

The Appraisal: Don't Over Think it!



Adam Fitzgerald

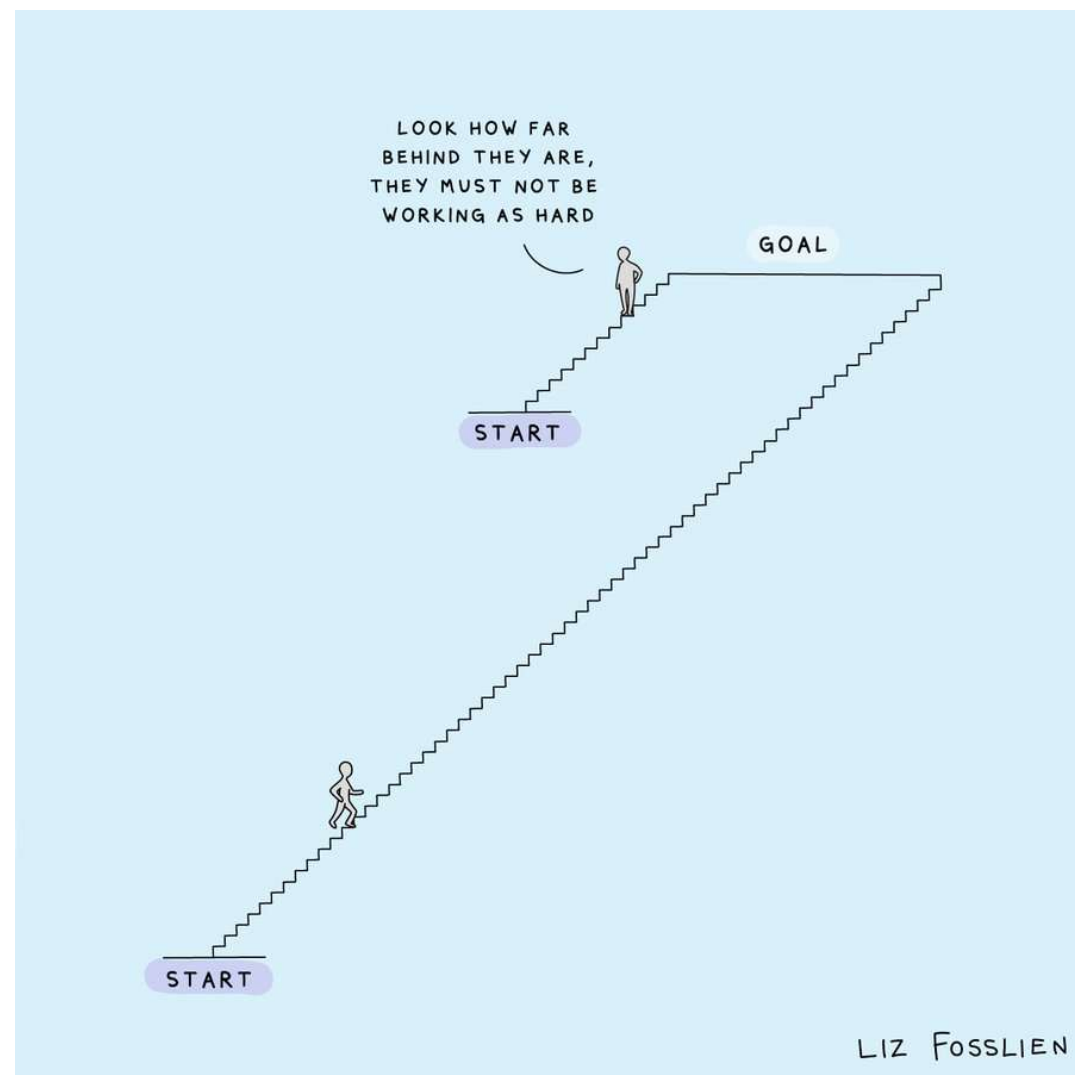
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AIF Pilot 2021

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AIF
Assessment
Type 3:
Appraisal



What is AT3: The Appraisal?

- 30 %

Which means: Yes, important, but only 30% (70 % is already done!)

- Externally Assessed

Which means: Marked by SACE, good because they don't know you, challenging because you need to convey and communicate this to an external person, who wasn't there when it happened.

- A 1000 words if written, a maximum of 6 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form

Which means: It's not a lot, but for some students, it could be over in 6 minutes!

- The Output of Learning must be evidenced in the Appraisal but does not contribute to the word count or time limit

Which means: You need to show the SACE marker what you did (in some way).

- Submitted to SACE first External Assessment for Marking.

Which means: Ideally, AT1 and AT2 (particularly "Progress Checks") are already done, A2 is more retrospective reflection in Appraisal.

The Assessment Design Criteria:

AKA: "Performance Standards."

