

OUTCOME-BASED AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT FOR GRADUATE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT UNZAH

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Abstract

This article formulates an outcome-based authentic assessment model for the Master's Program in Islamic Religious Education (S2 PAI) at Universitas Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong. Graduate-level PAI learning requires evidence that students can integrate advanced Islamic educational knowledge, research competence, pedagogical judgement, digital capability, and pesantren-based ethical responsibility. Conventional written examinations are insufficient when they are used as the dominant source of evidence because they tend to measure recall more strongly than transfer, professional reasoning, and scholarly performance. Using qualitative descriptive library research, this study synthesizes constructive alignment, outcome-based education, authentic assessment, rubric design, and quality assurance literature. The analysis produces a five-part model: mapping course outcomes to observable performances, selecting socially and professionally meaningful tasks, applying analytic rubrics, embedding feedback and revision, and conducting lecturer moderation. Suitable tasks include policy briefs, curriculum audits, research-informed lesson designs, critical reviews, community education projects, and oral defenses. The model positions assessment as a coherent system for generating valid evidence of graduate competence rather than merely assigning grades. Its novelty lies in connecting authentic assessment with the epistemic, pedagogical, research, and ethical profile of graduate Islamic religious education in a pesantren-based university context.

INTRODUCTION

Assessment at the master's level should demonstrate more than the accumulation of information. Students of Islamic Religious Education are expected to interpret classical and contemporary scholarship, evaluate educational problems, conduct research, design learning innovations, and communicate academically responsible recommendations. These expectations demand assessment evidence that captures intellectual depth, transfer of knowledge, professional judgement, and ethical responsibility rather than depending mainly on memory-based tests.

The current Indonesian higher education quality assurance framework requires study programs to define learning outcomes and ensure that learning processes generate credible evidence of their achievement (Republic of Indonesia, 2025). In this context, assessment is inseparable from curriculum design. If graduate outcomes emphasize analysis, research, innovation, and social contribution, assessment tasks must require

students to perform those capabilities in meaningful situations. Constructive alignment provides the logic for connecting outcomes, learning activities, assessment evidence, and criteria (Biggs, 1996).

Authentic assessment is relevant because it asks students to use knowledge in tasks that resemble scholarly, professional, or social practices. Systematic reviews show that well-designed authentic assessment can strengthen critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and transfer, although it also requires clear criteria, lecturer capacity, and institutional support (Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2024; Zhan et al., 2025). For S2 PAI UNZAH, authenticity should not be reduced to workplace simulation. It must also reflect Islamic educational scholarship, pesantren traditions, community needs, and the responsibility to produce beneficial knowledge.

This article aims to formulate a conceptual model of outcome-based authentic assessment for S2 PAI UNZAH. The study focuses on the alignment of graduate outcomes, authentic tasks, evidence, rubrics, feedback, and moderation. The proposed model is intended as a practical framework for course assessment, curriculum evaluation, and internal quality assurance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Constructive alignment and outcome evidence

Constructive alignment begins with explicit learning outcomes and then organizes teaching and assessment so that students enact the intended capabilities (Biggs, 1996). In graduate education, outcome statements should use observable intellectual performances such as synthesizing, evaluating, designing, investigating, defending, and producing. The quality of an outcome-based system depends on whether the collected evidence actually represents those performances.

Authenticity in graduate assessment

Authentic assessment is commonly associated with realistic tasks, cognitive challenge, evaluative judgement, feedback, student agency, and social collaboration (Villarroel et al., 2018; Zhan et al., 2025). In PAI, authenticity may involve analysing a contested educational issue, designing an intervention for a madrasah or pesantren, evaluating curriculum policy, or defending a research-based theological-pedagogical position. Authenticity therefore includes disciplinary, professional, personal, and social relevance.

