

Transforming Higher Education through Learning-oriented Assessment

Presenters/facilitators:

Professor Mike Keppell, Charles Sturt University

Ms Dominique Parrish, University of Wollongong and *Learning Achievements and Solutions*

Outcomes

By the completion of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Recognise the distinct characteristics of a learning-oriented assessment task
- Determine the appropriateness of learning-oriented assessment for their own context
- Design a learning-oriented assessment task for a subject they are currently teaching
- Examine a model for transforming and leading change in higher education through learning-oriented assessment
- Explore potential avenues for transforming and leading change in assessment in the university setting.

Intended audience

All academics involved in learning, teaching and assessment will benefit from the workshop. Academics and policy makers who are involved in higher education will benefit from the discussion, debate and exchange of ideas on assessment.

About the facilitators

Professor Mike Keppell



Professor of Higher Education and Director, The Flexible Learning Institute, Charles Sturt University mkeppell@csu.edu.au BHMS (Ed)(Qld); B.Ed (PG) (Qld); M.Ed (Calgary); Ph.D (Calgary)

Professor Keppell is currently working in the roles of Director, The Flexible Learning Institute and Professor of Higher Education at Charles Sturt University. The Flexible Learning Institute has as its aim to promote and foster excellence in flexible learning, teaching and assessment through pedagogical scholarship, promotion of exemplary practice and policy advice. Prior to this, he worked at the Hong Kong Institute of Education as Associate Professor and Head of the Centre for Learning, Teaching and Technology (LTTC) from 2003 – 2007. Before joining the Institute of Education, he was Head of the Biomedical

Multimedia Unit, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Science, The University of Melbourne from 1998-2002 and Head of the Interactive Multimedia Unit, Division of Distance and Continuing Education, Central Queensland University from 1994-1998. He has a background in teaching and learning, curriculum, evaluation and more specifically instructional design. His expertise lies in his ability to combine the operational and development tasks of educational technology with the academic study of curriculum, instructional design and evaluation. He has worked as an instructional designer on numerous technology-enhanced initiatives in areas as diverse as coal-mining, medicine, science, nursing, dentistry, physiotherapy, psychology, multimedia, human movement studies and education. His research focuses on blended learning, learning-oriented assessment, authentic learning and transformative learning using design-based research. One of his notable publications includes an edited book titled *Instructional Design: Case Studies in Communities of Practice* which was published in 2007 with authors from eight different countries. He is also in the process of editing another book: Keppell, M. J., Riddle, M. Souter, K. (Eds). *Physical and virtual learning spaces in higher education: Concepts for the modern learning environment*. Under contract with IGI Global, forthcoming 2010.

Ms Dominique Parrish



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Ms Parrish is completing her PhD on emotional intelligence and leadership in higher education. She is examining the leadership and emotional intelligence perceptions of academic scholars throughout several Australian Universities. In particular her leading-edge research is examining the importance of emotional intelligence for leadership and the priorities for leadership capacity development in higher education. Ms Parrish is a learning and teaching consultant for numerous higher education institutions and business organisations. She focuses on leadership, project management, strategic planning and organisational change. She juggles numerous projects and portfolios across the higher education sector. Ms Parrish is currently the *ascilite* secretariat www.ascilite.org.au where she manages the society and choreographs a dispersed volunteer executive located in three different countries. She has been Project Manager for a Leadership for Excellence Grant and *ascilite* Carrick Exchange Sub-project. In addition Ms Parrish has worked as a marketing manager and has extensive experience as a Student Welfare Educational Officer and Project Manager of Drug Education Programs across all NSW. She was also a Primary School Teacher for 15 years in Wollongong. Her expertise lies in her ability to work with leaders to develop learning and teaching enhancements in higher education by drawing on her research on emotional intelligence. Ms Parrish is particularly focussed on transformative change in organisations and is an experienced educator and seasoned facilitator of workshops. One of her notable publications includes: Parrish, D., Lefoe, G., Smigel, H. & Albury, R. (2008). *The GREEN resource: Growing • Reflecting • Enabling • Engaging • Networking. The*

Development of Leadership Capacity in Higher Education. University of Wollongong & Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC).
http://www.uow.edu.au/cedir/DistributiveLeadership/docs/resource/GREEN_Resource.pdf

Background / Context

Learning-oriented assessment is about embedding learning at the centre of assessment and reconfiguring assessment design so that the learning function is emphasised (Keppell & Carless (a&b), 2006; Keppell, Au, Ma, & Chan, 2006). It has relevance to both formative and summative assessments (Joughin, 2005) when core aspects of learning-oriented assessment are considered. Learning-oriented assessment has three cores aspects: assessment tasks as learning tasks, student involvement in the assessment processes and forward-looking feedback.

Firstly, assessment tasks need to be reconceptualised so that they emphasise and consolidate learning outcomes as opposed to examinations and end of subject assignments that often add little to the learning experience of the student. In designing subjects for teaching and learning in higher education it is essential that there is alignment between assessment, objectives and content (Biggs, 1999). In addition an assessment task should require sustained effort over a period of time in order to promote deep as opposed to superficial learning. Secondly, students need to be co-participants in assessment as opposed to bystanders. This involvement is essential so that they understand what constitutes quality in relation to assessment and learning. Thirdly, if assessment is to promote learning then appropriate feedback is essential, particularly in the early stages of the learning experience. Feedback as feed-forward suggests that students receive feedback to improve performance on subsequent assessment tasks during the subject. In other words the feedback can be acted on to enhance and improve learning.

Overview of activities

This workshop has two purposes. Firstly it reconceptualises assessment in higher education in order to emphasise student learning. It provides a conceptual background to learning-oriented assessment and case studies of actual implementation. The workshop will assist participants to design their own learning-oriented assessment in relation to their subject discipline. Secondly, the workshop will challenge participants to transform and lead change in assessment in the university setting. It is suggested that professional development activities; authentic learning activities; reflective practice; dialogue and cultivating appropriate professional networks is essential for transforming higher education through learning-oriented assessment (Parrish, Lefoe, Smigel & Albury, 2008; Keppell, Kan, Brearley Messer, & Bione, 2002; Keppell, Au, Ma, & Chan, 2005 (a,b,c)).

Detailed plan of workshop activities

Phase	Learning Outcome	Activity	Time
Overview of workshop	Participants obtain an overview of workshop	Facilitator presentation Questions Distribution of workshop booklet	5mins
Introductions	Participants outline one	Each participant	10 minutes

	goal they wish to achieve in the workshop	provides one goal Concept map of goals is developed	
Presentation What is assessment? What is formative assessment? What is summative assessment? Assessment OF Learning Assessment FOR Learning Assessment AS Learning Learning-oriented assessment	Recognise the distinct characteristics of a learning-oriented assessment task	Facilitator presentation Discussion Debate Questions	30 minutes
Examine examples of learning-oriented assessment Peer assessment Project-based assessment Self-assessment	Determine the appropriateness of learning-oriented assessment for their own context	Group work	10 minutes
Examine an in-depth example of learning-oriented assessment	Design a learning-oriented assessment task for a subject they are currently teaching	Participants design their own learning-oriented assessment tasks	15 minutes
Examine Transformative change in higher education	Examine a model for transforming and leading change in higher education through learning-oriented assessment	Facilitator presentation	30 minutes
Leading change in higher education	Explore potential avenues for transforming and leading change in assessment in the university setting.	Group work	10 minutes
Conclusion	Summary	Summary and final questions	5 minutes
Evaluation	Feed-forward to facilitators	Questionnaire	5 minutes

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