

## Reports – Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How do I explain the individual report to the Learner at the end of the assessment?

One useful source of information that will help Educators and Learners understand the rich data provided by the Assessment Tool can be found in the Professional Learning and Communities section: webinars. The PLANNET webinar provided by Lynette Winter on 4 August 2010 - [First and Second Impressions of the Assessment Tool](#) describes how to interpret reports. Lynette uses the context of assessing Youth Guarantee Learners at CPIT to go through how to run assessments with Learners and how to interpret individual and group reports. Further information will be available on the website in the near future.

### 2. How do we view assessment reports that our Learners have completed at other organisations?

The TEC and the Assessment Tool Service Desk have received a number of questions related to 'who assesses' the Learner using the Assessment Tool and does it count for reporting purposes. Please refer to [Sharing Learner assessment information between organisations](#) to obtain the background on how and why.

### 3. How can Learners get a result above the selected non-adaptive assessment range?

When a Learner gets all or nearly all of the questions in a non-adaptive assessment correct they will be located above the scale locations of all or most of the questions in the assessment. This is because it is most probable that the Learner is capable of answering many questions that are more difficult than the ones that were administered. This can happen for instance, when a Learner does very well on an assessment targeted at Steps 1 to 3. In order to achieve this rate of success, the Learner is likely to be at Step 4 or above.

It is important to remember that when this happens the shaded plus or minus range associated with the Learner's score will be relatively large, sometimes covering two or more steps. This means the result is imprecise and that a second assessment could provide a different result. If an Educator wants a more precise result they will need to use an assessment where the Learner is likely to get some questions correct and some incorrect.

### 4. What research has been conducted to evaluate the results if students merely guess at the multi choice options?

Each item used in the Assessment Tool was trialled before it was included in the item bank for general use. Part of the analysis of trial data involved checking to see if there was evidence that Learners were resorting to guessing on each item. Guessing can never be ruled out when selected response type items are used. As a response strategy it will generally not lead to success.

When a Learner is sitting an assessment that is "at their level" and are motivated to choose the answer they believe is best, then guessing behaviours can be minimised. The computer adaptive test provides a way of targeting questions at the Learner's level. During the development of a question every effort was made to ensure that correct answers did not stand out from the other available answer to a question.

### 5. Why is there no 'don't know' option for Learners?

The analysis that runs behind the responses a Learner makes is designed to accommodate instances where a Learner appears to have guessed an answer – this might be reflected by a Learner getting an item correct that all prior data suggests they should have got incorrect. A great deal of trialling and analysis has gone into the design of the current response options (as detailed in the FAQ information supplied). The inclusion of a 'don't know' option could encourage students not to attempt items, irrespective of whether they find them challenging or not. We need as much information from the student as possible on which to estimate their ability. In the event a Learner was to guess their way through the entire assessment their response pattern would be erratic and likely result in a low scales score with a high margin of error; indicating the Tool has difficulty getting an accurate estimate of where this Learner is operating at.

### 6. The Learner reports provide an estimated best fit across the Steps (eg Reading). How does this reporting relate to spiky profiles, the range of reading comprehension strategies and range of vocabulary strategies?

The reports locate a Learner's achievement on the adult learning progressions. They provide a solid starting point for further exploration to identify particular strengths and weaknesses.

This starting point also provides a benchmark which can be used when looking at whether change has occurred over time. The potential of the reports doesn't finish there however - the reports can also be used to look at patterns of responses across individual progressions.

It is always important not to make too much of answers to individual questions. Educators should probe further to confirm any patterns they identify when examining a report for an individual.