

HOW TO OSPE

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What are the advantages and disadvantages of using Objective Structured Practical Examinations (OSPE's) for assessment?

What things must you consider when planning an OSPE?

Derek Scott d.scott@abdn.ac.uk




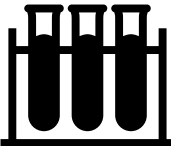

Twitter: @Prof_DerekScott






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**Things to think about if you want
to run a science OSPE**

1		<p style="text-align: center;">You and your students</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Who are they? How many of them are they? Do they have specific needs, requirements, study routines etc?</p>
2		<p style="text-align: center;">Why are you doing this?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">What skills/attributes do you need or want to assess? Are their resources that can help you with this in your institution, or do you need the help/views of staff, students, or others?</p>
3		<p style="text-align: center;">Logistics</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Location & Timing – wet laboratory? Clinical area? Sports facility? Multipurpose area? Remote e.g. field work? Computer lab?</p>
4		<p style="text-align: center;">Resources</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff – how many academic staff, technicians, examiners? Do you need demonstration days, examination days, marking time? Equipment – availability, costs, quick turnaround for lab/equipment needed?</p>
5		<p style="text-align: center;">Planning for problems</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Routine – spillages, breakages..... Business continuity – COVID, power cut, fire alarm, IT issues.... We recently had to run some of them virtually using MS Teams or our VLE.</p>

6		<p style="text-align: center;">Illness</p> <p>Arrangements if staff or students are ill and cannot attend? What about other good cause for being absent?</p>
7		<p style="text-align: center;">What should students do to demonstrate that they have gained the required skill(s)?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This should be clear to all students and staff.</p>
8		<p style="text-align: center;">Nature of the assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pass? Fail? Graded? Formative or Summative?</p>
9		<p style="text-align: center;">What skills will ALL of your students need?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Practical skills focused on discipline BUT also professionalism, communication, health and safety, ethics, employability, time management, organisation etc?</p>
10		<p style="text-align: center;">What if it works?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How do you upscale, expand to different disciplines, groups of students/staff, or locations? How will you measure and disseminate success of the OSPE?</p>

These are just some ideas to get you started. It will be an iterative process! Stuff will go right and things can go wrong – that’s totally OK as long as we learn from these experiences.

Feel free to suggest other factors or aspects that you feel should be considered.

Optional Task – you can do this on your own or bounce ideas off one another!

- Try to identify a group of learners you could use the OSPE with.
- What skills or attributes would you like to assess and how would you do it?
- Does your institution or professional body have a set of graduate attributes or skills that you could refer to?
- You can always vary the type, number, duration and format of stations.
- Use your imagination!
- The key thing is that the task should be achievable, and you think carefully about the skills.
- The grading criteria should be clear and transparent – we publish ours in advance on the VLE.
- Ask people to review what you design.
- You don't need to use lots of technology – I use laminated cards at lots of my stations – they work, are cheap and can be easily changed, updated and replaced.
- Lots of the time you can use resources, equipment or materials that your institution already has.
- It's not just about students' science technical skills.