Introduction to Educational Assessment

Module description
In this module students will be introduced to the fundamental principles of assessment and will explore key issues in contemporary educational assessment practice. Through study of various forms and purposes of assessment, students will investigate the role assessment plays in shaping the learning process, curriculum and teaching practice. The role of formative assessment will also be explored, and participants will be encouraged to reflect on their own perceptions and practices in order to evaluate the effectiveness and impact on student learning of the assessment tools they use.

This module aims to:
- Introduce students to the main principles underpinning educational assessment and how they are applied
- Introduce students to different purposes and uses of assessment and their impact on teaching and learning
- Provide students with an overview of different types of assessment, the ways in which they are defined or modified by assessment purposes, and the advantages and drawbacks they are associated with
- Deepen students’ understanding of the relationship between teaching, assessment and feedback in the learning process and allow exploration of different ways of incorporating assessment for learning in their own teaching context

Learning outcomes
On completion of this module, students will be able to:
- critically evaluate assessment practices in a range of educational contexts, including their own, and analyse these in order to inform and enhance practice
- evaluate the validity and reliability of different assessment forms (including e-assessment methods) and the appropriacy of their use for the stated purposes in a given educational context, identifying their advantages and shortcomings
- explain the relationship between assessment, feedback, learning and instruction both generally and in the context of their own teaching practice and context

Syllabus
- The purpose of educational assessment
- An introductory overview of fundamental assessment principles, e.g. validity, reliability, fairness, transparency, effectiveness and practicability
- A range of assessment purposes, tools and techniques including technology enabled assessment
- The benefits and challenges of different assessment types
- The relationship between assessment and teaching, feedback and learning, the importance of learning-oriented assessment
- Designing a balanced summative and formative assessment strategy

Formative assessment frameworks and the role of feedback

Learning and teaching methods
Input will be delivered through specified reading materials and pre-recorded lecture-casts provided on the University of Essex Online learning platform. This is supported by guided discussion forums, and biweekly online question and answer sessions (using synchronous communication software and application sharing facility). The pre-recorded lecture-casts and online Q&A sessions will include referenced use of selected case studies drawn from the reading materials and the tutors’ professional/educational contexts and experience. Self-managed learning will supplement input and to this end students will be given direction on required and indicative reading, including relevant websites, and encouraged to identify and share appropriate web-based resources with their peers.

The pedagogical approach for this module is informed by the principles of collaborative enquiry and constructionism. Collaborative enquiry is supported through our internet-mediated learning platform, the aim of which is to facilitate the activity of the learning community through online dialogue, peer discussion and feedback. The participants’ subject understanding, engagement and learning experience will be enhanced through interactions in which they explain their perceptions, discuss their views, share their experience, and receive feedback from peers and tutors.

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<th>Description of unit of assessment</th>
<th>Length/Duration</th>
<th>Submission date</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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