

SEDA Spring Conference 2024



Session Title: Authentic Assessment: Insights from the Development of the University of Chester's Guide

Session Type: Lightening talk (10 mins)

Main presenter(s): Dr Michelle Cordingley, University of Chester

Co presenter(s): N/A

Session Summary: The 'Authentic Assessment Guide' from the University of Chester, structured around three key themes supporting the fundamental principle of authentic assessment, aims to foster continuous learning and innovation in assessment among staff members. This talk will delve into the guide's development, exploring insights from theme establishment, the collation of examples of assessment practice (including a peer review process), utilisation of artificial intelligence tools, collaboration and the planned strategy for measuring the guide's impact.

Session Outline: Improving assessment practices is essential for enhancing learning and teaching within Higher Education. The University of Chester, following a Better Assessment Strategic Innovation Forum (SIF) process, is implementing changes in assessment to promote positive student and staff wellbeing, and to enhance student outcomes. Given an institution's pivotal role in advancing and disseminating innovative assessment practices (Advance HE, 2024), the development of an assessment guide was a key initiative which stemmed from the Better Assessment SIF.

Authentic assessment is a fundamental principle within the University of Chester Student Education Plan. The 'Authentic Assessment Guide' aims to promote continuous learning and innovation in assessment among staff members. The guide is structured around three main themes that uphold the principle of authentic assessment: (i) assessment fosters motivation to learn by building autonomy, competency and relatedness, (ii) assessments supports students' futures and (iii) assessment promotes positive wellbeing through inclusive and compassionate practices. The guide incorporates examples of good assessment practices from across the institution and addresses essential considerations for authentic assessment design and implementation.

This talk delves into the process of developing the authentic assessment guide, highlighting key learning points, successes, and challenges encountered during development. Firstly, the discussion will detail how the assessment themes and subthemes were established based on JISC Principles of Good Assessment and Feedback (Knight & Ferrell, 2022) and QAA inclusive assessment attributes (QAA, 2022). Attendees will gain insights into the experiences of collating examples of assessment practice from across the institution, highlighting the peer review process implemented for effective communication and maximal impact. Additionally, the talk

will shed light on the use of artificial intelligence tools to identify key considerations for the authentic assessment subthemes. Finally, the talk will explore collaboration in the guide development and outline how the impact of the authentic assessment guide will be measured.

References: Advance HE. (2024). Essential Frameworks for Enhancing Student Success: Enhancing Assessment in Higher Education. <https://advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/teaching-and-learning/essential-frameworks-enhancing-student-success>

Knight, S. & Ferrell, G. (2022). Principles of good assessment and feedback. JISC. <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/principles-of-good-assessment-and-feedback>

QAA. (2022, August 25). Set of Inclusive Assessment Design Attributes.

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/membership/collaborative-enhancement-projects/assessment/developing-a-set-of-inclusive-assessment-design-attributes-for-use-across-the-he-sector>