

Annotated Glossary of Evaluation Tools

The ACGME/ABMS Toolbox, ACGME Think Tank Recommendations, and Implementation Booklets are available at <http://www.acgme.org/outcome> and describe the range of potential assessment methods. The summaries below are excerpted and adapted from the ACGME materials and include only the types of tools being recommended by the Evaluation Task Force.

GLOBAL RATING FORMS: Usually completed by faculty supervisors at the end of a clinical rotation assignment, global forms ask judges to rate trainees on general categories of ability (e.g., patient care skills, communication skills, medical knowledge) rather than specific tasks, skills or behaviors. Global ratings are completed retrospectively and are based on general impressions collected over a period of time. As such, they are subject to subjectivity, recall bias, and halo effects in which positive or negative impressions of the trainee influence the specific ratings. Because they are relatively easy to collect, global rating forms are nearly ubiquitous in GME. Unfortunately, they do not yield sufficiently reliable or valid data for assessment of the competencies and must be supplemented with a second, better measure. Another kind of global rating form is used by learners to assess their clinical educators at the end of a learning experience (rotation, continuity clinic, etc.).

WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS: These are usually composed of multiple-choice questions (MCQ) selected to sample medical knowledge and understanding of a defined body of knowledge, not just factual or easily recalled information. Each question or test item contains an introductory statement followed by four or five options in outline format. The examinee selects one of the options as the presumed correct answer by marking the option on a coded answer sheet. Only one option is keyed as the correct response. The introductory statement often presents a patient case, clinical findings, or displays data graphically. The in-training examinations prepared by specialty societies and boards use MCQ type test items. A typical half-day examination has 175 to 250 test questions. Comparing the test scores on in-training examinations with national statistics can serve to identify strengths and limitations of individual residents to help them improve. Comparing test results aggregated for residents in each year of a program can be helpful to identify residency training experiences that might be improved.

360 DEGREE EVALUATION: 360-degree evaluations consist of measurement tools completed by multiple people in a person's sphere of influence. Evaluators completing rating forms in a 360-degree evaluation usually are superiors, peers, subordinates, and patients and families. Most 360-degree evaluation processes use a survey or questionnaire to gather information about an individual's performance on several topics. Data are then shared with the learner, who compares the perspectives of others with their self-assessment of the same qualities. 360 assessments are most useful for the