Assessment for learning (general):

A paper that discusses models of learning that are used in online learning. It give a clear sense of the different paradigms that exist and that, therefore, have an impact on the organisation of distance education.

Written in response to the *No Child Left Behind* legislation in the US (2001). It focuses on the variability of performance standards. Suggests that ‘variability in the definitions of proficient academic achievement by states’ in the USA ‘is so great that characterizing achievement is meaningless’.

A short article exploring the ‘incongruity’ of assessing the ‘student’s understanding of the constructivist approach to teaching and learning …by standardized testing, an assessment tool rooted in behaviorism’.

This short paper draws out the policy implications of research. It builds on the proposition that ‘when a test is used to measure the achievement of curriculum standards, it is essential to evaluate and document both the relevance of a test to the standards and the extent to which it represents those standards. Four policy points are emphasised: (a) think about alignment from the start; (b) Conduct an analysis that uses multiple criteria and agree-upon procedures; (c) consider whether the standards themselves need revision; and (d) update their alignment studies whenever the standards or the tests change.

Based on an on-line discussion among teachers on a masters programme in the State of Virginia (USA), the paper reports the views of teachers who experience conflict between meeting assessment standards and professional standards. As one of the teachers wrote: ‘Because multiple-choice testing leads to multiple-choice teaching, the methods that teachers have in their arsenal become reduced and teaching work is deskilled’.

Assessment for learning (key ideas):

Assessment Reform Group (2002) *Assessment for Learning.* (available via their website http://www.assessment-reform-group.org.uk/) This short document offers 10 research-based principles to guide classroom practice. The first principle, for instance, is 'Assessment for learning should be part of effective planning of teaching and learning'.

**History of testing:**


**Assessment as a socio-technical process:**


**Impact of the internet on testing:**

http://www.ed.psu.edu/acsde/deos/deosnews/deosarchives.asp This is the website of the American Center for the study of distance Education, at Penn State University. It lists nearly 120 articles that have appeared in the Center’s journal (DEOSNEWS). It is a valuable resource.

**Pedagogics:**

Wells, G. (1999). *Dialogic Inquiry: Towards a socio-cultural practice and theory of education.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. This is an ambitious text. It is almost a reference book because it is densely packed with material relevant to constructivist views of knowing and knowledge. Specifically, for instance, it links testing and constructivism through the claim that Vygotsky’s zone of potential development is 'the difference between a child’s test performances under two conditions: with or without assistance' (p. 313).

J. Devine (2003) Exploring what e-learning is and is supposed to be. www.elearningeuropa.info, 2003-07-17 A good, short, critical reaction to e-learning. Devine poses three 'challenging questions': (1) 'Teaching' or 'learning' with technology; (2) How interesting and engaging are learning environments?; and e-learning – a technology bandwagon?

Yong Zhao, Kevin Pugh, Steve Sheldon & Joe Byers (2002) Conditions for Classroom Technology innovations. *Teachers College Record, 104*(3), 482-
This is an extensive study, presumably based on multivariate analysis. It highlights the importance of ‘three interactive domains’ – the innovator or teacher, the project or the innovation, and the context. It also highlights other issues: the role of technological proficiency, pedagogical compatibility and social awareness. Overall, it supports the view that the integration of any classroom technology is a ‘messy process’.

A paper that is clearly situated in the field of ‘assessment for learning’. Yet, also offers ‘assessment career’ as a means of discussing the performance of learner careers as a function of assessment practices – formative and summative. In effect, attempts to embrace the significance of both high stakes and low stakes assessment.

(end of bibliography)