# Backwards Course Design: Assessment Planning Worksheet

##### **Part 1**

Your first task is to review your learning outcomes.

* Using the [Brescia Levels of Understanding](https://owl.uwo.ca/access/content/group/b4e8afcf-0301-4137-a285-6c7d7a4d12e4/http%3A__brescia.uwo20200402124752.URL) handout as a guide, examine the **verb**in each of your learning outcomes. **What SOLO level(s) do they align with**?
* Reflect on whether your learning outcomes capture the **degree of difficulty** that you expect students to demonstrate at the end of your course.

##### **Part 2:**

Consider how your course fits into students' degrees or modules.

* What are your department's goals in offering your course? What is it preparing students to do?
* Do your learning outcomes suit your course's purpose? Are they appropriate for the stage in which students typically take your course? (e.g. year of study)
* Is each learning outcome necessary or can some content be trimmed back?

##### **Part 3**

Reflect on your incoming students to this course.

* If you've taught this course before, **what prior knowledge and experience do they typically have**? Does your answer change depending on which learning outcomes you're thinking about?
* What diverse abilities and needs do students often have? Does your answer to these questions change depending on which term your course is offered in (intersession vs fall vs winter)?
* If you're teaching a new course to you, or you're not sure how to answer these questions, how can you find out?

The purpose of this reflection is to think about where students are **starting** your course. For each of your course learning outcomes, try to write down a brief description of what your students are already able to do/know before they 'step foot' into your course.

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##### **Part 4**

Put yourself in the mindset of your students: what do they need to do in order to actually meet your learning outcomes?

For each of your learning outcomes, write a sentence or a quick list of what 'chunks' your course will need to cover to bridge students from **Part 3** (where they start) and **Part 1** (where you want them to end up) above.

**Part 5**

Given your list of ‘chunks’, consider the points in your course where students will need formative feedback from you. Low-stakes assessments should provide students with feedback and guidance on their achievement of your learning outcomes *before* a high-stakes assessment is due (e.g. one that is worth a significant amount of the course grade).

Another thing to think about when filling in this column: the first time students receive feedback on a course learning outcomes should not be in a final, cumulative, or summative task.

If you’re concerned about giving students too much ‘busy work,’ how can the assessments in this column do double duty? Can you use them as an integral part of your lesson? Can you use the as a way to build classroom community and encourage student collaboration?

Use the action verb in your learning outcome to make decisions, especially your prioritized Brescia Competencies: if you want students to communicate, think critically, act respectfully, give them some practice in a low-stakes way here.

**Part 6**

Use this column to brainstorm summative or high-stakes assessments. Again, use your learning outcomes as your guide: if you expect students to know/do/believe something, then these assessments should be asking them to demonstrate it.

Need some inspiration? Explore t[hese resources available through Western’s Centre for Teaching and Learning](https://teaching.uwo.ca/elearning/student_assessment/index.html).

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| **Learning Outcome** | **Part 1 Checklist**  | **Part 2 Checklist** | **Part 3 Reflection** | **Part 4 Chunking** | **Part 5 Low-Stakes Assessments** | **Part 5 High-Stakes Assessments** |
| *Assign each of your LO’s a number* | *Does your LO verb match your expected degree of difficulty for this course?* | *Does your LO fit your course’s purpose within the module? Is it necessary to teach?* | *Add a brief description of your incoming students. For each learning outcome, where are students entering your course? What can they do / what do they know?* | *Write a brief sentence or quick list of what ‘chunks’ your course needs to cover for students to bridge Part 3 to Part 1 (your learning outcomes).*  | *Where will students need feedback from you? Where can students collaborate with each other, in order to reinforce their new knowledge? What ‘midpoint’ assessments are needed? Use your LO action verbs to brainstorm formative assessments.* | *Where do you need to assess students’ cumulative knowledge? Where will students be demonstrating your learning outcomes? Use your LO action verbs to brainstorm summative assessments.* |
| 1 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Yes / No | Yes / No |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Add rows if needed* |  |  |  |  |  |  |