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Case Study

Formative Assessment using a VLE based self and peer assessment approach

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In the beginning...

- ED111 – Learners & Learning, 170 1st year B.Ed.students
- Dr Gillian Inglis & Shared Learning
- Pebblepad
- Mary Welsh joined tutor team


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REAP – Re-Engineering Assessment Practices in Scottish Higher Education.

- 1 of 6 projects funded through SFC e-Learning Transformation Programme
- Project operating across 3 universities; Glasgow, Strathclyde, Glasgow Caledonian/Caledonian Business School
- Aim of 'Real Changes' which are 'Measureable, Sustainable and Embedded'
- Focus on first year classes

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Ed111 – Learners & Learning

Potential for development

- Limited Student engagement
- Variable 'formative assessment' practice
- Time consuming 'formative assessment'
- Mismatch of formative and summative experiences
- Disappointing quality of exam writing


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Drivers for Change

- To improve Student Experience
- To provide more effective feedback
- To strike balance between formative and summative assessment
- To align teaching, learning and assessment
- To develop innovative assessment techniques
- To improve efficiency in staff utilisation

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Assignments and Study Time

- To reduce staff contact time, students need to spend more time studying independently
- Small seminars = increased social pressure which generate study effort
- Large seminars = ?
- Students more likely to study strategically

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Formative Assessment

- Natriello (1987)
- Crooks (1988)
- Sadler (1987, 1988, 1989)
 - Assessment that is specifically intended to provide feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning
 - Substantial modification to the learning environment through changes to regular classroom practice involves turning the learning culture around
 - ... the quality of feedback is a crucial issue ...
- Black & William (1988)

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Impact of Formative Assessment in HE 1

Boud (2000)

- Sustainable assessment: rethinking assessment for the learning Society

Biggs (2003)

- Constructive alignment

Gibbs & Simpson (2004)

- Conditions under which assessment supports students' learning

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Impact of Formative Assessment in HE 2

Gibbs (2006)

- Why assessment is changing

Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick (2006)

- Formative Assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice

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Seven Principles of good feedback practice - Nicol & Milligan, (2006)

1. Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, standards)
2. Facilitates the development of self-assessment and reflection in learning
3. Delivers high quality information to students about their learning
4. Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning

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Seven principles of good feedback practice (contd.)

5. Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
6. Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
7. Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching

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1. Helps clarify good performance

- Individual responses
- Individual reflection and feedback
- Group response
- Tutor feedback to one group
- Evaluation of own response against group evaluated

• Exemplars?

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2. Facilitates development of reflection and self-assessment in learning

- Individual response
- Assets shared
- Peer assessment
- Reflection
- Group response

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3. Delivers high-quality information to students about their learning

- Tutor feedback
- Detailed comments
- Timely
- Descriptive rather than evaluative
- Identify gaps between student's/students' performance and the goals, standard and criteria that define academic performance

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4. Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning

- Technology is used to support class-wide discussion
- Tutorials
- Online=new kinds of dialogue
- Asynchronous online discussion takes place in writing
- Delay=reflection
- Permanent record
- Promotes reflection and learning from others
- Blog?

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5. Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem

- Motivation, self-esteem and self-regulation are linked
- Students assess their understanding in private against their own goals
- Low-stakes assessment
- Managing own learning

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6. Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance

- Is the feedback of the best quality?
- Structure/Scaffolding for student feedback
- Students need to complete the feedback loop (Boud, 2000)
- VLEs assist in making the process visible

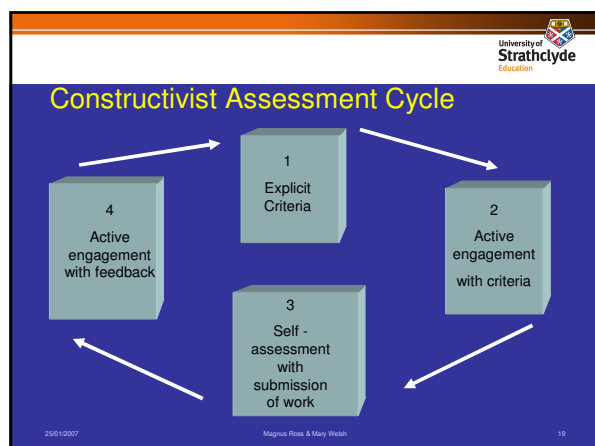
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7. Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape the teaching

- Assessment affects teacher and student
- Provides data on student progress
- Teachers review, reflect and take action
- Regular feedback about student learning

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Communal Constructivism

"Communal constructivism is an approach to learning in which students **construct their own knowledge** as a result of their experiences and **interactions with others**, and are afforded the opportunity to contribute this knowledge to a **communal knowledge base** for the benefit of existing and new learners." (Holmes et al., 2001).

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ePortfolios

- Independent lifelong learners
- Formative self – assessment
- Personal development planning
- Share all, or parts, with peers, tutors, assessors
- Access, evidence
- Longitudinal

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Theory to Practice -The Ed 111 Initiative

- Identification of 5 'Learning Milestones'
- Concept of 5 'Core Tasks'
- Progression in Core Tasks
- Linkage of Core Tasks to Summative Assessment

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Management of Learning Experience

- 8 Tutor groups for seminars – 5 sub groups of 4/5 students in each tutor group
- Identical groups and sub groups agreed with 'Skills for Effective Learning'
- Core Tasks as vehicle for development of formative self and peer assessment
- Tutor mediation and feedback to support process
- Pebblepad as medium for peer assessment, submission and tutor mediation

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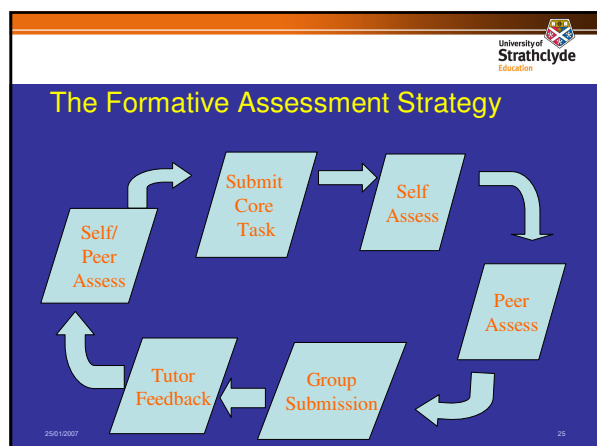
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Pebblepad

An intranet based VLE offering

- Private student environment at different levels
 - Individual
 - Sub-group
 - Tutor Group
- Interactive environment at same range of levels
- Restricted Tutor Access
- Publication to 'Gateways' to different levels

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Sub-Group Strategy

- The (M&M) Single Number Rule
- $\sqrt{n(tg)} \leq n(ssg) = n(ct) - 1$
- Rotation of student responsibility in sub groups
- Tutor feedback on single submission for each Core Task
- Re-iterative Peer Assessment for each Core Task

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Student Experience

1. Induction Training
2. Team Working
3. Team Leadership
4. Shared Learning
5. Self/Peer Assessment skills (Reflective Practitioner)
6. Greater engagement with module content
7. Improved quality of learning

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Staff Experience

1. Induction Training Essential
2. Staff Support Requirements
3. Reduced Marking time
4. Greater value from feedback comment

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The Future

- Refine model for 2007/8
- 1st year experience likely to affect student expectations as well as immediate performance
- Possible application and modification to other module contexts in BEd programme or.....!!!

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