A1 Appraising the **personal value** of the learning experiences

333 words

or 2 minutes

A2 Appraising the **impact** of strategies, perspectives and/or feedback **to progress the learning towards the learning goal**

333 words

or 2 minutes

A3 Appraising the **learning development** as represented in the **output of learning**

333 words

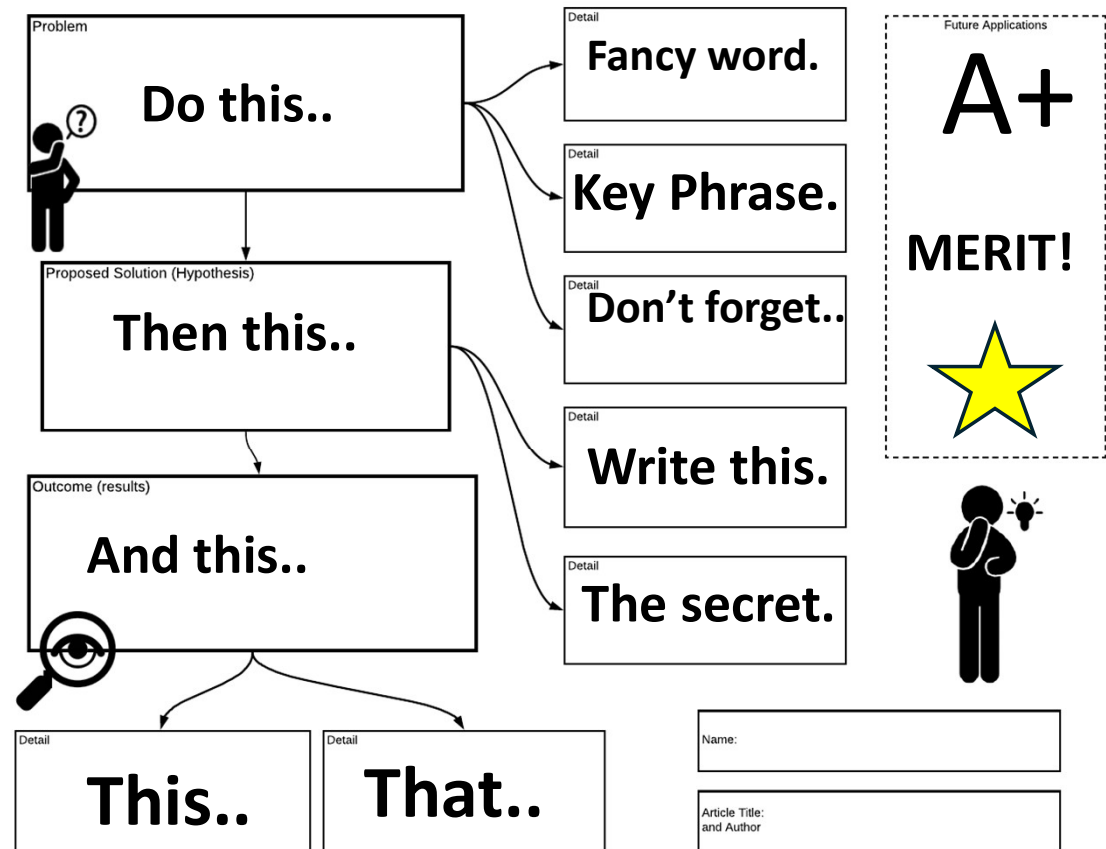
or 2 minutes

This means: There are ONLY 3!

