

A B C D E F G H

\_\_\_\_\_ For example, if we want to assess group work, using intra-peer group assessment seems sensible in order to assess group process, whereas if we want to assess employability, involving placement supervisors or clients would give us a better understanding of how students engage in a working environment than a hastily scribbled post-hoc work placement report could do. In some cases only the tutor will do, but these occasions I believe are fewer than is often posited.

\_\_\_\_\_ Is it possible to give students a choice about when they are ready to be assessed? How far can we (or should we) allow multiple attempts at assessment over a period of time? Why is UK higher education so wedded to a model of assessment that means that an Honours degree can normally only be undertaken over three years? Why not much longer? Or shorter?

\_\_\_\_\_ Assessment methods and approaches need to be focused on *evidence of achievement* rather than the ability to regurgitate information. Inevitably this means a lesser concentration on traditional written assessments, particularly time-constrained unseen exams, and a greater emphasis on assessment instruments that measure not just recall of facts, but also the students' abilities to use the material they have learned in live situations. To be *valid*, the assessment needs to focus as well on what is intended to be learned. If we want our students to demonstrate employability when they graduate, our assessments need to be designed to be *practice-orientated*, whether in terms of the practice of being a researcher or applications to professional contexts such as being an artist, an accountant, a health practitioner or a quantity surveyor. Rather than assessing a learner's ability to write about good practice, an effective assessment strategy would seek to measure how the student can put into practice the learning achieved. The methods used need to be *authentic*, that is, assessing what they claim to assess, not just what is easy to assess.

\_\_\_\_\_ We cannot simply expect our students or ourselves to just keep working harder and harder; where possible we must make best use of the available technologies to make assessment more efficient (Brown *et al.*, 1994). The assessment tasks need to be *integral* to the learning process, rather than a subsequent bolt-on and, to ensure this, tutors should be able to concentrate equally strongly on giving feedback and on making evaluative decisions about performance. Timing of assessment is also a key issue, since the responses given to assessed work need to allow opportunities for amendment and remediation of errors.

\_\_\_\_\_ This provides an opportunity for students to review their experiences of the programme of learning as a whole, describe how they have developed over the period of study, reflect upon the literature that has influenced and guided their practice, and indicate how they plan to develop their work and themselves into the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ Assessment can become *valid* when the assessors use evidence of achievement, clearly matched against the criteria (Brown & Glasner, 1999; Gibbs & Rowntree, 1999; Thorpe, 2000).

\_\_\_\_\_ All participants need to be provided with *equivalent opportunities* to demonstrate their abilities and maximize their potential.

It is imperative to clarify tutors' and students' expectations at the time of giving the assessment brief to the students. This means that the assessment criteria need to be clear, explicit, framed in language that is meaningful to staff and students and available well in advance of the commencement of activities that will subsequently be assessed.

The programme of assessment chosen needs to be *reliable*, so that different assessors derive the same grade for similar work (inter-assessor reliability) and individual assessors mark reliably to a defined standard (intra-assessor reliability). This can only be assured when the criteria are clearly understood by all who undertake assessment.

\_\_\_\_\_ Where possible, it may be helpful to involve students in establishing or negotiating the criteria for assessment, so that they fully understand what is expected of them. The degree of subjectivity involved in evaluating artefacts and productions needs to be recognized and articulated, so that everyone concerned understands the rules of the game. Assessors need to be sure that where students are involved in assessed work of widely divergent types, they can be assured of the equivalence rather than the identity of the assessment experience. For example, students involved in group activities (such as drama and dance productions, or the production of installations) will necessarily take different roles, so assessment criteria must be designed to ensure that all students have an equal chance of achieving high grades.