Rubrics, feedback, and quality assurance

Analytic rubrics clarify the dimensions of expected performance and support consistency across lecturers. However, rubrics should not fragment complex performance into mechanical checklists. Their criteria need to represent conceptual accuracy, use of evidence, methodological coherence, contextual sensitivity, originality, and ethical responsibility. Feedback and opportunities for revision transform assessment from a terminal judgement into a learning process (Boud & Molloy, 2013).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive design with a library research approach. Sources included higher education assessment studies, authentic assessment reviews, constructive alignment literature, feedback scholarship, and the Indonesian

higher education quality assurance regulation. The unit of analysis was the design principle that connects graduate learning outcomes with valid and usable assessment evidence.

The literature was analysed thematically through four stages: identifying core concepts, comparing assessment design frameworks, contextualizing them for graduate Islamic Religious Education, and synthesizing an operational model. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing regulatory, theoretical, review, and empirical literature. The study is conceptual and does not claim to report classroom implementation or student achievement data at UNZAH.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mapping graduate outcomes to performances

The first requirement is to translate broad graduate attributes into course-level performances. Knowledge mastery should be evidenced through synthesis and critique, not only definition. Research competence should be evidenced through problem formulation, literature positioning, methodological decisions, data interpretation, and scholarly argument. Pedagogical competence should appear in curriculum analysis and learning design. Ethical and pesantren-based values should be observed through academic honesty, respectful dialogue, social sensitivity, and responsible use of religious sources.

Selecting meaningful assessment tasks

Authentic tasks must generate products and performances that have value beyond grading. A policy brief can assess the ability to translate research into institutional recommendations. A curriculum audit can assess alignment between aims, content, pedagogy, and evaluation. A research-informed lesson design can reveal the integration of theory, technology, and learner needs. A community education project can demonstrate problem diagnosis, collaboration, implementation planning, and public communication.

Developing analytic rubrics

A rubric should contain a limited number of high-value criteria. For a policy brief, the criteria may include problem accuracy, quality of evidence, Islamic educational reasoning, feasibility, communication, and ethical implications. Performance descriptors need to distinguish superficial description from analytical synthesis and defensible judgement. Exemplars and calibration discussions help lecturers and students interpret the criteria consistently.

Embedding feedback and revision

Authentic assessment is weakened when students submit a complex task only once. A staged sequence proposal, draft, peer dialogue, lecturer feedback, revision, and defense produces stronger evidence of learning. Feedback should identify the gap between the current work and the expected standard and should direct concrete improvement. Students should also write a short response explaining which feedback they accepted, rejected, or adapted and why.

Moderation and program-level use

Lecturer moderation is needed to protect fairness and comparability. Before assessment, lecturers can review the task and rubric; after assessment, they can compare samples representing different achievement levels. Aggregated rubric results can be

mapped to course learning outcomes and then to program outcomes. This makes assessment data useful for curriculum improvement rather than merely storing final grades.

Table 1. Outcome-based authentic assessment framework for S2 PAI UNZAH

Graduate outcome area	Authentic assessment task	Primary evidence and criteria
Advanced Islamic education scholarship	Critical synthesis or policy brief	Source accuracy, synthesis, argument, relevance
Research competence	Mini research dossier and oral defense	Problem, method, evidence, interpretation, ethics
Pedagogical innovation	Research-informed learning design	Alignment, learner analysis, innovation, feasibility
Social and pesantren responsibility	Community education project	Context sensitivity, adab, collaboration, impact plan

The novelty of the model lies in treating authenticity as a combination of disciplinary scholarship, educational practice, social contribution, and pesantren-based ethical responsibility. It also connects classroom evidence to program-level outcome monitoring through common criteria and moderation.

CONCLUSION

Outcome-based authentic assessment provides a coherent approach for evaluating graduate competence in S2 PAI UNZAH. Its effectiveness depends on explicit outcome-performance mapping, meaningful tasks, valid rubrics, staged feedback, revision, and lecturer moderation. Through this system, assessment can capture synthesis, research, pedagogical judgement, social contribution, and ethical conduct more convincingly than a predominantly examination-based model.

The practical implication is that each course should develop an assessment map specifying outcomes, tasks, evidence, criteria, weight, feedback points, and moderation procedures. Because this study is conceptual, future research should pilot the model in selected S2 PAI courses, examine inter-rater consistency, analyse student work, and investigate how authentic assessment influences graduate learning and curriculum quality.

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