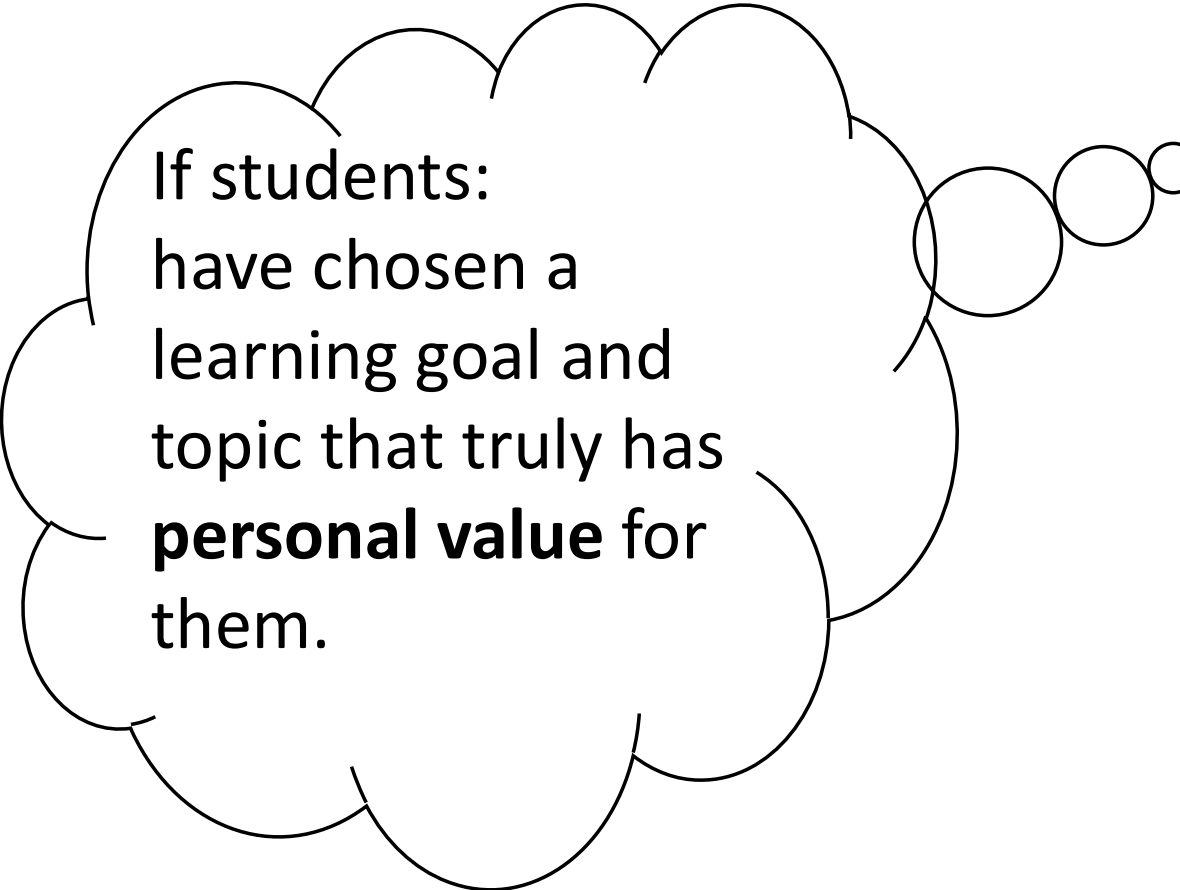
AT3: Appraisal

What's the Secret?

- A1, 2 then 3?
- Scaffold?
- Key words or vocabulary?
- How can we be “insightful”?



A1: Appraising the **personal value** of the learning experiences

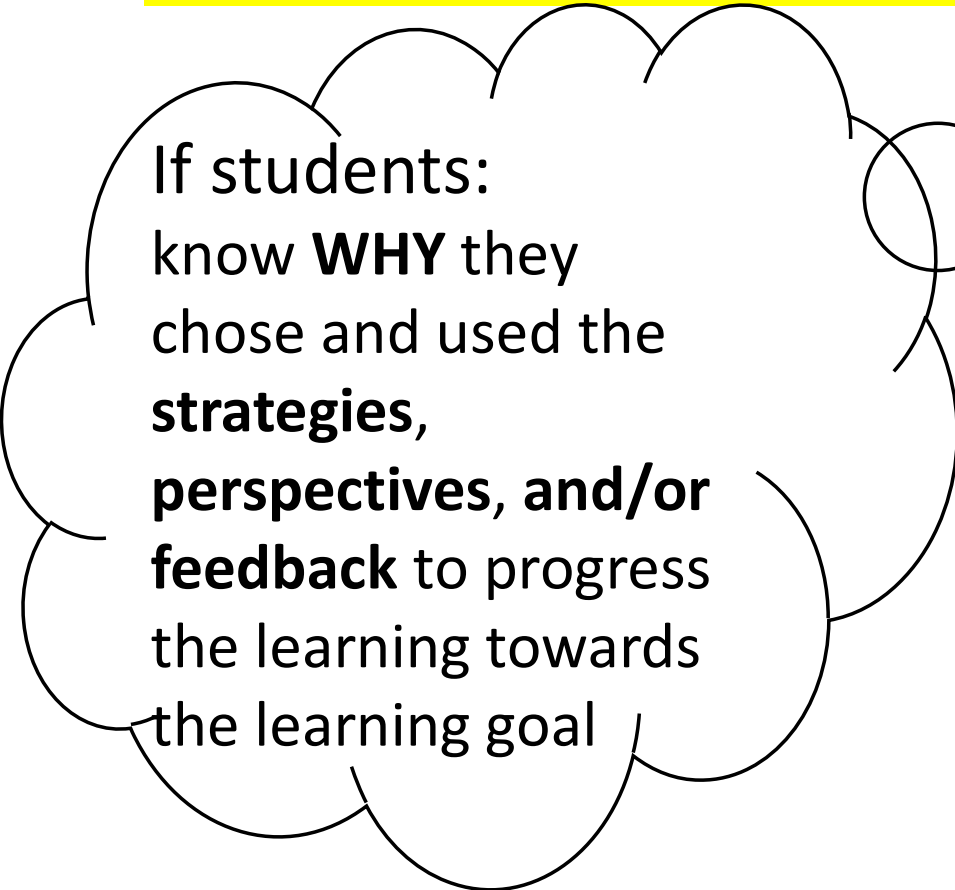


If students:
have chosen a
learning goal and
topic that truly has
personal value for
them.

Then students...

will be able to
appraise the
personal value of
the learning
experiences (*maybe
insightfully*).

A2: Appraising the **impact** of strategies, perspectives and/or feedback **to progress the learning towards the learning goal**

