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

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

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

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

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

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)

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

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

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?

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

- Individual response

- Assets shared

- Peer assessment

- Reflection

- Group response

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

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?

University of
Strathclyde
Education

5. Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem

- Motivation, self-esteem and self-regulation are linked

- Students asses their understanding in private against their own goals

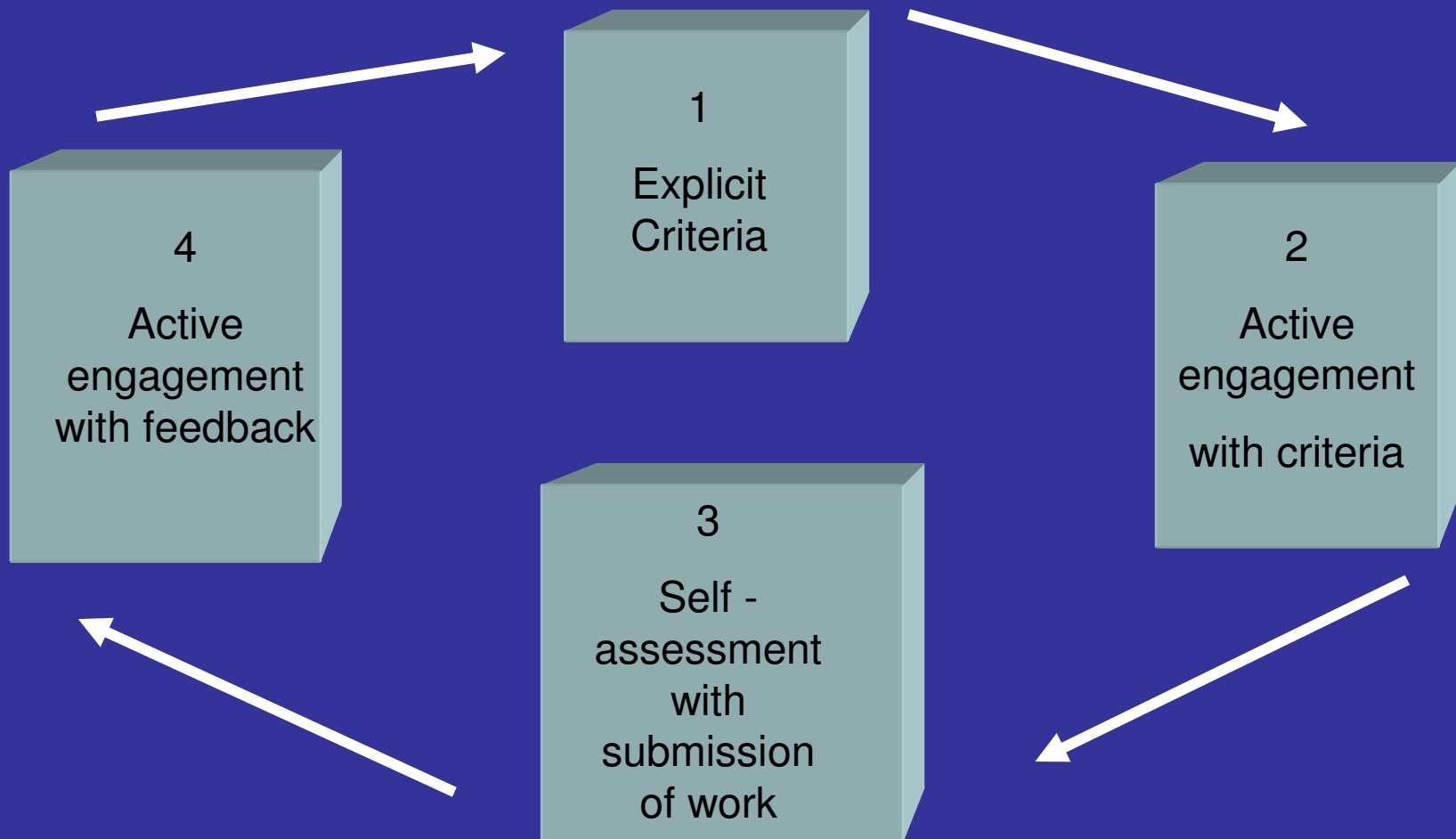- Low-stakes assessment

- Managing own learning

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

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

Constructivist Assessment Cycle

1

Explicit Criteria

2

Active engagement with criteria

3

Self - assessment with submission of work

4

Active engagement with feedback

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).

