

8 Qualitative eLearning Assessment Methods to Track Online Learners Progress

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[ELEARNING DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT](#)

As the saying goes, "It's not how much you know but how well you know it". Qualitative eLearning assessments help you determine online learners' proficiency and knowledge mastery. In this article, I'll share 8 qualitative eLearning assessment methods to track online learners' progress.

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How To Track Online Learners Progress: 8 Qualitative eLearning Assessment Methods



Qualitative eLearning assessment, as its name implies, is all about quality over quantity. Rather than scratching the surface of eLearning course comprehension, it allows you to gauge the depth of an online learner's understanding. As a result, you can improve proficiency and productivity by identifying areas for improvement. Here are 8 qualitative eLearning assessment methods that can help you track online learners progress and bridge knowledge gaps.

1. Task-Based Simulations

[Simulations](#) test practical and experiential knowledge. Online learners must use all of their resources and skills to complete the task in a safe virtual environment. Thus, you can assess proficiency without taking any real world risks. The simulation must be as realistic as possible to obtain accurate results. This includes background sounds, relevant images, and immersive [eLearning characters](#). If the task requires software or equipment, these tools should also be involved. You need to be able to mimic every aspect of the eLearning experience so that you can assess their performance in context. For example, how they would perform under pressure.

2. Branching Scenarios

Branching scenarios involve multiple decision points that lead online learners down different paths. Every choice brings them one step closer to the outcome, which highlights the negative or positive repercussions of their actions. They must utilize their skills and talents to navigate the situation and overcome common obstacles. Since there are many branches involved, it's wise to create a detailed [eLearning storyboard](#) beforehand. This allows you to keep track of all the decision paths and maintain consistency. Track your Online Learners' Progress by using the Most Engaging Branching Scenarios! Discover, choose and compare the top eLearning Authoring Tools with Branching Scenarios Functionality!

3. Online Group Collaboration Projects With Feedback

You can also use [peer-based eLearning feedback](#) to gather qualitative data. Ask your online learners to divide into groups and assign them a topic or prompt. They must work together to solve the problem or create a finished product, such as an online presentation or eLearning video. What sets this apart from other online group collaboration projects is the peer observations. Provide online learners with a checklist or questionnaire they must complete during the eLearning assignment. Encourage them to assess the performance of their peers. Is there a specific group member who stood out? What were their strengths and areas for improvement? To ensure that everything goes smoothly, develop group guidelines in advance and let them know they're being assessed.

4. Open-Ended Questions

[Open-ended questions](#) are one of the most simple and straightforward qualitative eLearning assessment methods. However, they also allow for the most creative freedom. There are no right or wrong answers. Instead, online learners must reflect on the topic and draw their own conclusions. They may even discover that their current assumptions or beliefs are holding them back. The only caveat is that open-ended questions are challenging to grade. However, you can [develop a rubric](#) in advance to streamline the process and compile accurate data.

5. Problem-Solving Case Studies

Problem-solving, as a qualitative eLearning assessment technique, turns online learners into detectives so that they can solve the problem and display their knowledge. It all starts with a case study or real world example. Remove the ending to leave it on a cliffhanger, then ask online learners to [brainstorm](#) solutions. They must also explain how they arrived at the conclusion and why they feel it's the best approach. It's not about the solution, itself, but the thought process. Which skills did they use in their strategy? How did they put their knowledge into action?

6. eLearning Blogs

Encourage your online learners to set up an eLearning blog and post on a daily or weekly basis. Develop a posting schedule that includes prompts or questions, minimum word count, and upload deadlines. Review the blogs periodically to assess online learner progress and identify areas for improvement. There are a variety of free blogging platforms to choose from. Thus, you should to set some ground rules and provide a list of suitable tools. You can also create online tutorials or walkthroughs for new bloggers to minimize the learning curve.

7. Online Interviews

Face-to-face interviews aren't possible in eLearning environments. However, you can still conduct interviews with the help of Video Conferencing tools. This is usually more feasible for smaller groups or one-on-one mentoring. Prepare a list of questions and schedule an online interview for each online learner. Offer online learners the opportunity to address their concerns and provide eLearning feedback. For example, encourage them to identify their strengths and weaknesses, then recommend supplemental eLearning resources. In lieu of online interviews, host live webinars where online learners can interact with their peers and discuss the topic. You can even ask questions directly to see who knows their stuff and who needs to refresh their knowledge.

8. Forums And Online Discussions

[eLearning forums](#) give online learners the ability to share ideas, explore topics, and improve their comprehension. [Meaningful online discussions](#) naturally occur and learners reveal their level of understanding. Online instructors and facilitators even have the power to guide the online discussion by posting prompts and thought provoking questions. For example, asking online learners about the decisions they made during an eLearning scenario. Their explanations reveal why they made the choices they did and what they'd do differently in the future. The most effective way to assess qualitative knowledge in eLearning forums is careful monitoring. Make a note of online learners who participate frequently and those who sit on the side lines. You also have the option to conduct online learner surveys after the fact to get their input.

Qualitative eLearning assessments measure the level of comprehension so that you can [create personalized eLearning experiences](#). This also allows to intervene and offer supplemental resources for online learners who are struggling. Thus, every online learner benefits from your eLearning course and is able to use their new knowledge in the real world.

Is your current online training program living up to expectations? Read the article [7 Tips To Create Effective eLearning Assessments To Measure Online Training](#) to discover some useful tips for creating assessments that measure the effectiveness of your corporate eLearning.