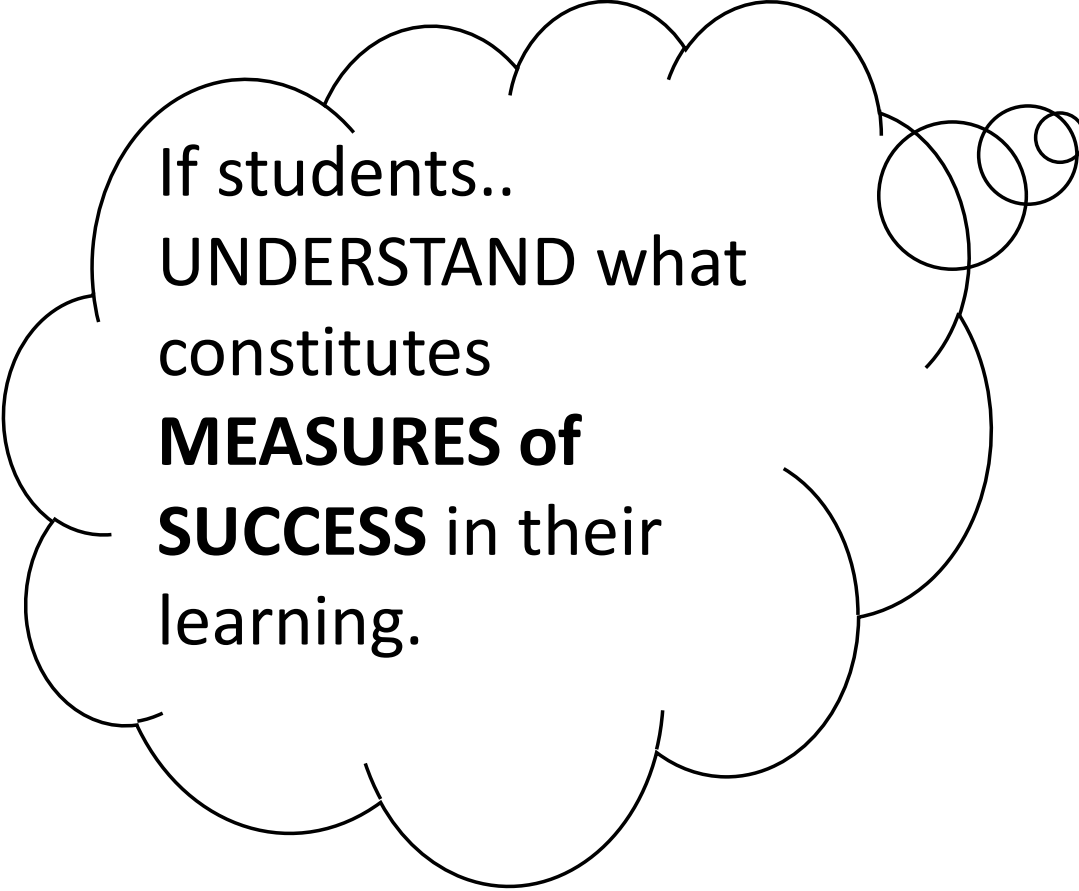


If students:
know **WHY** they
chose and used the
strategies,
perspectives, and/or
feedback to progress
the learning towards
the learning goal

Then...

they might be able to
appraise the related
impact of strategies,
perspectives, and/or
feedback to progress the
learning towards the
learning goal

A3: Appraising the learning development as represented in the output of learning



If students..
UNDERSTAND what
constitutes
**MEASURES of
SUCCESS** in their
learning.

Then...
they might be able to
appraise the extent of
learning development,
using **interconnected
measures**, as
represented in the output
of learning

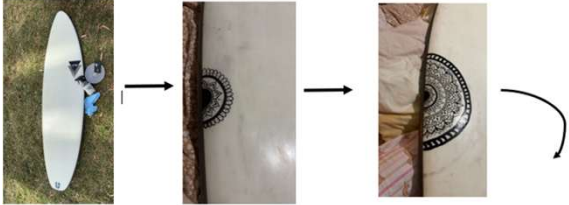
Output of Learning (and the Appraisal)

From the 2025 AIF Subject Outline:

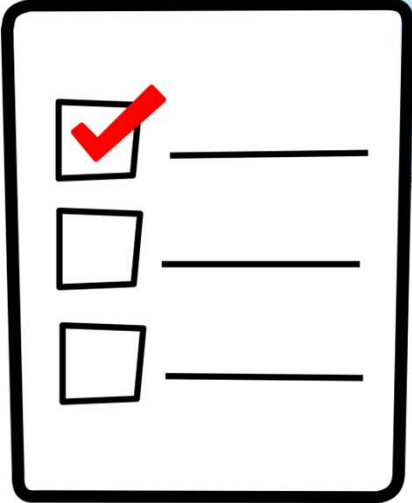
“In this assessment, students evidence their **Output of Learning** that showcases the progress to or attainment of their Learning Goal, appraising the value and purpose of the learning for themselves. They evaluate the impact of strategies, perspectives, and feedback, identifying the most significant contributing factor/s that supported the learning progress towards their Learning Goal and **Output of Learning**. They also showcase their **Output of Learning** and appraise it based on their learning development and own goals chosen and shaped throughout the portfolio. Their Appraisal may also include anticipation of future benefits related to transfer of skills and knowledge and development of connections.

Output/s of Learning

My output of learning:



All these pictures show evidence of my out put of learning and the steps that where taken. In photo one that was the first step I had to do which was dewaxing the surfboard and wiping it clean. Photo 2 was the start of the first mandala following with photo 3 which was it more completed. Photo 4 shows a completed mandala and then photo 5 shows all three completed mandatas which is my output.

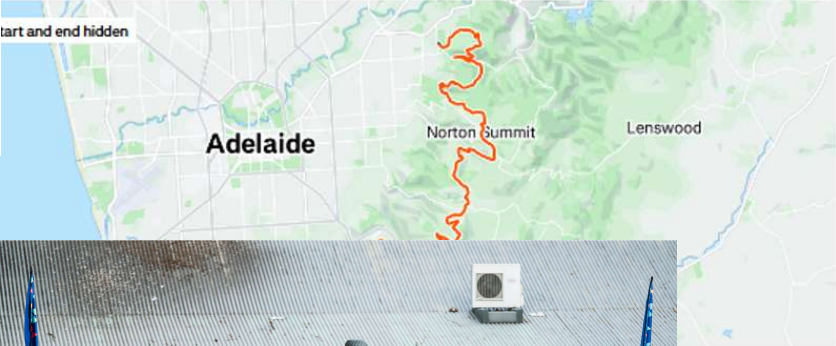


5 PEAKS 2025!!!!!!!
 Got real rough at some parts but we push through and happy to finish

Distance	Elev Gain	Time
60.41 km	2,334 m	8h 2m

Achievements 4

Best estimated 50k effort (6:53:40)
 Best estimated Marathon effort (5:43:19)





A 10 Second
Output of
Learning?