ePortfolios

- Independent lifelong learners

- Formative self – assessment

- Personal development planning

- Share all, or parts, with peers, tutors, assessors

- Access, evidence

- Longitudinal

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

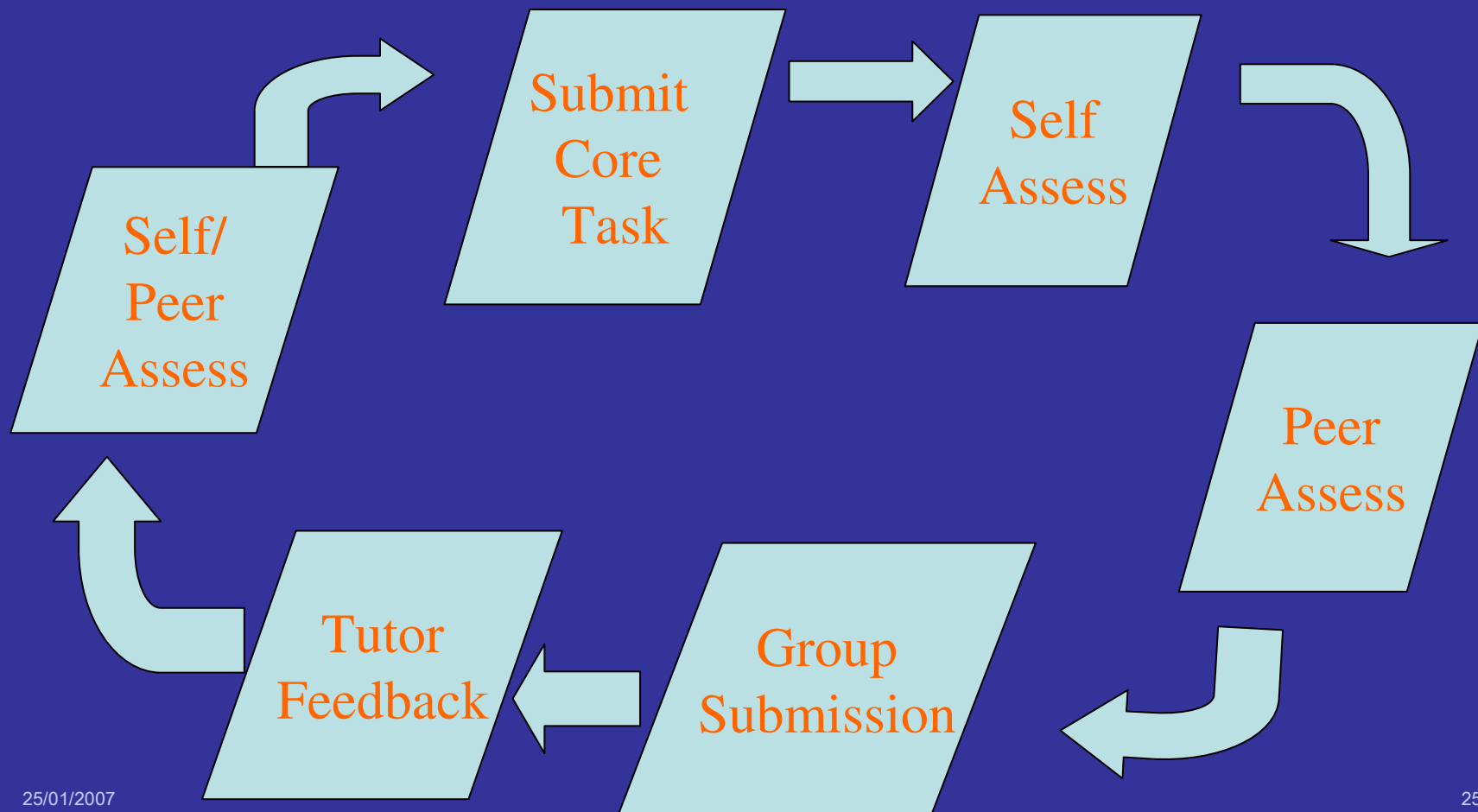# Management of Learning Experience

- 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

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

The Formative Assessment Strategy

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

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

Staff Experience

1. Induction Training Essential

2. Staff Support Requirements

3. Reduced Marking time

4. Greater value from feedback comment

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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