

Title: **Co-creation of assessments: principles and practice**

Presenter: **Barbara Dexter**
Victoria University of Wellington

Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Explain some general principles relating to co-creation in assessment;
- Identify benefits, barriers and some critical success factors for students' involvement in assessment design;
- Judge the transferability of the study to delegates' own institutional contexts.

Session Outline

Key issues to be addressed are:

Co-creation, learning partnerships, student autonomy, graduate attributes and assessment are all 'hot topics' in higher education. It is becoming more accepted that the teacher is no longer just a subject expert, but is expected to engender autonomy in students (Lamb & Reinders, 2008). The NUS (Porter, 2010) advocates learning partnerships, co-creation of knowledge and more student involvement in course design. Race (2009) argues that the more that students are engaged in assessment design, the greater the level of understanding of assessment principles and processes, and the higher their motivation and results.

On a public sector management module with 20 participants, and following guidance on basic assessment principles, students were asked to create, negotiate and agree the module assessment brief and to tailor the standard university marking criteria. Students were also involved in some peer-marking and giving feedback to each other. An action research project explored the responses to the intervention, from students and teachers' perspectives. Findings were thematically analysed and 'member checked' with student focus groups. Findings were subsequently shared with academic developers in New Zealand to share experiences and to peer-test findings.

This session will firstly explain the context, process, content and outcomes of the project.

The focus of the session will be on sharing our own experiences in a collegial and open manner, with opportunities to discuss principles and practice. We will then compare UK practice with the NZ responses gained from a similar workshop run at the Tertiary Educational Research New Zealand conference (Nov 2011), where the principles were

understood but issues around practice resulted in a limited number of examples of co-creation in participants' experiences.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

After a short summary (10 minutes max) of the project, the discussion will focus on *three questions* relating to student involvement in creating and assessing all or part of a module:

Q1 - As a basic principle, is it ever *desirable* to have students creating their own assessment briefs? [initially use question to break down into 2 groups; can flex depending on group size and response]

Q2a - If Q1 is 'yes', then is it *feasible*, and if so, under what conditions? [identify critical success factors for potential transferability to other institutions]

Q2b - If Q1 is 'no', how far can we take learning partnerships and co-creation? [explore and devise general principles, including recognition of limitations and barriers]

The sub-group discussions will take 15 minutes, with 5 minute feedback from each and a 10 minute summary (including NZ findings) to close.

References

Lamb, T.E. & Reinders, H., (2008) *Learner and Teacher Autonomy*, John Benjamin Publications: Philadelphia.

Porter, A., (2010), National Union of Student address to *Higher Education Academy National Teaching Fellowship awards evening*, Middle Temple Hall, London, September 2010.

Race, P., (2009), *Assessment Workshop*, University of Derby, May 2009.