Output of Learning

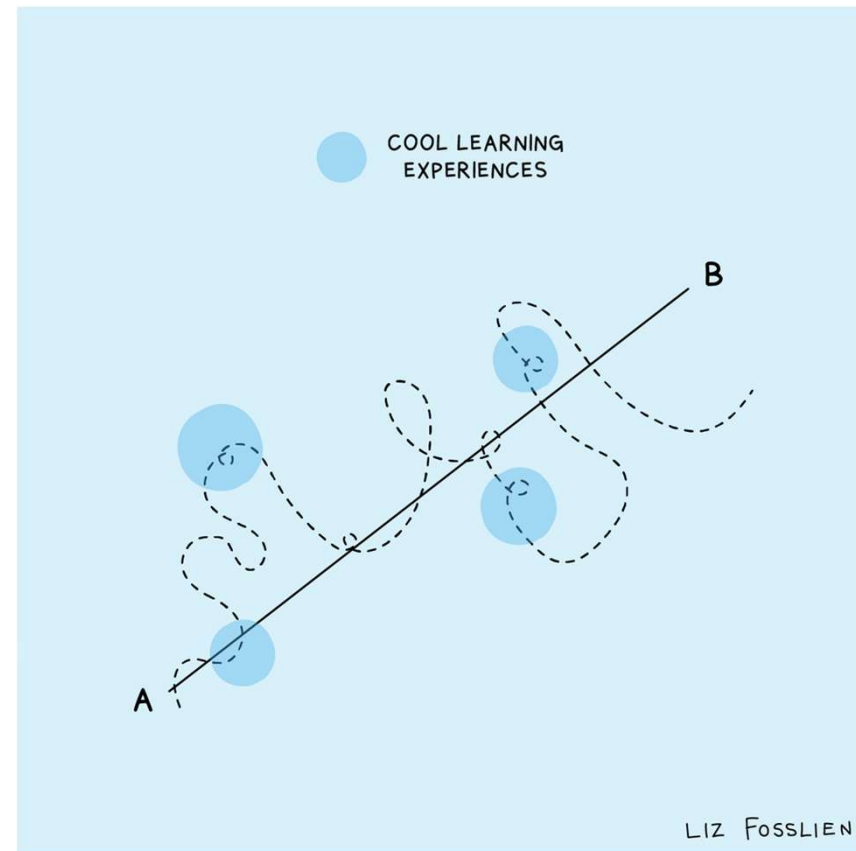
- **Not directly** assessed for AIF – but ‘assessed.’
- **Appraised** in AT3
- **NOT** an “**add on**”, **extra task** or **chore**.
- “Evidence” (attach, include, show etc) for SACE submission
- A **reference point** for the SACE Marker (a bit like the Summary was in RP)

Who assesses the learning output then?

<p>My local history → Output: Timeline poster of key events → Appraisal: 6-min video presentation discussing findings</p>	<p>Write a short story → Output: Final 2-page story → Appraisal: 1000-word</p>	<p>Build a birdhouse → Output: Photos → Appraisal: 6-min audio explaining decisions and challenges</p>	<p>Create a personal budget → Output: Spreadsheet showing a month of expenses → Appraisal: 1000-word reflection</p>
<p>Cochlear implant research → Output: Magazine article → 1000-word notes around article</p>	<p>Horror short film → Output: Storyboard + practice footage → 6-min screencast with voiceover</p>	<p>Learn guitar basics → Output: Video playing 3 songs → Appraisal: 6-min audio/video reflecting on learning</p>	<p>Handknit jumper → Output: Nearly finished jumper → 6-min video wearing it</p>
<p>Sustainable farming → Output: Recorded discussion with parent → Write 1000 words + attach recording</p>	<p>Learn basic coding → Output: Screenshots of coding projects or simple apps → Appraisal: 1000-word written reflection on what was learned</p>	<p>Grow vegetables at home → Output: Photo diary of the growing process → Appraisal: 6-min video explaining steps and results</p>	<p>Rebuild car engine → Output: Photos of engine → 6-min audio about the photos</p>
<p>Improve basketball skills → Output: Video clips showing practice drills → Appraisal: 6-min audio discussing improvements and challenges</p>	<p>Make a podcast episode → Output: Final podcast audio file → Appraisal: 1000-word evaluation of content, process, and feedback</p>	<p>Create a digital art piece → Output: Image file of original artwork → Appraisal: 6-min audio describing inspiration and techniques</p>	<p>Practice healthy eating habits → Output: Diet and exercise plan → Appraisal: 1000-word Appraisal</p>

A1: “Personal Value” of “Learning Experiences.”

