Assessment should be embedded in all aspects of a course rather than being something that just happens at the end. More than any other aspect of the curriculum, well-designed assessment is the key to engaging students in active and productive learning. When you design assessment for a course of study, you're essentially designing what and how students will learn. What you decide to assess should be closely aligned with the stated learning outcomes for the course.

Assessment as Learning - Dr Adele Flood

Dr Adele Flood from the Learning and Teaching Unit discusses assessment as learning.

If you have a well-designed set of course learning outcomes, assessment task design will be a great deal easier. It is good educational practice to communicate to students what you are trying to achieve and what they should expect to gain from your topics. This helps students, but it also helps you. Articulating your aims for teaching the course can clarify these matters in your own mind.

Brown, Race and Smith suggest:

*How we assess our students has a profound effect on what they learn, and on the ways in which they learn. If our choices of assessment strategies provide systems under which students are goaded into activities that privilege short-term memory, information recall and surface learning, we should not be surprised if the outcomes are exceedingly poor in terms of learning gain.*

(500 Tips on Assessment, Kogan Page, London, 1996, p7)

Assessment is always a learning opportunity for students. As a teacher, you are responsible for ensuring students can use this opportunity effectively.

Students learn more effectively when they can:

- Develop their own understanding of a subject,
- Apply their knowledge to real-world contexts,
- Think critically and
- Reflect on what they have learned.

When you design assessment appropriately, you can facilitate deeper learning experiences for your students.
learn more effectively. Carefully planned assessment can also benefit you as a teacher by reducing plagiarism and your marking and feedback load.

Further information

See Designing Assessment As Learning for help when considering and designing assessment.