What learners should know before doing an adaptive assessment using the Tool

Before they sit the assessment

Discuss with your students:

- The purpose of the assessment

  - to find out what your learners know so that you can match their needs to the course requirements.

  - To help plan the teaching required to fill any gaps students may have.

- Explain how the tool works;

  - 'adaptive' reacts to students responses. If correct a question at a higher level is asked. If incorrect a lower level question will be asked.

  - different ways of answering questions.

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Organisationally: Think about the logistics of this – when will this brief take place and who will do it? Tutors may need some training prior to setting up learners to use ALNAT + support for the early groups.

Be honest about what you're going to do with the results, eg., adapt course material, group learners, give extra support, change order of topics…case in point: student who put no effort in then found out that learners who scored really poorly would be referred to learning support.

Give an idea about how the course has some reading, writing and number demands and the assessment will give an idea about how this group might deal with those demands. (More about the scales later)

This is about setting learners up emotionally, and taking away as much of the 'test' anxiety as we can. Really important that they know this is a different kind of assessment to the summary assessments they are used to taking.
Case in point: student who was used to doing well on tests, gutted to find he'd missed several questions.
It's the tool's job to try to find questions you CAN'T answer.

Some logistics for groups

- Print the assessment codes, cut them up, and give to learners before going to computer suite
- Make sure they all have logins for organisation's network
- Prepare the room – make sure all computers are on, write the website for the assessment on the board https://assess.literacyandnumeracyforadults.com
- Have the assessment login page showing on data projector

Before they sit the assessment

- Check your students have the required computer skills;
  - know how to 'highlight' words and phrases, 'drag and drop'
- Time factor;
  - most of the assessments require a lot of reading. Explain to your learners they can take their time, have a short break.
  - some of the questions will interest them others wont but it is important learners attempt to answer all the questions.
  - make sure they know there will be around 30 – 35 questions
- Let students know that their assessment will have different questions than their neighbours

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May even need to check they know about opening a browser to load assessment.

In Reading assessment, several questions will relate to the same bit of text. Make sure your low level readers especially, understand that it's the same text and they may not have read the whole thing each time.
Case in point: Learner who went to lunch for a break then came back to finish – for large groups you may need to schedule a make-up session anyway for those not there on assessment day, so those that are taking longer spread it across a couple of sessions.

Before they sit the assessment

Say things like:

Try the practice questions first so you can see how the questions will look.

There will be around 30 to 35 questions in total.

If you really don't have a clue about an answer, take your best guess and submit an answer.

If you've really had enough, take a break and walk away. Keep your assessment code so you can come back to it later

Comment about reliability of results: Yes, there may be learners who put no effort in to the assessment, but that in itself probably tells you something about that learner, i.e., either their skills are quite low or their attitude to learning is… in either case, it's good to get a red flag about this learner asap.

AT is what it is – designed to give accurate levels based on answers input. Like any assessment, attitude will play a part in the results.

Before they sit the assessment

- Tell learners they'll be able to see their results straight after they finish by clicking 'view results'.
- Prepare learners for what the will see on their printouts.

  - there will likely be a lot of incorrect answers. The 'tool' is trying to find the best fit (step) for the learner where they will consistently score 70% correct.

  - The Tool simply places their results on a scale from 1 to 6, so they'll see their result as step X.

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Before they sit the assessment

Say things like:

At the end, your results will be given a number from step 1 to step 6.

Most people have quite a few wrong answers. Remember the tool's job is to keep making the questions harder until you DO miss!

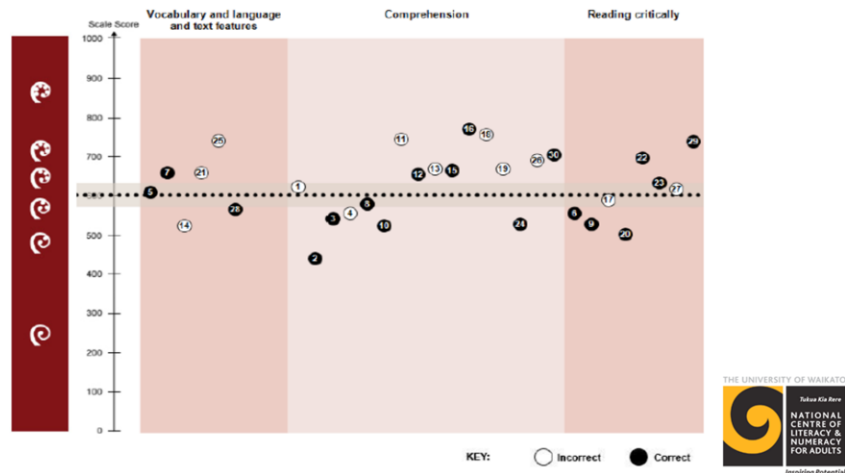The results help us see what you already know, and where there's room for improvement.
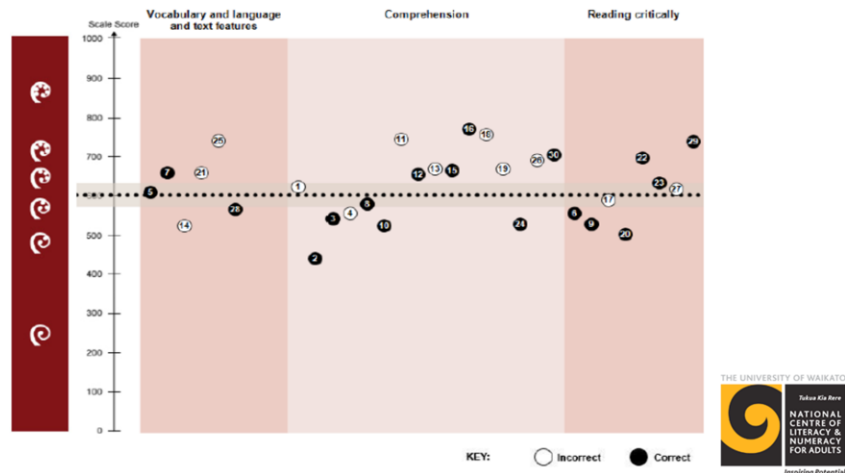
You could at this stage have conversations about course demands, eg., this course has some material that sits at level 4, so we'll look at some reading tips and strategies to help everyone understand them more easily.

Common question from educators

- How does the tool place that line?

Setting the learner's level
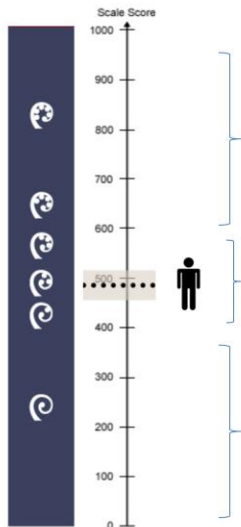
The learner is:

expected to get **much less than 70%** of the questions located above their achievement level correct.

expected to get **about 70%** of the questions located at their achievement level correct.

expected to get **much more than 70%** of the questions located below their achievement level correct.

This is not something you'd need to share with learners, but in a nutshell whatever level they're at we expect them to capably handle material mapped to that level. We can also expect them to handle SOME material above that level.
Note also the margin of error around the result.

If you get a learner at step 1 or maybe 2, the conversation will look a bit different.

Let them know they'll sit a similar assessment later in the year (if applicable)
Make sure they go away feeling that you and they can use the results to move forward.