# 1.a. Showcasing the Power of Portfolios: A Pathway to Aligned and Innovative Assessment for Learning in Higher Education

## Presenter:

Dr Yakubu Salifu

## Chair:

Simon Allan

## Sub-theme:

Creative Approaches to Assessment and Feedback

## Abstract:

This paper explores the challenges of using essay-type assessment methods for doctoral coursework and proposes an alternative approach using portfolio assessment. The paper highlights the importance of aligning the curriculum, research, and context of practice in PhD programmes, and the limitations of essay-type assessments in measuring a student’s skills and linking coursework directly to their research project or career pathway. The paper draws on relevant pedagogical literature and theories of learning to argue that a portfolio assessment approach underpinned by constructivist learning offers a potential solution to the traditional essay-type assessment for PhD coursework.

Portfolio assessment offers a more flexible and personalised approach to assessment that facilitates an aligned curriculum that has an impact on students' work and future careers. Portfolio assessment offers the potential benefit of equipping students with a range of research skills and disciplinary knowledge, as well as broader graduate skill sets to increase their impact and employability beyond the context of academia. Portfolio assessment has been shown to enhance sustainable learning, level of assessment novelty, and interconnection with practice and research to maximise societal benefits.

The presentation highlights the importance of aligning curriculum elements, including assessment, to graduate attributes and career pathways. Overall, this paper argues that a holistic and formative assessment approach, such as portfolio assessment, is necessary in preparing PhD students for a range of career contexts. Portfolio assessment is recommended in higher education to align curriculum, research, and context of practice, and to prepare students for diverse career pathways.

## Time:

10:50 to 11:20

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 1

# 1.b. Reducing ambiguity in assessment: The TAPE model as a practical tool

## Presenter:

Clare Stone

## Chair:

Dr Ann-Marie Houghton

## Subtheme:

Inclusive Assessment

## Abstract:

The Transparency of Assessment in Practice and Education (TAPE) model was initially designed to reduce ambiguity in the assessment of social work students during practice learning placements but since its launch in 2018, a much wider application has been realised. This presentation will encourage participants to reflect upon the six domains of assessment (why, when, who, what, where and way) to identify opportunities to use the principles of the TAPE model within their own professional assessment contexts including (but not limited to) the design of modules, staff probation, identifying student support needs and to facilitate discussion between the assessor and the assessed.

The TAPE model is a practical tool that can be used visually or to structure dialogue. The ultimate aim is to improve assessment practice, avoid misunderstandings and reduce ambiguity within assessment. Educators and practitioners will be encouraged to use this innovative model creatively to best fit their own assessment situations.

## Time:

10:50 to 11:20

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 4

# 1.c. Reflexivity and musicking in community based settings

## Presenter:

Andrew Ford

## Chair:

Dr Brett Bligh

## Subtheme:

Inclusive Assessment

## Abstract:

The research I am undertaking as part of my Doctorate involves music making in a community setting. The group I work with all have a learning disability. The use the ideas of territorialisation and de-territorialisation, as outlined by Deleuze and Guattari together and Guattari writing on his own, helped inform the session. The idea of territory is outlined in the plateau ‘Of the refrain’ from a thousand plateaus as related to a feeling of home. As Guattari argues, ‘Territory can be related to an inhabited space or perceived system within which an individual feels “at home.”

Deleuze and Guattari argue that this can be as simple as a child humming a familiar song. The analysis is also inspired by Tia DeNora’s account of music asylums. The way in which music can create a sanctuary from stressful lives and environments. She quotes Bull in arguing, ‘Sound colonises the listener but is used to actively recreate and configure the spaces of experience. Through the power of sound, the world becomes intimate, known and possessed’

Territorial assemblages are a means to create safe spaces which provide and receive feedback. We used technology and music to create opportunities for feedback from the space, the learner’s peers, and the staff. For example, a profoundly disabled learner was able to form a territorial assemblage with a microphone and staff member that enabled him to vocalise in ways which previously he had not. The learner provided feedback about the activity through sound and body language. He also received immediate feedback from the staff members. Finally, as part of a territorial assemblage, of microphone amplifier, he was able to ‘furnish’ the space to make it happen in his territory, his space. This presentation will explore the idea of territorial assemblage to inform feedback.

## Time:

10:50 to 11:20

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 6

# 1.d. A critique of cultural context or colonial cop-out?

## Presenter:

Neil Ralph

## Chair:

Dr Chris Longman

## Subtheme:

Decolonisation of Assessment

## Abstract:

Students on the Masters in Management at Bailrigg are introduced to foundational theories of leadership with the aim of developing their self-awareness and informing their practice as impactful leaders of the future. The curriculum endeavours to introduce a broad range of leadership concepts, however there is a strong bias towards a Western hegemony. This is partially countered by consideration of the cultural context within which students will apply their learning and an assessment that requires students to "demonstrate a critical understanding of leadership in their own cultural context and its implications for practice as a leader".

