



School of Business and Management (MBA)

Department's Best practice

Report: Assessment Centre and Development Centre (ACDC)

The Assessment Centre and Development Centre (ACDC) methodology is a structured and competency-based approach widely used for talent identification, evaluation, and development. In the context of our MBA student placement training, the ACDC methodology that we have applied, serves as a highly effective tool to simulate real-world recruitment scenarios while simultaneously enhancing students' employability skills.

- Our Assessment & Development Centre approach typically focuses on evaluating candidates against a predefined set of competencies required for specific roles. These competencies include overall personality development, and aspects such as communication skills, analytical ability, leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making.
- The Development Centre extends beyond evaluation to emphasize feedback and improvement, helping participants understand their strengths and areas for growth. When combined as ACDC, the methodology creates a holistic framework that integrates both assessment and developmental interventions.

Staged Progression

In our MBA placement training program, the ACDC methodology was implemented as a multi-stage process. The first step involved identifying key competencies aligned with industry expectations and recruiter requirements.

Based on these competencies, a series of simulation exercises were designed. These included group discussions, case study analyses, role plays, in-basket exercises, and structured interviews. Each activity was carefully mapped to specific competencies to ensure objective evaluation. Drama as a learning methodology played a significant role in these simulation exercises.

Students participated in these exercises under conditions that closely resembled actual placement processes. Assessors, typically faculty members or trained evaluators, observed and rated student performance using standardized scoring rubrics. This ensured consistency, fairness, and reliability in assessment. Importantly, the methodology moved beyond traditional academic evaluation by focusing on behavioral indicators rather than theoretical knowledge alone.

A critical component of the ACDC approach is feedback. After the assessment phase, each student received detailed, structured feedback highlighting their performance across various competencies. This feedback was both qualitative and quantitative, providing actionable insights. For instance, a student might learn that while their analytical skills are strong, they need to improve clarity in communication or assertiveness in group settings.

The development aspect of ACDC was addressed through targeted interventions such as workshops, mock interviews, communication training sessions, and personalized coaching. These interventions were designed based on the gaps identified during the assessment phase, making the training highly customized and relevant.



ACDC Applied Impression

The use of ACDC in MBA placement training offers several advantages. It enhances self-awareness among students, allowing them to understand how they are perceived in professional settings. It also improves readiness for recruitment processes by providing hands-on experience in a risk-free environment. Furthermore, the structured and evidence-based nature of ACDC increases the credibility of the training program among stakeholders, including recruiters.

Effectiveness and continuous improvement

To ensure the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the ACDC methodology, it is essential to evaluate it using a structured set of metrics. These metrics should capture both assessment accuracy and developmental impact, aligning with placement outcomes and student growth.

Competency Improvement Scores serve as a core metric. By comparing pre-ACDC and post-ACDC ratings across key competencies (such as communication, analytical thinking, and teamwork), the program can quantify individual and cohort-level improvement. This provides direct evidence of developmental impact.

Placement Conversion Rate is a critical outcome metric. This measures the percentage of students who successfully secure job offers after participating in ACDC-based training. It can be further refined by tracking the quality of placements, such as average salary packages or number of students placed in top-tier firms.

Assessment Reliability and Consistency is (where possible) evaluated through inter-rater reliability scores. Since multiple assessors observe student performance, consistency in scoring ensures objectivity and fairness. Statistical measures such as correlation coefficients or agreement indices can be used for this purpose.

Student Feedback and Satisfaction Scores provide insight into the perceived value of the ACDC process. Structured feedback forms can assess dimensions such as relevance of exercises, quality of feedback, and overall learning experience. High satisfaction levels often correlate with better engagement and outcomes.

Behavioral Change Indicators can be tracked over time. These include observable improvements in mock interviews, classroom participation, and group activities following ACDC interventions. Faculty evaluations and longitudinal tracking can support this metric.

Return on Investment (ROI) is an institutional metric that compares the cost of conducting ACDC (including assessor time, infrastructure, and training resources) against measurable outcomes such as improved placement rates primarily and enhanced employer satisfaction (where possible).

Employer Feedback serves as an external validation metric. Recruiters' perceptions of student preparedness, professionalism, and competency alignment provide valuable insights into how effectively the ACDC process meets industry expectations.



Participation and Completion Rates indicate program engagement. High participation and completion levels suggest that the ACDC process is well-integrated and valued within the placement training framework.

