

Tips for Developing a Learning Assessment

As you develop a learning assessment, remember that it is intended to assess what the participants have learned and help demonstrate program attendance and participation.

CONTENT

Test items should be developed from content offered throughout the program. Each learning objective should be assessed. Test items should not focus on content that is minimally relevant to the overall learning experience.

DIFFICULTY

Test items should be hard enough to test learning and participation without being overly burdensome. Test items should not be overly simple.

LENGTH

NBCC does not regulate the length of learning assessments; however, you should make the assessment proportionate to the number of credit hours being awarded. For example, consider asking 4–5 questions per credit hour.

SCORING

NBCC does not specify what percentage the participant must correctly answer to pass the assessment. The CE provider must determine the passing percentage.

DESIGN

Many CE providers find that multiple choice works well for participants—it is easy to score, and if test questions are designed well, it is considered a more objective measurement of learning.

ANSWERS

NBCC does not require CE providers to offer answers for items answered incorrectly. Offering correct answers should be included as an option if deemed beneficial to learning outcomes.

EXAMPLES

Below are examples of test items that **are** optimal. Optimal questions should be specific, correlate with the learning objectives, hard enough to test learning outcomes, and directly relevant and developmentally appropriate to the overall learning experience.

1. Diaphragmatic breathing helps to promote relaxation by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.
 - A) True
 - B) False
2. What is one of the six core processes in Acceptance Commitment Therapy?
 - A) ethical action
 - B) transparency
 - C) cognitive defusion
 - D) mental flexibility

Below are examples of test items that are **not** optimal.

1. Who is the father of psychoanalysis?
 - A) Mickey Mouse
 - B) Carl Rogers
 - C) Sigmund Freud
 - D) Albert Ellis

The question is too simple for graduate-level counselors. In addition, including Mickey Mouse may be viewed as less than professional.

2. The name of the client in the first vignette was Shawna.
 - A) True
 - B) False

This content is not relevant to the overall learning experience.