# The Educational Evaluation Process in the Digital Era

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**Abstract**: In a constantly evolving educational landscape, student assessment remains a central and sensitive component, significantly influencing both academic performance and personal development. This paper offers a comparative analysis of four major forms of assessment: traditional, modern (competency-based), inclusive, and digital. Traditional assessment, still prevalent in many education systems, is valued for its structure and objectivity but criticized for its rigidity and emphasis on rote memorization. In contrast, modern assessment focuses on key competencies and provides a more comprehensive view of student progress, encouraging active and contextualized learning. Inclusive assessment aims to ensure equity by adapting evaluation methods to the diverse needs of students, playing a crucial role in learner-centered education. Meanwhile, digital assessment introduces innovative opportunities through technology, enabling timely and personalized feedback, but also posing challenges related to accessibility and academic integrity. The study highlights the importance of a balanced, integrated, and flexible approach to contemporary assessment, aligned with the evolving demands of modern society.

**Keywords:** Assessment; Traditional assessment; Modern assessment; Competency-based assessment; Inclusive assessment; Digital assessment; Teaching process / Instructional process

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## 1. Introduction

In an ever-changing educational world, student assessment remains a central and sensitive topic. The way a student is assessed influences not only their academic progress, but also their self-esteem, motivation and personal development. Over time, assessment systems have evolved significantly, moving from traditional methods, focused on performance and conformity, to modern and inclusive approaches, which follow individual progress and the development of skills. Thus, it is essential to analyze these varied perspectives in a balanced way, in order to better understand the direction in which contemporary education is heading.

In contrast, modern assessment promotes a broader vision of learning. Methods such as interdisciplinary projects, portfolios, presentations or formative assessments contribute to a deeper understanding of the contents and the development of skills relevant to real life. Learners are encouraged to be active in their own learning process, to take responsibility for their progress and to collaborate with their peers. This approach supports autonomy, creativity and critical thinking. However, its application can be difficult in rigid educational contexts, and success depends largely on the training and involvement of teachers. Another important pillar of current assessment is the inclusive dimension. This involves adapting assessment methods to the needs of each student, especially those with special educational needs or coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. In this context, teachers use various tools such as observation, self-assessment, peer assessment or rubrics to create an environment that is fair and accessible to all. Inclusive assessment recognizes that every child learns at their own pace and deserves the chance to reach their full potential. However, this type of assessment requires a change in mindset, as well as resources, time, and ongoing training for teachers.

Last but not least, technology has begun to play an increasingly important role in the assessment process. Educational platforms, interactive applications, and digital tests offer new opportunities for personalized feedback, gamification, and real-time progress analysis. These tools can make assessment more engaging for students and more effective for teachers. However, the use of technology requires access to infrastructure and digital skills, both on the part of students and teachers.

## 2. Traditional Assessment

Educational assessment is one of the most important components of the educational process, being a means by which the progress, level of knowledge and skills of pupils and students are measured.

Traditional assessment is the oldest and still widespread form of assessing the performance of learners. It is mainly based on standardized written tests – in the form of a grid, essays or open questions – as well as on oral and written examinations.

In Romania, traditional assessment has established itself as the dominant method in the education system, remaining a central practice in assessing school performance, from primary to university education.

Among the advantages of this type of assessment are the clear and objective structure it offers, as well as the possibility of comparing results between pupils or educational institutions. It is also an effective method for verifying and measuring theoretical knowledge.

However, traditional assessment also has important limitations. It often emphasizes the reproduction of information, to the detriment of deep understanding and applicability in real-world contexts. In addition, it can generate anxiety and psychological pressure on students, especially in the case of those who do not do well in standardized testing situations. Last but not least, this method does not always reflect the real competencies or practical skills of the student, such as critical thinking, collaboration or creativity. In appreciation and grading, traditional assessment uses grades, in primary education (Very good, Good, Sufficient, Insufficient), in secondary and high school education grades from 1 to 10, the completion of each cycle being through the National Assessment exam or the Baccalaureate, and in university education assessments are made through exams, colloquia, projects, but the emphasis is still on the final grade.

## 3. Modern Assessment (Competency-Based)

In contrast to traditional methods, modern assessment emphasizes the development of essential real-life skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, or problem solving. This approach focuses not only on what the student knows, but also on how he or she can apply this knowledge in varied and meaningful contexts. Modern, competency-based assessment is an essential step towards quality

education, adapted to the real needs of today's society. It is important that schools do not limit themselves to grading knowledge, but also train people capable of thinking, adapting, collaborating, and learning continuously. Therefore, the transition to an authentic, fair, and development-oriented assessment system should be an educational priority at all levels. Modern assessment no longer focuses solely on testing theoretical knowledge, but aims to measure competencies – that is, the combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to solve concrete tasks in various contexts.

Key competencies promoted in modern education include: effective communication, critical thinking, the ability to work in a team, problem solving, the use of technology, lifelong learning.

