



Partnership in Assessment: Conversation Starter

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Workshop objectives

- Define and discuss different types of assessments
- Explore the Participation Matrix in relation to assessment and feedback
- Consider case study examples of how partnership in assessment has worked in practice
- Explore the benefits and challenges of student staff partnership in assessment
- Identify ways for students and staff to engage in partnership in assessment opportunities

Defining Assessment - What is it for

- To prescribe a mark or grade to reflect or establish learning achieved
- A tool to enhance future learning outcomes and performance by providing constructive feedback (or “feed-forward”) to students.
- To develop and refine key skills, such as reflective and peer assessment.
- Empowering students to become active participants in their learning journey.
- An aid allowing tutors to measure current knowledge and understanding

Methods of Assessment

- **Summative Assessment:** This is assessment OF learning - measure whether a student has reached the academic standard required, and counts towards your final grade/qualification,
- **Formative Assessment:** This is assessment FOR learning, is does not count towards your final grade, used to practice/gain feedback before Summative Assessments.
 - Reflective
 - Peer
 - Diagnostic

Types of Assessment

- Individual essay / dissertation / research project
- Closed / open exams
- class tests
- groupwork assignments / projects / reports
- presentations
- case studies / real world work problems
- exhibitions / posters
- Flipped classroom
- laboratory reports
- simulations / practical skills demonstrations
- VR rooms with real world test cases / situations in the workplace such as operations
- Choosing your own assessment - Tailoring assessment to students' needs / interests, e.g. Workplace / Apprenticeships / career aspirations

Participation Matrix

	Type of participation			
	Inform	Consult	Participate	Partnership
Designing assessment methods	Often assessment methods are designed solely by staff so this might be the most commonly populated box.	Students might be consulted about, for example, whether an exam should be typed or written.	Students could be invited to choose between undertaking several different assessment methods.	Students are invited to design their own assessment or students might work in partnership to undertake a class assignment.
Grading	Students are given the grading rubric and can ask questions about it.	Students are involved in discussions, for example about whether grading should be changed to pass/fail rather than more granular grades.	Students self-assess and peer-assess their work.	Students co-create the grading rubric. Students co-assess their work alongside the lecturer. This might involve the student self-assessing, lecturer-assessing, followed by discussion and a shared decision on the final grade.

Partnership in practice: case studies

Case study 1: Deciding on learning and assessment together for democratic education:

- students planned the course learning activities and assessment based on stated learning outcomes in the first week of the subject via pre-class reflection questions

Case study 2: Co-creating essay titles within a classics course:

- Students invited to design their own essay titles using six to eight keywords. Drafts were submitted and feedback received on the designed question e.g. too narrow or broad in scope.

Case study 3: Shared negotiation of assessment weighting:

- Students invited to decide on the weightings of each assignment in the module, enabling them to influence the emphasis placed on each type of assessment.

Partnership in practice: benefits

- Allows students to showcase their strengths and align with modern workplace needs
- Develops professional skills e.g. negotiation, collaboration, critical thinking
- Involvement ensures career-relevant assessments
- Clarifies assessment criteria, learning outcomes, enhances understanding of evaluation methods
- Fosters transparency and trust, potentially reducing anxiety
- Students can suggest innovative, digital-based methods
- Promotes inclusivity and accessibility
- Fosters ownership and motivation
- Demonstrates student perspectives are valued
- Supports community building

Partnership in practice: challenges

- Students time constraints due to coursework, jobs, and personal commitments
- Power dynamics with staff
- Lack of confidence or experience students hesitant to contribute ideas.
- Can feel overwhelming for students seeking structured guidance
- Diverse student preferences make it difficult to reach consensus on assessment methods
- Contributing to assessment decisions can increase student anxiety about potential academic impacts

Feedback on Assessments

Type of participation				
	Inform	Consult	Participate	Partnership
Feedback	Students are informed when and where their feedback will be available, and where to seek further information or help.	Students are asked if they prefer written or audio feedback. Students are asked what kinds of feedback they find most helpful.	Students are asked to complete a form, which they attach to the front of their work highlighting how they have adapted their work on the basis of previous feedback they have received.	Students include a statement identifying strengths and areas for improvement in their work. The lecturer provides similar feedback. A discussion takes place to ascertain the outcome and to discuss learning from this work for future assignments.

Next steps: Partnership in Assessment on your course

- Students talk to your programme leader or Course Rep (consider being a Course Rep yourself)
- Academic Staff talk to students and/or Student Reps
- Professional Support staff talk to Academics about how they could implement partnership in assessment activities
- Get involved in academic societies (or start one up) (staff can support these too!)
- Look out for wider University involvement opportunities
 - Check out the Student App / staff ebulletin
 - UWS Job Shop

Resources and Further Reading

UWS specific:

- UWS Assessment Handbook 2024/25 -
<https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/qkenikto/assessment-handbook-2024-25.pdf>
- UWS Curriculum Framework (as December 2023) -
<https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/7600/uws-curriculum-framework.pdf>
- UWS Regulatory Framework 2024/25 -
<https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/ctqfot55/uws-regulatory-framework-2024-25.pdf>

External:

- Assessment futures: What will assessment look like in 2035, Jisc Involve -
<https://codesign.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2022/06/assessment-futures-2035/>
- Student Partnerships in Assessment (SPiA), Advance HE –
<https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/student-partnerships-assessment-spia>