

Background and Aims

Educational research has long since acknowledged the powerful role of different forms of assessment in student learning. Different contexts can provide assessment of learning and assessment for learning.

Online group assessments were developed for a new undergraduate haematology module at the University of Manchester. Although part of a summative assessment, the assessments were also aimed towards integrating lecture material with real life case study "patient" scenarios. Assessments originally designed and developed by staff and included analysis of two scientific papers and three case studies.

Aims:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the online group assessments and to survey student opinion of these
- To establish collaborations between staff and students to further develop content and format of these and future assessments.

Development & Design of assessments - Five Dimensional Framework (5DF) ¹

Task - A problem that the student would encounter in the "field"

Physical context - Difficult to reflect real time constraints.. Referred to in assessments to ensure students appreciated its influence

Social context - If a real life situation involves team work then so too should the related assessment

Form of assessment - a number of different approaches used as a single type of assessment unlikely to be "authentic" or develop transferable skills as suitable for professional development

Criteria - made clear to learners for all assessments.

Assessments

	Subject	Description
1	Haemopoiesis	current paper from primary literature, 15 True/False questions
2	Haemoglobinopathy	Patient case study - questions on clinical symptoms/tests/ diagnosis & treatments.
3	Haemostasis	Same format as 1
4	White blood cells	Interpretation of blood films and bone marrow slides
5	Blood transfusion	Patient case study (same format at 2)

Table 1. Assessment details

- Delivered via Blackboard 8, timed intervals throughout the semester
- Most assessments active for two weeks
- Each assessment: 1% with a total of 5% available

Evaluation

The assessments were evaluated using an end of semester student questionnaire.

- Over 80% of students found the assessments intellectually stimulating, allowed them to apply knowledge gained in lectures and enhanced their learning
- 87.5% felt the assessments would help with exam revision

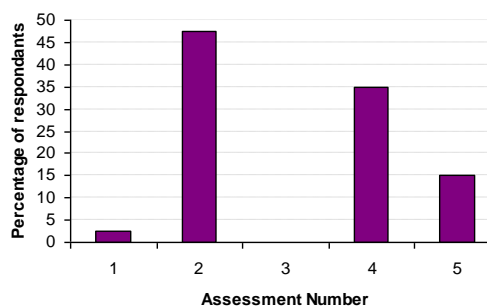


Figure 1. Student responses to the question "Which assessment was most stimulating and challenging?"

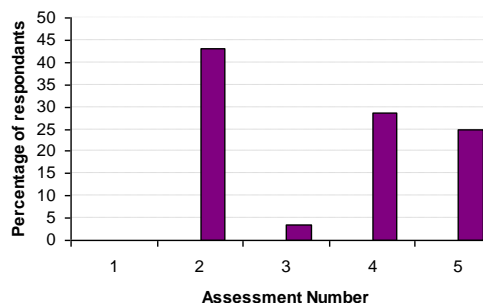


Figure 2. Student responses to the question "Which assessment was most interesting?"

-The most stimulating assessment was also most time-consuming

-Overall it was felt that analysis of the scientific papers was least stimulating and not suited to online group work

Conclusions

- Immediate changes to assessment format and schedule in response to student feedback
- Collaborations have been established between staff and students who have completed the haematology module to further develop content and format of these assessments

Future Directions for 2011-12

- "Critical" analysis of scientific papers will now be individual assessments, reflects social context more adequately ¹

-Contribution to final mark: each assessment will now be worth 2% giving an overall mark of 10%

- This initiative for collaboration between students and staff will be further developed in ongoing design and development of EBL components.

- Past students due to start working on production of material for use in future assessments

Reference 1. Gullikers J, Bastiaens T & Kirschner P. (2008) Defining authentic assessment: Five dimensions of authenticity. In: Havnes A, McDowell L (Eds) (2008) Balancing dilemmas in assessment and learning in contemporary Education. London: Routledge.