- A tricky one to quantify or teach explicitly – *they just need to get it!*
- Not often a stand-alone but more **embedded with A2 and A3**
- Higher levels Grade bands **gives reasons for “Personal value.”**
- Reasons that **aren’t cliched or rote**
- “Personal value” is **connected or is as a result of “learning experiences”** – *even by accident.*
- Learning experiences **need not to be planned** from the beginning
- Insightful **appraisal often happens despite the planning**, but is noticed, and valued
- To be discussed in the Appraisal, Learning experiences **need not to have positive personal value** – it could be opposite 😞



Is this *really* “Personal Value”?



“This project has been one of the most *transformative* learning experiences I’ve had. It was challenging, hands-on, and filled with both *setbacks* and *successes*. I’ve gained technical skills, *developed systematic problem-solving habits*, and discovered how *valuable feedback* and expert perspectives are in learning something new. *The fully working lawn mower engine represents not just a mechanical outcome, but growth in confidence, understanding, and independence.* I now feel capable of tackling other mechanical projects and have a strong *foundation for future learning* in this area.”

Can ChatGPT write your Appraisal?

Authentic Identities and Futures ATH: Appraisal SAC:16: 123456K

Appraisal – Combustion Lawn Mower Motor Project

I set this Learning Goal because I've always wanted to understand engines, especially those used in everyday equipment like lawn mowers. Growing up on a semi-rural property, I've seen many tools fall into disuse simply because no one didn't have the know-how to fix them. By learning how to fix and maintain a combustion lawn mower motor, I hoped to gain confidence, reduce waste, and be more self-reliant with mechanical issues.

This project held personal significance for me beyond just fixing a machine. It represented a shift from being dependent on others to becoming someone who could solve practical problems. Before this, I didn't know how a carburetor worked or what caused an engine to fail. I had always assumed mechanical knowledge was something you were born with or needed formal training for. Now, I understand that with curiosity, patience, and the right strategies, it's possible to learn these skills independently.

The project also aligned with my values around sustainability. Reusing an old mower instead of buying a new one gave me a sense of environmental responsibility. It made the learning feel purposeful—not just a school task, but something that mattered in the real world. The moment the engine turned over and ran smoothly for the first time was incredibly powerful. I had spent days cleaning, adjusting, and reassembling, and hearing it start was like the machine was speaking back to me, saying, "You did it right." That sound reflected everything I had learned, from theory to practice, and gave me a real sense of ownership over the process.

To achieve my goal, I used a combination of hands-on trial and error, expert feedback, and online tutorials. Each strategy complemented the other and contributed to different stages of my learning. One of my main strategies was using YouTube tutorials to guide my disassembly and cleaning process. For example, I followed a video by Steve's Small Engine Saksion titled "How to Clean a Lawn Mower Carburetor." This video provided a step-by-step visual that helped me identify and clean the fuel bowl, float, and needle valve. Without this visual guide, I would have struggled to understand how the small parts interacted. I watched this video multiple times—pausing at key steps and comparing it to the mower in front of me.

I also spoke regularly with Phil, a retired small engine mechanic and a [YouTube expert](#) who agreed to check in on my progress weekly. After I cleaned the carburetor and reassembled it, the engine still wouldn't start. Phil suggested I test the spark plug

Authentic Identities and Futures ATH: Appraisal SAC:16: 123456K

using a spark tester tool (which he lent me). I discovered the spark plug was fouled and had no spark. He advised me to replace it and explained how moisture and age could reduce conductivity. This feedback not only solved the immediate problem but helped me understand the role of ignition in engine starting.

Phil also challenged me to explain what each part of the engine did and why it mattered. This kind of questioning helped deepen my learning. For example, when I showed him the cleaned air filter, he asked, "What happens to fuel efficiency and engine wear if the filter is dirty?" That pushed me to research and [explore](#) how small maintenance tasks can significantly affect performance. His perspective taught me to think beyond repairs and towards long-term care and prevention.

A critical piece of feedback came when I assumed the problem was with fuel delivery and spent hours reassembling the carburetor. Phil asked whether I had checked the crankcase breather and explained how it could cause compression issues. After watching a video from Taryl Pines All titled "Hard to Start Lawn Mower Fix," I [realized](#) I hadn't considered air pressure or oil contamination. I replaced the oil and let the engine rest, and it started with two pulls. This feedback helped me see that focusing too narrowly on one issue can lead to missed clues, and that broader mechanical understanding is essential.

Throughout the project, I kept a learning log where I documented my daily progress, mistakes, and what I learned from them. Reviewing my log helped me spot patterns—like forgetting to reconnect the fuel line after cleaning or using the wrong torque on bolts. These reflections became feedback to myself and guided how I approached later stages more carefully.

My learning development is clearly represented in the functioning lawn mower motor I restored. At the beginning of this process, I didn't know the difference between a choke and a throttle, or how to adjust the idle screw on a carburetor. Now, I can explain the full air-fuel-ignition cycle and confidently carry out regular maintenance tasks like oil changes, blade sharpening, and spark plug replacement.

I've also learned to evaluate and respond to problems based on sound diagnosis. For instance, I now follow a systematic checklist—starting with fuel, then spark, then compression—rather than guessing. This structured thinking shows growth not just in knowledge but in how I approach problem-solving. The mower now starts on the first or second pull, idles smoothly, and cuts evenly under load. I've tested it multiple times on different lawn types, and it continues to perform consistently.

