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BEST PRACTICE TIPS FOR WRITING CUSTOM ASSESSMENTS

1

FOCUS ON SKILLS NOT KNOWLEDGE

Anyone can look up which tool to use in a help file, or on the internet.

2

PLAN AND STRUCTURE YOUR CONTENT FIRST

What are the critical skills you are assessing and what is the best order for your modules and questions?

3

ORGANISING AND REFERENCING

Write your assessment in Excel where you can organise and edit your questions effectively before importing them. Make sure each question and associated file has a unique reference and description that is easily traceable.

4

VISUAL AIDS

Use plenty of images to make the test experience interesting from a user perspective.

5

A VARIETY OF QUESTION TYPES

Use a variety of question types and make sure to vary the length of questions.

6

AVOID QUESTIONS WITH LENGTHY TEXT ANSWERS

Where text fields are used, try to keep the answers to numbers or single words.

7

BE CLEAR ABOUT NUMERICAL INPUT

When asking for numerical input, be clear to define whether you expect the units to be entered, and how many decimal places the answer should show.

8

CONSIDER UNAMBIGUITY

Make sure your questions are completely unambiguous. Ask a colleague to proof read your questions. You will be surprised how easily questions can be misinterpreted.

9

INCLUDE A FEW RANKING QUESTIONS

Questions where the candidate has to put a list of instructions in the correct order are very effective to test a user's ability to use a tool properly. It can also be helpful in increasing their abilities even if they don't know the answer. Limit this question type however as they are time consuming.

10

WHERE POSSIBLE ASSIGN FILES TO A QUESTION

Avoid using multiple-choice, knowledge only questions, wherever possible and instead consider how to assess the same skill by editing or interrogating a file. For example, instead of asking "Which variable controls the linetype scaling in AutoCAD?" consider asking "To what value is the linetype scaling factor set in the file?".