Among the methods frequently used are individual or group projects, educational portfolios, formative assessments and personal reflections. These tools provide a much more complete picture of the student's progress, not just at a given moment, but over the long term.

One of the main advantages of modern assessment is that it promotes the active involvement of the student in the learning process. The student becomes a partner in his own educational path, gaining autonomy and responsibility. At the same time, the teacher has the opportunity to provide personalized feedback, encouraging continuous improvement and adaptation of learning strategies. It provides a more complete picture of a student's progress, not just a "snapshot" of current performance, and supports continuous and deep learning, not just the superficial accumulation of information.

On the other hand, this type of assessment requires additional effort on the part of teachers, both in terms of the time needed for analysis and documentation, and in the preparation of clear and coherent assessment criteria. Without these, the assessment may be perceived as subjective, which can generate distrust or confusion among students and parents.

The Romanian education system has started to adopt a modern perspective on assessment, in line with European trends and the European Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. Curricular reforms in recent years have attempted to orient the educational process from knowledge acquisition to competence development.

In the implementation of the competence-based assessment system, there are obstacles and challenges that slow down the process. These mainly concern

resistance to change. Many teachers and parents are attached to the grading system, considering it clear and objective.

Another obstacle may be the lack of consistent training of teachers, who have not been trained to apply competency-based assessment methods. Also, the existence of a hybrid assessment system is a barrier to modern assessment. Although the Curriculum promotes competencies, assessments at the end of the lower secondary and upper secondary cycle, respectively the National Assessment and the Baccalaureate, still have a rigid, knowledge-centered format.

Solutions and strategies that could lead to the development of a competency-based assessment system could aim at:

-implementing a digital educational portfolio for each student,

-reforming national exams in a competency-based sense,

-integrating educational technologies for formative assessment,

-promoting constructive feedback instead of grades as an end in themselves, and

-aligning teacher training with new educational requirements.

## 4. Inclusive Assessment

Inclusive assessment is an essential component of equitable and student-centred education. It involves adapting assessment methods to the individual needs of each student, with an emphasis on supporting those with special educational needs (SEN) or those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Rather than following a one-size-fits-all model, inclusive assessment recognises the diversity of learning rhythms and cognitive styles.

The tools used in this type of assessment are varied: from systematic observation and progress sheets, to self-assessment, peer review, descriptive rubrics and adapted presentations. The aim is to give each student the chance to realise their potential in a safe and motivating environment.

The major advantage of inclusive assessment is that it promotes equity, providing all students with adequate conditions to express their competences. In addition, it creates a positive classroom climate, in which diversity is seen as a resource, not a hindrance.

However, the application of this form of assessment requires a profound change in mentality on the part of teachers and educational institutions. Continuous professional training, additional resources and institutional support are needed for inclusive assessment to be implemented effectively and consistently.

Inclusive assessment is an assessment process adapted to the needs and potential of each student, regardless of their background, learning style, possible learning difficulties or disabilities. It is part of inclusive education, which promotes equity and equal opportunities for all students.

The constant implementation of inclusive assessment is important because it offers real learning opportunities for each student, supports the development of an equitable and balanced education, contributes to reducing school dropout and increasing motivation, forms a culture of respect for diversity and uniqueness in the school.

## 5. Digital Assessment

"Digital assessment" refers to the use of digital technologies to design, administer and analyse assessment processes in education, training or other learning contexts. It can take many forms, depending on the purpose, tools and scope.

Digital assessment means using digital tools (platforms, applications, software) to test a person's knowledge, skills or performance. It can be formative (to track progress) or summative (to give a final grade).

The advantages of digital assessment are important in the teaching-learning-evaluation process because it involves fast and personalized feedback, time saving for teachers, accessibility from anywhere, for students, clear data and analysis about learning progress, the possibility of adapting the assessment according to the answers (adaptive testing).

Digital assessment involves some challenges such as: requires access to technology and internet connection, data and assessment security (avoiding plagiarism, fraud), resistance to change on the part of teachers or students, not all skills can be assessed digitally (e.g. practical/manual skills).

Digital assessment has gained an increasingly important role, taking into account the context of technological transformations and the accelerated digitalization of education. It uses online platforms, interactive applications, automated tests and data analysis tools to track student progress in a personalized and flexible way.

Among the most widely used digital assessment methods are online tests, interactive quizzes, real-time feedback, video recordings of presentations or educational game-based activities (gamification). These can increase student motivation, providing a more dynamic learning experience and closer to their daily digital environment. The most widely used online learning and assessment platforms are: Google Classroom, Moodle, Microsoft Teams for Education, Edmodo, Shoology, Kahoot, Quizziz, Socrative, Google Forms, Wordall. Also in the online environment, platforms have been developed that offer open and personalized educational resources such as: Khan Academy, Brio.ro, Livresq, etc.

1. Google Classroom

• Easy to use, integrated with Google Workspace (Docs, Drive, Meet).

• Allows assignments, tests, feedback and real-time communication.

• Widely used in schools in Romania.