Authentic Identities and Futures ATH: Appraisal SAC:16: 123456K

I also added value to the project by labelling each component in a photo series and creating a short visual guide to the key maintenance steps. This extra step shows how I've [applied](#) the learning enough to teach someone else. One interconnected measure of my development is the ability to explain cause and effect in engine function. For example, I can describe how a dirty jet in the carburetor can restrict fuel flow, causing poor idling, and how that connects to the need for cleaning and adjusting.

Another is the way I applied feedback to improve outcomes. Phil's suggestion to replace the spark plug saved me hours of troubleshooting. Finally, my ability to transfer this knowledge is evident—I've already started repairing a second mower for my uncle, and I'm planning to service our ride-on mower next.

My learning also deepened in non-technical areas like persistence, attention to detail, and openness to feedback. Early mistakes taught me the importance of double-checking work and being willing to admit when something wasn't working. The ability to take apart, understand, and reassemble a machine gave me a new sense of capability that goes far beyond lawn mowers.

This project has been one of the most transformative learning experiences I've had. It was challenging, hands-on, and filled with both setbacks and successes. I've gained technical skills, developed systematic problem-solving habits, and discovered how valuable feedback and expert perspectives are in learning something new. The fully working lawn mower engine represents not just a mechanical outcome, but growth in confidence, understanding, and independence. I now feel capable of tackling other mechanical projects and have a strong foundation for future learning in this area.

Output of Learning

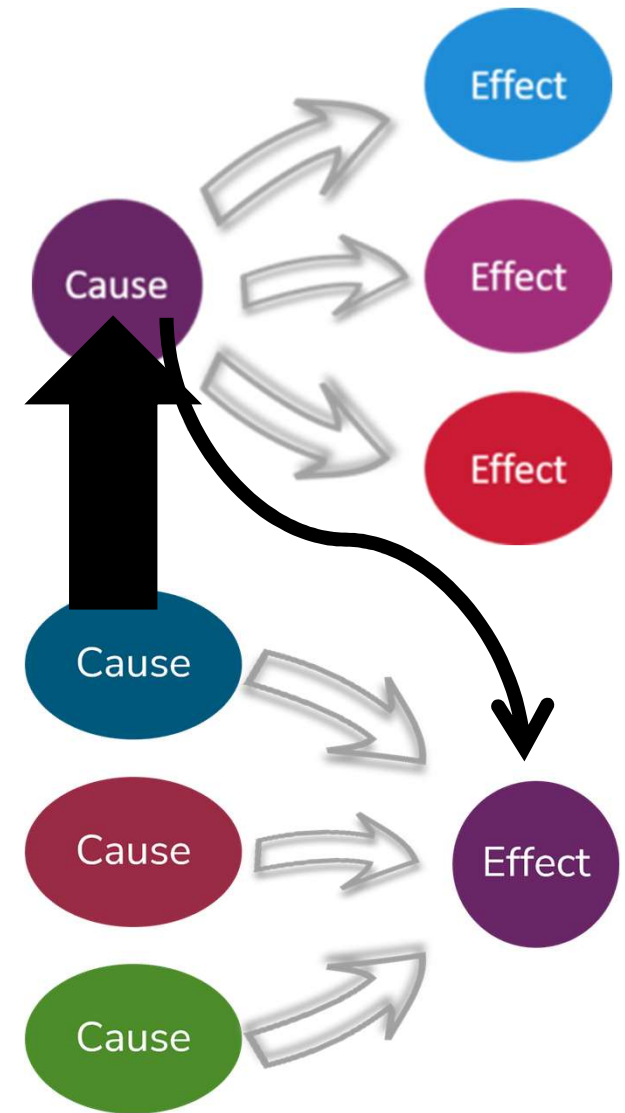


A2: “Decisions” and “IMPACT.”

- **METACOGNITION** – Mindful and purposeful decision making occurs throughout AIF, with a particular INTENT and IMPACT on learning

“I am getting this PERSPECTIVE, this LEARNING STRATEGY, and/or this piece of FEEDBACK to this hopeful IMPACT on my learning.”

- **WHY?** – and NOT just because the teacher said to do a survey.
- **REFLECTION** on how all of those DECISIONS connected to impact learning RETROSPECTIVELY (for AT3)
- **RELATED IMPACT** – shows **understanding of the IMPACT and connections** between learning strategies, perspectives and/or feedback.



A3. “Output of Learning” and “Learning goals.”

- “**Success Criteria**” or “**Criteria**” is no longer part of the A3
- “**Measures**” – **ways in which the Output of Learning** (or RESULT/S) of learning can be measured (or JUDGED)
- “**MEASURES**” should be determined, described and fully understood by the student, not necessarily predetermined or based on other typical criteria found elsewhere in school
- **INTERCONNECTED MEASURES** – can be a combination of successes, failures and unexpected results.
- The **Output of Learning** might not have been 100% successful, or the learning goal met to appraise its worth.



Written or Multimodal?

Written

- Great if writing is your strength
- Familiar format
- Easier to edit, recorrect and re-format.
- Probably won't improve your grade.



Multimodal

- Great if writing isn't your strength
- Can suit the Output of Learning
- Can be a great way to finish (6 minutes and done!)
- Can we get more words if we speak faster?
- Probably won't improve your grade.



