

## **Assessment and Feedback Symposium 2020:** Assessment and feedback in the pandemic era: A time for learning and inclusion

28 October 2020

### **Session abstracts**

#### **Parallel session 1.1a, oral presentation**

##### **Changing assessment for good: Building on the emergency switch to promote future-oriented assessment and feedback practices**

Professor Kay Sambell, University of Cumbria and Professor Sally Brown, Leeds Beckett University

This presentation will suggest that we now have a vital opportunity to make positive long-term changes to assessment as a result of the rapid alterations we had to make during the short-term switch to emergency remote teaching due to the pandemic.

We will specifically focus on highlighting the value of future-oriented assessment and feedback. Building on our COVID-19 assessment collection (Sambell and Brown, 2020) the session will particularly highlight some practical strategies for creating future-oriented assessment and feedback practices in the upcoming academic year.

Sambell, K. and Brown, S. (2020) Covid-19 Assessment Collection is available at <https://sally-brown.net/kay-sambell-and-sally-brown-covid-19-assessment-collection/>

#### **Parallel session 1.1b, oral presentation**

##### **Bridging inclusion and employability: Creating significant real-world experiences in the curriculum**

Aranee Manoharan, Kingston University London

Inclusion and employability have become important but distinct priorities within the sector. For universities that serve a diverse student population, these two concerns necessarily converge, as better job prospects is a key driver for the diversification of the student population. For these students, the traditional methods of employability development, e.g. internships, are often not accessible. Therefore, this presentation will make the case that employability development must be integrated within the curriculum through teaching and assessment. In particular, it will focus on how academic teams can create significant real-world experiences within the curriculum by implementing authentic assessments facilitated through community/industry-engaged learning.

#### **Parallel session 1.1c, oral presentation**

##### **An investigation of the scope of formative assessment and feedback aimed at widening participation students within a game-based student response system, Kahoot!**

Dr Syed Tarek, University of Oxford

This presentation situates within the broader 'Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)' theme of the symposium and will focus on the use of Kahoot as an integral part of a hybrid classroom learning and explore how it can further enhance formative assessment and feedback within a curriculum-based learning setting and also limit demotivating factors by boosting confidence, encouraging involvement and active participation in the class and anonymised competition. Attendees of this session will be able to reflect on whether an active integration of Kahoot! can bring a positive change in the learning experience of WP students in their

area of practice.

### **Parallel session 1.2a, oral presentation**

#### **Embedding equity and inclusion: Showcasing inclusive assessment and feedback case studies and suggesting choice and diversity**

Dr Lisa Padden and Dr Geraldine O'Neil, University College Dublin

In the context of increasing widening participation and diversification of the student population, this presentation will give an overview of the principles of inclusive assessment and feedback based on the framework of Universal Design for Learning. We will outline the key learning from some of these case studies as well some case studies from our recent research on diversification and choice of assessment in our HEI (June 2020). We will outline some of the ways diversity and choice of assessment can provide opportunities for equity and inclusion and student success, particularly in the current educational environment.

### **Parallel session 1.2b, oral presentation**

#### **Assessment insights from the margins: Garnering the view of learners with disabilities through lesson study**

Gareth Dart and Dr Sean Bracken, University of Worcester and Professor Jáima Pinheiro de Olivera, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais.

The role of learner voice has been recognised as central for charting more inclusive changes in policy and practice in higher education (Canning, 2017; Johnson et. Al; 2018; Seale, 2015). Nevertheless, undertaking such research with learners who have disabilities to inform assessment and feedback policy is negligible (Hanesworth, Bracken and Elkington, 2019; Seale, 2016). Using a Lesson Study method, which has been adopted in compulsory education, but one just emerging in higher education (Lee and Tan, 2020; Ni Shuilleabhain and Seery, 2018), this presentation provides insights from learners with disabilities whose voices were garnered in a small-scale research project exploring the nexus between assessment and Universal Design for Learning (Bracken and Novak, 2019).

Key findings of the study will be presented and critically analysed. Tentative and potential implications for assessment practices arising from the study will be addressed, as will the use of Lesson Study as a method for improving professional development and student engagement in HEIs.

### **Parallel session 1.2c, oral presentation**

#### **Pre-assessment support: Is it one size fits all?**

Dr Nicola Swann, Dr Hannah Moir, Dr Frank Owusu-Sekyere and Tia Boddie, Kingston University

Supporting students when preparing assessments is crucial to maximise attainment but both delivery of this support and uptake by students is variable. We will discuss evidence of influencing factors and student preferences to show that the situation enforced by the COVID-19 pandemic provides challenges to this provision but also opportunity to enhance accessibility of support in ways that might be valuable to students at this time and beyond, helping to reduce some of the inequality of experience in the sector.

### **Parallel session 2, Workshop A**

#### **Introducing TEDM: Improving feedback practices**

Willie McGuire, University of Glasgow

This session showcases the TEDM principle of written feedback - the core of a CPD resource deployed in the University of Glasgow to improve practice, which was co-constructed by staff and students to: address issues identified locally and nationally (NSS 2017-19, PTES 2017-19) in relation to low satisfaction levels, which were as follows: What are the common issues that arise in: communicating feedback to students; internalising feedback; closing the gap between feedback and action on that feedback and in identifying the drawbacks of instructional models (students are told what to do) as opposed to

illustrative models (students are shown what to do)?

## **Parallel session 2, Workshop B**

### **Towards inclusive feedback to support student engagement and learning**

Dr Kirsty Kiezebrink and Professor Abbe Brown, University of Aberdeen

This workshop will share experiences of encouraging colleagues to (i) engage with varied forms of assessment to provide an inclusive and stimulating learning experience, and (ii) provide learners with feedback to support them in an inclusive manner in enhancing their diverse learning experiences. It will develop a framework to support colleagues in providing feedback which respects disability, cultural background and student strengths and weaknesses, has effective and proportionate regard to colleague workload and can be delivered in a home working environment.

