Fairness in exam delivery

A commitment to equity

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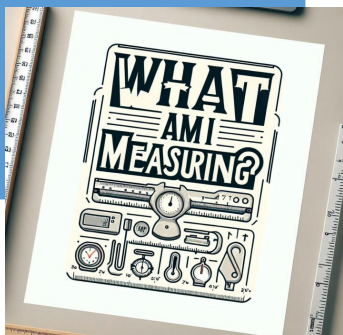
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Accessibility and fairness in assessments

Overview

1. What am I measuring?

2. Who will be taking my test?

3. What item types should we use?

4. Does our test measure what it was intended to measure?

❖ Clearly identify and define the exam construct(s) that you are measuring

❖ Document this information

❖ Identify reasonable adjustments that will not impact your construct(s)

Frequent hidden constructs

- ❖ Reading comprehension
- ❖ Visual acuity
- ❖ Hand-eye coordination
- ❖ Written language skills
- ❖ Motor dexterity
- ❖ Hearing
- ❖ Speed of processing information
- ❖ Cognitive load

What are the characteristics of your test-takers?

- ❖ Demographics

- ❖ Educational background

- ❖ Reason(s) for taking the exam

- ❖ Language proficiencies

- ❖ Disabilities

Neurodiversity, psychological and psychiatric disabilities, and chronic health conditions can impact these sensory/cognitive abilities:

- ❖ Reading comprehension
- ❖ Reading fluency
- ❖ Processing speed
- ❖ Spatial processing
- ❖ Sustaining attention
- ❖ Color perception
- ❖ Visual acuity

Assistive technologies

Assistive technology	Description	Used by people who:
Screen reading software	Converts text to speech (and/or to a refreshable Braille device): JAWS, NVDA	Are blind
Screen magnification software	Magnifies text and images on a computer: Microsoft Magnifier, ZoomText, Mac Zoom	Have visual impairments
Text to speech	Reads aloud digital text (Read and Write, Word Q)	Have a diagnosis of dyslexia
Speech to text	Converts spoken word into text (Dragon)	Have a diagnosis of dysgraphia / problems with motor dexterity

Item types

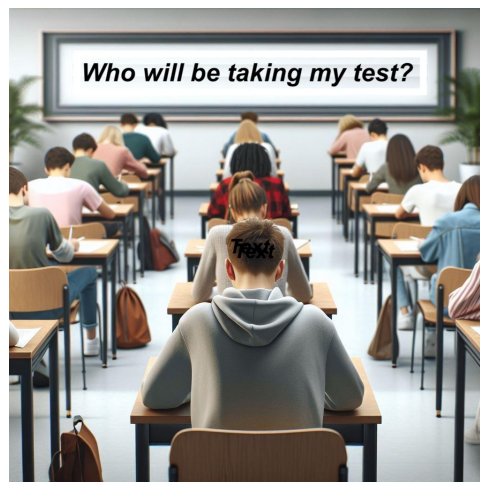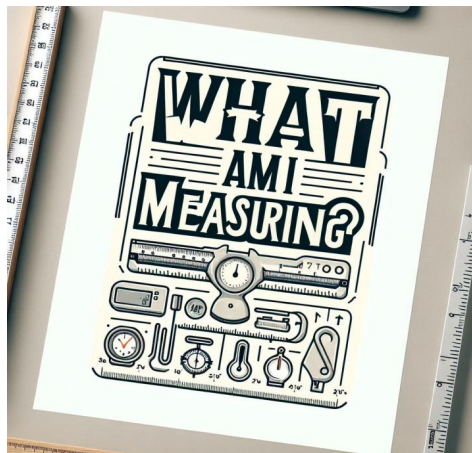| Item types	Possible hidden constructs
Text based stem/response (single/multiple)	Reading comprehension, hand/eye coordination, motor dexterity, visual acuity, speed of processing information
Drag and drop items	Hand/eye coordination, motor dexterity, visual acuity, increased cognitive load, speed of processing
Hot spot/hot area	Hand/eye coordination, motor dexterity, visual acuity, speed of processing
Essay, fill-in-the-blank, short response	Written language skills, reading comprehension, speed of processing

Addressing hidden constructs

If you're not measuring sensory skills, be mindful of the following considerations:

- ❖ Visual acuity – Allow for screen readers, screen magnifiers

- ❖ Hand-eye coordination – Ensure keyboard access

- ❖ Written language skills – Do not penalize for spelling/allow for speech to text software

- ❖ Motor dexterity – Avoid hot spot items on tests

- ❖ Hearing – Provide auditorily presented information in text

- ❖ Speed of processing – Allow for extra time on the exam

What item types should we use?

What am I measuring?

Who will be taking my test?

Does our test measure what it was intended to measure?

How test sponsors are approaching accessibility

Approaching accessibility

❖ Crisis vs. calculated approach to accessibility

❖ Consider the accessibility of the exam and the exam driver

❖ Consult with/hire people with accessibility/assistive technology expertise

Questions