Some more ideas to help students more generally with the Appraisal:

- Students should **NOT** overthink the Appraisal – *“Insightful” isn’t something to conjure up at the last minute, write it down, they should value their ‘insights.’*
- Throughout AIF- **Discuss personal value/s, learning strategies, perspectives and feedback**—ask **“WHY”** often and throughout AIF, not just at the end
- Highlight and discuss the **Assessment Criteria** – but don’t just re-write them.
- Match the **suitable Appraisal format**—1000 words or 6 minutes to the student – *what format suits them best?*
- For some students, you could **scaffold with sequenced writing: A1, A2, A3** – but with doubling up, this could mean you run out of words or time.
- Another option, have students **RANK their most to least valuable strategies, perspectives, or feedback** then appraise with A1, 2 and 3 accordingly.

RANK Learning Strategies, perspectives, and/or feedback, according to:

A1: “Personal Value”

Eg. “Talking to my Nonna was an amazing experience for the personal value...” etc etc

A2: “Impact on learning development”

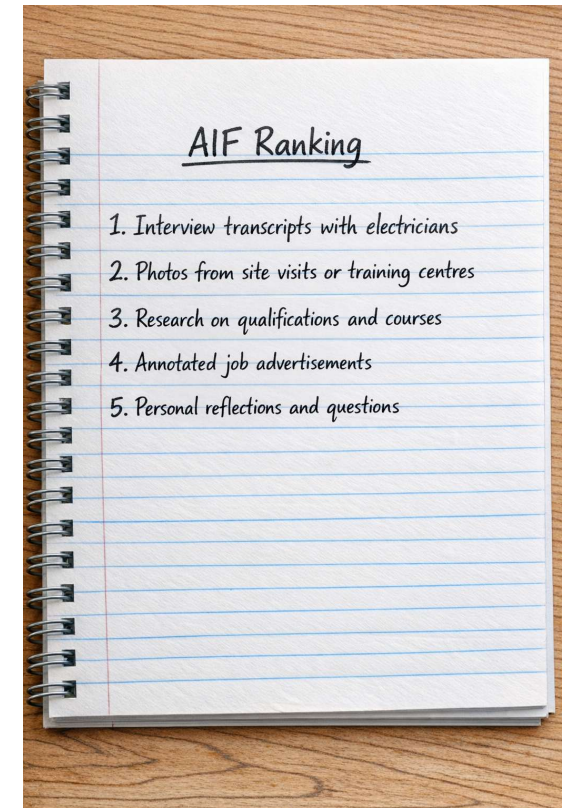
Eg. “By far the most valuable part of my learning occurred during my practical cooking lessons...”

And/or

A3. Connection to, influence on, or impact on the learning goal and Output of Learning.

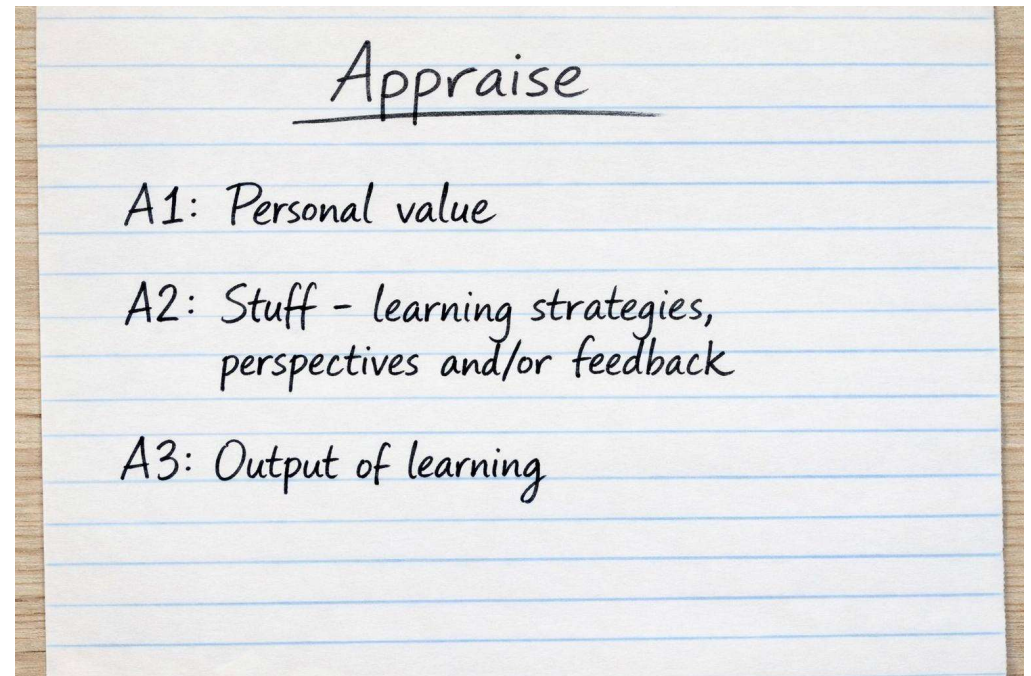
Eg. “The process and pressure of catering for my whole family for my cousin’s wedding really influenced the quality of my cooking...”

The RANKING Method



How to help those struggling students with AT3?

- Highlight the fact that AIF is nearly finished, and ***it could be literally be over in 6 minutes!***
- **They don't have to do anymore STUFF, just reflect on what they have done.**
- Help them note down, or record their achievements.
- **Be proud of their accomplishments, regardless of what the SACE Marker thinks**



Thankyou – where to next?

