

Assessment discussion – points raised by delegates on 12/10/04

Delegates were asked to divide into groups and consider and discuss the following questions in relation to one of their modules:

- Where do you publish the assessment criteria?
- How do these criteria line up with the Learning Outcomes?
- How do you ensure that students use and understand these criteria?
- If students engage differently with the criteria for different tasks (lab report vs. essay vs. poster)

Key points raised during discussions were as follows:

Where do you publish the assessment criteria?

- Publishing is problematic:
 - we have general and specific criteria that we need to communicate
 - there are different styles of criteria
 - published in module guides/handbooks
 - important to have face to face communication about criteria

How do these criteria line up with the Learning Outcomes?

- We tend to have Learning outcomes for courses and modules but criteria for assignments – therefore not fully aligned

How do you ensure that students use and understand these criteria?

- Requires active engagement/discussion (provides reinforcement)
- Two-way dialogue
- Feedback must be couched in the same terms as the criteria
- Also important that staff use and understand criteria – perception that their use is not universal across some institutions
- Requires translation from tutor to student language
- Easier to convey attributes than level/standard
- Learning by doing - get students involved in peer-assessment from the first year – this engages them in discussion, interpretation and application of criteria
- Use exemplars and examples e.g. of posters to illustrate/exemplify the criteria

If students engage differently with the criteria for different tasks (lab report vs. essay vs. poster)

- Yes students engage differently, depending on the nature of the task.
- Easier to engage students in new or novel tasks