2. Moodle

• Open-source, flexible and customizable.

• Used mainly in higher education.

• Allows the creation of courses, tests, forums and progress tracking.

3. Microsoft Teams for Education

• Integrated with Microsoft 365 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneDrive).

• Includes teaching, collaboration, testing and video calling features.

• Used by many schools in Romania, especially during the pandemic.

4. Edmodo (in the process of gradual closure, but still used in some schools)

• Social media-like platform.

• Used for assignments, tests and teacher-student communication.

5. Schoology

• Combines online learning with academic management.

• Includes advanced assessment options, rubrics, and reporting.

Platforms for testing, assessment and feedback

1. Kahoot!

• Interactive platform for live quizzes, games and surveys.

• Ideal for reviews and formative assessment.

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• Popular for dynamism and motivation.

2. Quizizz

• Alternative to Kahoot!, allows synchronous or asynchronous tests.

• Includes feedback, timer and detailed analysis of results.

3. Socrative

• Real-time testing platform.

• Supports various question types and instant feedback.

• Useful for summative and formative assessment.

4. Google Forms

• Simple and free tool for creating tests and questionnaires.

• Allows automatic correction and analysis in Google Sheets.

5. Wordwall

• Allows the creation of interactive activities (matching, completion, quiz).

• Can be used both online and in print

Educational platforms with integrated resources and assessment

1. Khan Academy

• Video lessons, interactive exercises, tests and progress reports.

• Excellent for individualized learning, especially in math.

2. Brio.ro (Romania)

• Standardized testing platform for students in Romania.

• Based on digital assessments and progress reports on skills.

3. Livresq

• Romanian platform for creating interactive digital lessons.

• Used by teachers for teaching and visual testing.

One of the great advantages of digital assessment is the ability to provide immediate feedback and track student progress through detailed statistics and reports. It also allows content to be adapted to the level and pace of each student, promoting personalized learning.

However, this form of assessment also poses some challenges. Unequal access to technology, lack of digital skills among teachers or students, and the risk of

superficiality in assessment are obstacles that must be carefully managed. In addition, technology cannot completely replace the human dimension of the educational act, but must intelligently complement it.

Another important pillar of current assessment is the inclusive dimension. This involves adapting assessment methods to the needs of each student, especially those with special educational needs or coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. In this context, teachers use various tools, such as observation, self-assessment, peer assessment or rubrics, to create an environment that is fair and accessible to all. Inclusive assessment recognizes that each child has their own pace of learning and deserves the chance to realize their potential. However, this type of assessment requires a change in mindset, as well as resources, time and continuous training for teachers.

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Digital assessment is growing rapidly, but there are significant gaps between countries, between urban and rural schools, and between education levels. Romania is in a phase of transition and development, with great potential if investments continue.

Statistics on digital assessment (globally and European) show that the global digital assessment market had an estimated value in 2023 of around 10 billion USD, and the projection for 2030 is over 25 billion USD.

An increase in use is observed. Over 70% of higher education institutions use digital assessments (HolonIQ, 2023), and in pre-university education, over 60% of schools have introduced online tests during or after the pandemic.

Digital assessment reduces marking time by up to 50-70% (McKinsey, 2022).

In Europe and Romania, digital assessment is being promoted, as in other Member States. 84% of teachers in Europe use at least one digital tool for assessment (European Commission, 2023).

According to the report "Education in Romania during the pandemic" (Save the Children, 2022), only 36% of students said they had taken regular digital

assessments. Less than 40% of teachers said they were well prepared for digital assessment.

However, after 2021, projects such as CRED, EduLib, Digitaliada led to a significant increase in digital skills among teachers.

In 2024, the Ministry of Education launched the pilot project for online standardized assessments in over 300 schools and thus over 60,000 students participated in standardized digital tests (pilot assessment organized by Brio.ro in partnership with the Ministry of Education).

Official bibliographic sources – Digital assessment

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➤ https://brio.ro/raportare (Brio.ro – Report on standardized testing in Romanian schools, 2023.

Includes data on testing digital pilot supported by thousands of Romanian students)

➤ https://www.educred.ro/ (Relevant national / international projects CRED Project – Training teachers for digital assessment)

➤ https://www.digitaliada.ro/ (Romanian project with digital resources, platforms and assessments in schools) (Resources for digital assessment in Romanian education) Digitaliada – Orange Foundation

In conclusion, student assessment today is no longer a rigid and unique process, but a complex approach, reflecting the diversity of educational needs and contexts. The wise combination of traditional methods with modern and inclusive ones can lead to a fair, relevant and motivating assessment system. The challenge for contemporary education is not only to measure students' knowledge, but to support their authentic development, in a way adapted to the realities of the 21st century. Student assessment currently tends towards a hybrid model, which combines the advantages of traditional methods with modern and inclusive ones. The focus is gradually shifting from simply measuring performance to supporting the continuous development of the student, in a personalized and relevant way for today's world. The ideal is a fair, flexible and student-centered assessment system.

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