Assessment and Feedback

This document brings together a summary of the discussion outcomes from the session on Assessment and feedback, led by Anne Tierney at the event 'Teaching in the Biosciences: an Introduction for Postgraduates and Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows'.

Assessment and feedback

What is being assessed?
Depth of knowledge / facts
Being able to apply knowledge to problem solving
Thinking outside the box
Lateral thinking
Quality of teaching
Understanding of abstract concepts
Critical evaluation
Analytical thinking

When might assessment happen?
Throughout the course
End of course / module

How might you assess?
Presentation
Exams
Essay
Report

Designing assessment and feedback for different types of course

1. A one-semester first year biology course with 500 students, some of whom have no previous experience of biology
2. A one-semester second year practical microbiology course
3. A third year zoology weekend residential field course
4. A final year biochemistry honours project

1. A one-semester first year biology course with 500 students, some of whom have no previous experience of biology

- Diagnostic test at the start of the course of different subject components e.g. maths, bioinformatics, Chemistry
    - Multiple choice
- Formative test during the course, problem solving
    - e-test
- End of Course
    - Half multiple choice
    - Essay type

2. A one-semester second year practical microbiology course

- Worksheets to fill in and hand in at the end of each session
- Full lab report written on one practical at the end of the semester, either student or staff choice
- Lab report for each session then mark one, but don't tell students until the end of the semester
- Proportion of module mark for attendance
- Presentation on lab report with questions
- MCQ exam on previous practical at the beginning of the next practical
- Long MCQ exam at the end of the semester
- Demonstrators marking practical skills of their group of students
- Assessed practical at the end of the semester

3. A third year zoology weekend residential field course

- Students complete a portfolio or lab book on the course
- Full report written after the field course
- Poster
    - either produced by the group or individual
    - can be peer-assessed or assessed within groups
- End of the field course
    - presentation with Q+A session
    - assessed by peers
- Feedback from students gathered from students using standard feedback form

4. A final year biochemistry honours project

- Lab skills assessed by the supervisor
- Written report
- Presentation of the report and results
    - presentation and discussion / Q + A session
- Students also produce a poster about their project