Communication assessment

Some example questions to ask about the person or ask about the person:

How does the person like to interact?
How does the person communicate?
How does the person express their feelings?
What senses are being used to process information?
How / What motivates the person?
How do you / family communicate with the person?
What opportunities does the person have to communicate?
Do people listen and respond?
Does the person make choices - what's the best way to offer choices?
What modes / systems are used to express and receive information?
What is the best -position, distance, direction, contrast?
Ask about use of technology for access to communication
Ask about use of touch for Communication
What is the context?

Examples of methods used to record:

Observation
"Best guess" sheets
Use of video
Capture with a photograph - easier than trying to describe an expression in words

Interview Schedules - People who know the person well, include parents / carers

**Things to think about following assessments:**
Consider optimum conditions for maximising communication through Functional Sensory assessments

**Pictures / symbols / line drawings** - size, thickness, colour preference, contrast etc.

**Sign/Gesture** - proximity, distance, visual frame, tactile elements

**Voice** - volume, pitch and direction

**An environmental audit**

**Which communication modes to use** – consider preferences and levels of functioning etc

Based on information in Aitken S, Buultjens M, Clark C, Eyre JT and Pease L, Editors, 2000, *Teaching Children who are Deafblind: Contact, Communication and Learning*, London, David Fulton
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>What the person does</th>
<th>In this setting</th>
<th>What we think it means</th>
<th>What we do</th>
<th>What happens</th>
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Mary Foster, T&C Sense West, (Adapted from Sense Scotland and CALL Centre, 2004)