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How to Build an Interpretation and Use Argument




To review the concept of validity as it applies to higher education

Provide a framework for developing an interpretation and use argument for assessments



Validity

What it is, and how we examine it

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- Validity refers to the *degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of the test scores for proposed uses of tests.* (p. 11)

Source:

- *American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Psychological Association (APA), & National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME). (2014). Standards for educational and psychological testing. Washington, DC: AERA*

The Importance of Validity

Validity is, therefore, *the most fundamental consideration in developing tests and assessments.*

The process of validation involves accumulating relevant evidence to provide a sound scientific basis for the proposed score and assessment results interpretations. (p. 11)

Source:

AERA, APA, & NCME. (2014). *Standards for educational and psychological testing*. Washington, DC: AERA

How Do We Examine Validity in Higher Education?

- Most often this is qualitative; colleagues are a good resource
- Review the evidence
- Common sources of validity evidence
 - Test Content
 - Construct (the idea or theory that supports the assessment)
 - The validity coefficient

Important distinction

It is not the test or assessment itself that is validated, but the *inferences one makes from the measure based on the context of its use.*



Therefore it is not appropriate to refer to the 'validity of the test or assessment' - instead, we refer to the validity of the interpretation of the results for the test or assessment's intended purpose.

Validation Process

How do we establish that the interpretation and use of results of our assessments are valid for their intended purpose?

**Validity
Rationale:
Building an
*Interpretation
and Use
Argument***

When developing a validity rationale, it's important to state that the assessment covers relevant knowledge and skills (content validity).

However, validity rationales should also include support for the degree to which *inferences* you make from your results *match your assessment's intended purpose*

*Building an
Interpretation
and Use
Argument:
Purpose*

Describe the purpose of
your assessment

What is its relationship to
your curriculum?

Why this assessment is
important to your program?

*Building an
Interpretation
and Use
Argument:
Content*

Does the measure adequately cover the content and skills students are expected to know and demonstrate?

Does the assessment measure what you've covered?

*Building an
Interpretation
and Use
Argument:
Context*

Is the assessment implementation strategy consistent with the purpose of the assessment?

Is the way the assessment is implemented going to allow students to yield their best performance?

Building an
Interpretation
and Use
Argument:
Inferences

How do you know that a rubric level or assigned score matches your expectations for that level of performance?

How do you know that your use of test scores appropriately reflects the test's intended purpose?

Does your assignment of an achievement level or score *infer* that student has met that level of achievement?

Review of the Validation Process – *The Interpretation and Use Argument*

- Establish the purpose of your test/assessment
- Develop content evidence
- Align the test/assessment context with its purpose
- Establish the degree to which your assessment results infer the student's attainment of your established levels of achievement