## **Parallel session 2.1a, oral presentation**

### **Take-home exams at Heriot Watt University**

Dr Alex Buckley, Heriot Watt University

Like most universities, when the pandemic first swept through the UK, urgent changes were made to assessments at Heriot Watt, and many Semester 2 exams were turned into take-home exams.

This session will provide some brief information about the exam format used at Heriot Watt in Semester 2 2019-20, before exploring the main themes emerging from the qualitative element of a survey which collected nearly 700 student responses: how students understood the expectations of this new form of assessment, and how the assessment change impacted on students in different circumstances.

## **Parallel session 2.1b, oral presentation**

### **What just happened? Impact of COVID-19 induced on-campus activities suspension: Lessons learned and the way forward**

Majid Ali Umm, Al-Qura University

The suspension of on-campus activities and/or lockdown in most parts of the world, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, has affected most aspects of learning in higher education including the readjustment of assessment methods and the way feedback is provided to the students. A Twitter chat invited all Pharmacy students to share their learning experiences during the lockdown period, including assessment and feedback. The participants identified several facilitators for and barriers to effective assessment and feedback, and provided suggestions for improvement during and post-pandemic. Our findings have implications for all degree programs in higher education.

## **Parallel session 2.1c, oral presentation**

### **'Time' for increased collaboration: (Re)designing online assessment under the pressures of a pandemic**

Dr Gladson Chikwa, Dr Fiona Meddings and Tarek Zoubir, University of Bradford

In this presentation we will introduce an institution-wide approach to the design and delivery of online assessment in response to the pandemic, ensuring the adoption of inclusive programme-level strategies (Bracken, 2019; PASS project, 2012). Our institution-wide response took place over a short period during which programme leaders met jointly with educational developers and quality officers to discuss appropriate assessment changes. This collaborative approach will be explained as key to the development and enhancement of alternative assessments and feedback practices in response to a pandemic (Brown and Sambell, 2020).

## **Parallel session 2.2a, oral presentation**

### **Scaling up flexible assessment**

Dr Sam Eklington, Teesside University

Universities have been compelled to rethink how the significant resources devoted to assessment and feedback might be reconfigured (even reimaged) to better support student

learning whatever their mode of study. This presentation documents work undertaken at Teesside University to prioritise and support the design and implementation of 'flexible' assessment arrangements on an institutional scale and shares key insights, challenges and considerations to illustrate how an emergent framework for flexible assessment has enabled more sustainable approaches and designs that are both sensitive to the needs and circumstances of diverse students groups and relevant to students' future lives.

### **Parallel session 2.2b, oral presentation**

#### **Academics as key stakeholders in digital examinations implementation: Best practices from Scandinavia**

Dr Anja Sisarica, Inspira Assessment

One of the tools that academic staff can have in their EdTech ecosystem, that has successfully been utilised by Scandinavian universities to support teaching and learning, is digital assessment and feedback software. In this presentation, Dr Sisarica will be sharing some of the key learnings and examples from the collaboration with universities in e-assessment adoption, before and during the pandemic.

### **Parallel session 3.1a, oral presentation**

#### **Incidentally online**

Dr Lynn Gribble and Dr Janis Wardrop, University of New South Wales, Australia

This presentation will explore the case study of a large postgraduate (coursework), compulsory core course comprising mainly international students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Using easy-to-access technology 'hidden in plain sight' we reimagined how incidental interactions could be achieved through multi-media and modal information sources. Importantly, students who had differing learning preferences as well as those with physical disabilities were benefactors of this approach. At the conclusion of this presentation you will have at least one practical and time efficient way to create incidental interaction in a fully online environment.

### **Parallel session 3.1b, oral presentation**

#### **Facilitating successful online academic integrity panels**

Dr Mark Sergeant, Nottingham Trent University

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a number of challenges for assessment practices. One such challenge has been successfully conducting online student Academic Integrity panels to consider cases of plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating and other forms of potential misconduct. This session will outline the specific challenges faced when conducting Academic Integrity panels and the practical solutions that have been developed in the School of Social Sciences at Nottingham Trent University. Analytics and observations, based on the 50+ online Academic Integrity panels that have been conducted successfully, will be outlined and evaluated.

### **Parallel session 3.2a, oral presentation**

#### **Evaluative conversations: Unlocking the power of viva voce assessment for undergraduate students**

Professor Fabio Riccardo Arico, University of East Anglia

This presentation will outline findings from the evaluation of an innovative oral assessment aimed at developing criticality and debating skills. We shall describe how an Evaluative Conversation assessment was successfully introduced, and constructively aligned, within an undergraduate module in History of Economic Thought. To follow, we will discuss the results of the evaluation of our innovation, encompassing: student perceptions, as well as enablers, of viva voce assessment. In the final part of the presentation we will share tips for successful implementation of viva voce assessment, addressing unconscious bias, inclusivity, scalability, and quality assurance requirements.

### **Parallel session 3.2b, oral presentation**

#### **Can the new norm of remote oral examination be inclusive? Guidelines to support stammering and international students.**

Dr Salma Alarefi, University of Leeds

The breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic has imposed the remote migration of teaching and learning practices. Concerns over academic integrity made oral assessment one of the most viable options for remote examinations.

This type of assessment, however, does not cater for the learning needs of all students - in particular, students with speech impediments and international students. While the former impacts approximately 23,000 students, the latter makes up more than a quarter of the student population in U.K. higher education. This, in addition to the nature of oral exams, calls for best-practice guidelines on inclusive oral assessment where the needs of all students are anticipated and catered for.