is it...?</i>	<i>HQPA Look-Fors</i>
Eliciting Learning That Matters	<p>Transferability. The knowledge and skills being demonstrated are in high demand and/or are highly transferable to many postsecondary pursuits; the form and method of the challenge are also common to the adult experience</p>
	<p>Alignment. Some of the knowledge and skills being demonstrated match those identified in recognized standards: state-determined content standards and others (e.g. industry, professional, academic)</p>
	<p>Complexity. The assessment and the learning journey have some cognitive complexity. This might look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifying what skills and knowledge are needed to complete a given task ■ Using higher order thinking skills (beyond recall) ■ Navigating unexpected challenges and adjusting accordingly

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Tight on its Criteria for Success	Clarity of outcomes. It is clear what skills and knowledge are being measured, both in the challenge students must complete, as well as the criteria used for evaluation

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Open to Different Learner Approaches	Choice. Students are expected to take charge of their learning. This might look like: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Expressing their own views○ Accessing personal strengths, interests, passions, backgrounds, and cultures○ Deciding and designing their process○ Deciding and designing their product

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<i>Is it...?</i>	<i>HQPA Look-Fors</i>
Authentic	<p>Real work. Students are engaged in real work in the real world, both in the assessment and the learning journey. This might look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On-the-spot application of life skills and/or discipline-specific skills ○ Moments when the students' work is seen, appreciated, and/or used by more than the teacher ○ Students are engaged in doing things they are likely to have to do again
	<p>Real results. Students' work and learning is driven by a clear purpose. This might look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Offering solutions to real problems ○ Making a real contribution to people who need it ○ Pitching ideas to people of influence
	<p>Real examples. Students are exposed to the work of actual experts as models</p>

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A Learning Experience In and Of Itself	<p>Reflection. The assessment itself is an opportunity for metacognition. This can look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrating understanding of the importance and application of the measured skills ● Reflecting on: growth over time, choices made, challenges met, struggles experienced ● Fielding provocative or probing questions from audience and/or evaluator
	<p>Feedback. The performance assessment itself is an opportunity for students to gain feedback through self-, peer-, community, and/or teacher assessment</p>
	<p>Revision. The performance assessment plan includes multiple embedded opportunities for students to adjust an approach, as well as revise and resubmit work.</p>

Rationale: How do the HQPA criteria contribute to rigorous and equitable assessment experiences?

Eliciting Evidence of Learning That Matters

In order to provide students with as many postsecondary options as possible, high quality performance assessment measures **skills that are in high demand, and relevant** to multiple postsecondary pursuits. It is essential to engage community stakeholders, including employers, industry professionals, and higher education in validating the skills and knowledge that matter, in an ongoing way. Today, what college and career readiness looks like has evolved from knowing certain facts and technical skills, to being able to apply cross-cutting skills, including the social, emotional, and interpersonal skills we now know to be essential to success. Additionally, **recognized standards often reflect authentic field-specific needs**. In any case they can serve as mighty “gatekeepers” on the way to opportunity. Learners need to develop both -- skills that will open doors for them and skills that are broadly transferable. **A high quality performance assessment creates the necessity and the opportunity for students to learn and demonstrate these skills, so it is clear where learners are in their development of them.**

Tight on its Criteria for Success

What qualifies as a high quality piece of student work is never in doubt, when a performance assessment is designed well. Traditionally, the teacher may be the only one who knows what exactly constitutes a quality version of what she is asking her students to do. In HQPA, students know what learning is expected for them to demonstrate, and what it looks like when it is done well, at a developmentally appropriate level. **This reflects not only a value on craftsmanship, but the belief and expectations that all students can and must not only improve, but accomplish a certain level of proficiency.**

Open to Different Learner Approaches

The assessment does not dictate exactly how learners must meet the challenge set before them. **The cognitive demand required to “chart one’s own path” is**

more intensive than following directions, more adequately preparing students to be problem solvers and innovators. Building in choice is also a key strategy for supporting **equitable access to diverse learners** by ensuring that students have varied entry points that build on existing strengths and passions, **in their engagement and persistence**, and provide options for investing hard work in content that is meaningful and relevant to them.

Authentic

Just like necessity drives innovation, authenticity and purpose give shape to HQPA design. **Pursuing real goals for real reasons is a powerful motivator** for learners to take intellectual risks, develop their identities, persist in solving elusive problems, and increase their connections to their community and the world around them. **Doing work in authentic contexts also provides a more valid demonstration of how students are able to apply, transfer, and integrate their learning.**

Learning Experience In and Of Itself

HQPA presents learning opportunities for everyone involved. Learners can see how they have grown, and be provoked to think differently than they have. Teachers can learn what their students know and can do in order to plan responsive instruction, and identify areas for individual student goal-setting and support. Additionally, the learning sciences have shown that people learn by doing and then engaging in metacognitive reflection. **Learning by doing, taking many opportunities to practice and apply skills and knowledge, and reflecting on the process, enables us to internalize and consolidate learning, reinforce the neural pathways needed to expand our cognitive capacities, and identify what worked and didn’t work in the learning process.**