Objectives of the Practice

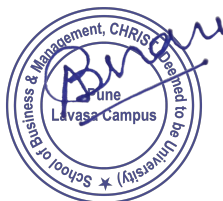
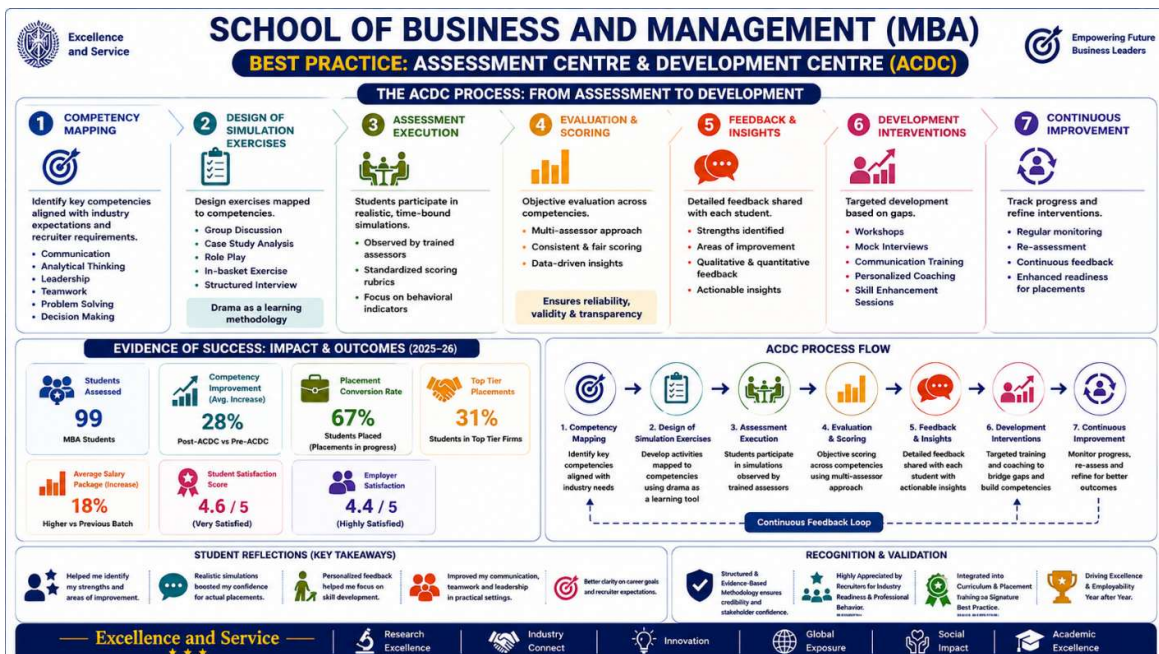
- To evaluate students' behavioural, managerial, and leadership competencies beyond academic knowledge.
- To provide structured feedback and developmental inputs that enhance decision-making, teamwork, critical thinking, and communication.
- To bridge the gap between classroom learning and corporate expectations through simulated business scenarios.
- To enhance employability readiness by preparing students for placement processes and corporate careers.

The Context

Business schools are expected to produce graduates who are job-ready from the first day. Traditional evaluation systems like exams and assignments measure knowledge but do not fully capture behavioural competencies demanded by employers such as communication, adaptability, leadership, and problem-solving.

The ACDC methodology offers a structured way to assess and develop these competencies. By aligning with corporate practices used in hiring and leadership development, it provides a practical bridge between business school education and workplace readiness.

The Practice



The ACDC is conducted in a structured and supervised format, using multiple exercises and evaluation methods:

- Simulation Exercises: Group discussions, case analyses, business games, role plays, and in-tray exercises.
- Individual/Group Exercises: Psychometric tests, business presentations, and problem-solving simulations.
- Observer Panels: Faculty and industry professionals assess students using competency-based frameworks.
- Feedback Mechanism: Each student receives structured feedback on strengths and developmental areas.
- Developmental Interventions: Workshops, coaching sessions, and Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to ensure capability building

The uniqueness lies in its holistic approach, real-world orientation, evidence-based evaluation, and integration of both assessment and development.

Evidence of Success

- Employers recognize ACDC-tested candidates as more prepared for corporate challenges.
- Students report increased self-awareness of strengths and areas of improvement.
- Enhanced confidence among students in handling placement interviews and real-world problem-solving.
- At Christ University, Pune Lavasa, early adoption has created focused readiness among students, ensuring they can showcase their strengths to potential employers in a more pointed manner.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

- **Challenges:**
 - Initial resistance from students unfamiliar with experiential assessments.
 - Requirement of trained assessors for unbiased and effective evaluation.
 - Logistical effort to conduct multiple exercises in a time-bound format.
- **Resources Required:**
 - Faculty and industry experts trained as assessors.
 - Competency dictionaries, rubrics, and psychometric tools.
 - Infrastructure for conducting simulations, group activities, and presentations.

In conclusion

Evaluating ACDC through a balanced scorecard of quantitative and qualitative metrics ensures that the methodology remains robust, transparent, and outcome-driven. These metrics not only help in assessing current effectiveness but also guide continuous refinement of the program to better align with evolving industry demands.


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