

Use of Computers in Instruction

Article 1

(ERIC) Kerka, Sandra., Wonacott, Michael E., Grossman, Cheryl., and Judy Wagner. (2000)
Clearing House on Adult, Career and Vocational Education, No. *Assessing Learners Online –
Online Assessment: Principles and Practices*, ED-99-CO-0013.

This issue of the *Practitioner File* looks at issues and techniques related to the assessment of online learning for adult, career, and vocational education. Online assessment in distance education can make use of Internet technologies that allow greatly increased communication, interactivity, and collaboration compared to the traditional classroom or paper-and-pencil forms of distance education. CMC allows synchronous and asynchronous, one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many communication; its use of text-based communication promotes thoughtful and reflective commentary (Schrum 1998). The interactivity possible in online continuous assessment, either with the online environment or with instructors or other learners, helps engage learners in active application of knowledge, principles, and values and provides them with feedback that allows their understanding to develop (Hazari and Schnorr 1999). Hence, online assessment can play an important part in a constructivist learning experience. In addition, online assessment can take advantage of the capabilities of other software applications to develop interactive online tests with a wide array of functions (Dickinson 1997) for example:

- Record answers to a file the instructor can review later
- Compare learner answers with correct answers and give feedback.
- Grade the test and give feedback.
- Recommend remediation.
- Show the learner a web page with more information on a missed question.
- Prevent the learner from proceeding to new instruction until the learner passes the test.
- Controlled retries allow any number or a restricted number only.
- Require the learner to enter a name and controlled password.
- Restrict the dates on which learners can take the test, avoiding last-minute test-taking.
- Time the test.
- Email test results to the instructor.