

Objective and fair assessments

Reference: PA3-A-2 Last Updated: 19/12/2018

All student assessments should be objective and fair.

An objective and fair assessment should assure that the student is safe and competent to enter the register or continue on a course, and that they have been given a reasonable opportunity to do so.

An objective and fair assessment takes into account the individual needs and circumstances of the student, while providing a consistent standard to be met. All students are individuals with different needs and abilities and should be treated as such.

A key feature of assessment will be the facilitation of reasonable adjustments when required. All environments will have a responsibility to provide reasonable adjustments for students. This will be the responsibility of the AEI, with their practice learning partners, to manage. If a student has not been given the right adjustments to remove barriers to their learning, this may lead to unfair assessments and affect their ability to complete the course.

Students should also be challenged and given the opportunity to improve and reflect, if appropriate, for an assessment to be considered objective and fair. If a student poses an immediate risk to patient safety, it may be appropriate to remove them from a course, without being given the opportunity to improve. However, this must be supported by evidence and proper record keeping, following AEI processes.

Practice assessors have a responsibility only to 'pass' or recommend a student for progression when this is supported by evidence.

A fair assessment is transparent. It is evidenced based, and supported by clear and reliable documentation, and includes a variety of viewpoints. The student is communicated with appropriately and in a timely way about what the decision is, and clear reasons are given for the decision.

There may be circumstances in which the student feels that they have not been treated fairly. The AEI, with its practice learning partners, should have processes in place to manage student complaints or concerns about their learning and assessment.

Individual practice assessors should also reflect on how they are interacting with students, and be aware of how various things, such as personality clashes, generational and cultural differences, or conscious or unconscious bias, may affect their decisions.

The AEI, with its practice learning partners, is responsible for ensuring that assessments are fair, objective and evidence based. They do this by ensuring that practice assessors meet our standards, and through audits of student learning and assessment.

In order to make an evidence based assessment the evidence collated must be fair and reliable. The practice assessor should be able to make a judgement about what constitutes fair and reliable evidence based on their experience and our standards and expectations.

The practice assessor may come across times in which the evidence that has been presented to them is not in their view reliable or fair. For instance student documentation may be incomplete, or the student or practice assessor may feel that the feedback received is not accurate.

When this happens the practice assessor may want to do one or both of the following things:

- If the evidence is not reliable due to a perceived issue, for example a practice supervisor has not performed their role properly, or the environment in which the student has been placed was not conducive to effective learning and assessment, the practice assessor has a responsibility to raise these issues in a timely and appropriate way. More information on how to raise concerns can be found [on our website](#).
- If the evidence is not sufficient to make a fair and reliable assessment, the practice assessor should improve and supplement the evidence or support the practice supervisor to do so. This may be done by talking to the student's practice supervisors, anyone else involved in the education of students, anyone who has been coordinating the learning experience, and the academic assessor. They may also choose to further observe the student to ensure they have the required evidence.

The practice assessor should be continually reviewing the evidence throughout the time they are assigned to the student, in order to decide if they need take action to enhance the evidence.

The student may also feel that they have been treated unfairly during their education and assessment, more information can be found on what they can do in these circumstances in the section on student empowerment.