The assessment encourages students to identify and analyse key cultural influences in their chosen cultural context, typically their home country. This analysis may include historical and philosophical influences as well as more current pragmatic interpretations of culture, such as power distance. This foundation is used to postulate the type of leadership that may be most appropriate in that cultural context, with a view to critiquing the dominant western theories and encouraging exploration of more culturally appropriate approaches.

Having run this module and assessment for three years, I am left asking myself whether this is a positive intervention that opens an important debate about the nature of leadership in different cultural contexts and supports students to critically evaluate the impact of predominantly Western/ Global North leadership approaches, or a proxy for decolonising the leadership curriculum.

## Time:

10:50 to 11:20

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 10

# 1.e. Visual-AI as A Symbiosis Creative Tool for Precedence Studies in Creative Design Process

## Presenters:

Arief Ahmad Afandi , Bibi Zafirah Hanfa Badil Zaman, Nur Faridatull Syafinaz Ahmad Tajudin, Seri Intan Sidik, Amirul Idlan Mukhtar

## Chair:

Susan Armitage

## Subtheme:

Using AI in Assessment Design

## Abstract:

Visual AI, or generative AI models for visual content creation, has shown great potential as a creative symbiosis tool for precedence studies in the creative design process. By analyzing large amounts of visual data and generating new designs based on this information, Visual-AI can assist designers in developing innovative and effective designs. Visual-AI can contribute to time efficiency in the creative design process by analyzing existing designs, brainstorming sessions, and other creative works to inspire and generate novel ideas. This application of Visual-AI is particularly relevant in light of the increasing importance of personalization in design, as it enables designers to tailor their creations to individual users or audiences. This research, will investigate and examine the effectiveness of Visual-AI in assisting designers with precedent studies and assess its potential for improving the creative design process. By identifying areas where Visual-AI can be most effective and exploring its potential and limitations, this research will provide insights into how Visual-AI can be used responsibly and ethically to enhance the initial stage of creative design process.This research may identify areas where Visual-AI is most effective, such as in analyzing large datasets of images and identifying patterns and trends, and also the potential limitations of using Visual-AI in the creative design process. Additionally, this research may provide insights into how Visual-AI can be used in a symbiotic manner with human creativity rather than as a replacement for it.

## Time:

10:50 to 11:20

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 20

# 2.a. Using ChatGPT to raise language awareness in an undergraduate assessment

## Presenter:

Veronika Koller

## Chair:

Dr Fiona Curtis

## Subtheme:

Using AI in Assessment Design

## Abstract:

In this presentation, I will share a written undergraduate assessment integrating the language-generating AI application ChatGPT, designed for a module attended by students from different degree schemes: English language, marketing and media studies. The coursework questions require students to critically reflect on and rewrite AI-generated output, arguing how they would change the automatically generated text and why. The output covers both texts provided in the assignment and texts that students need to ask ChatGPT to produce. The latter task is also intended to make them reflect on the effect that phrasing of queries has on output.

I will also report on the manner and extent to which students took up the assignment topics, which were given next to conventional ones. Beyond the case study, I will reflect on how the notion of communicative competence needs to be adapted in the face of AI, and what challenges and opportunities apps including, but not restricted to, ChatGPT offer for teaching and learning about the language aspects of organisational and corporate communication.

## Time:

11:25 to 11:55

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 1

# 2.b. Facilitating specific pedagogical needs within the VLE

## Presenter:

Phil Devine

## Chair:

Dr Ann-Marie Houghton

## Subtheme:

Creative Approaches to Assessment and Feedback

## Abstract:

Occasionally, the institutional VLE and third party applications and related plugins, cannot or do not, meet the pedagogical requirements of the tutor. Reasons for this can be legion; for example, the institutional VLE may not have that native functionality available to meet that specific pedagogical outcome or, the wider institutional suite of existing applications and third party tools do not integrate with institutional processes, regulations, systems or financial budgets.

Set within that context, my presentation will give an account of the use of the 'Moodle Database Activity' as a simple self-assessment and triage, programmatic feedback framework. The 'Moodle Database activity' is a semi-flexible 'in' VLE 'small' scale development environment that can combine; html templates, cascading style sheets (CSS), JavaScript and database field entry.

## Time:

11:25 to 11:55

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 4

# 2.c. Addressing the Ethnicity Awarding Gap for Students in Higher Education: Findings and Recommendations from a Lancaster University Research Project

## Presenters:

Nafisa Baba-Ahmed and Dr Sunita Abraham

## Chair:

Dr Sarah Robin

## Subtheme:

Closing the Awarding Gap

## Abstract:

In this presentation we aim to share the findings from a research project carried out in 2021-22 which was internal to Lancaster University (LU). Involving two staff and two doctoral colleagues, the research investigated the issues that Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority students face in Higher Education (HE) which affect their sense of belonging and educational outcomes. Through initial scoping of the extensive literature on educational outcomes, this study found that an "awarding gap" exists between white and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students not only at LU but across the other universities in the United Kingdom (UK). This gap is evident in the significant disparity in grades and other outcomes between these two groups of students, which has been noted for over 20 years. Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority students are more likely to drop out and less likely to achieve a 2.1/1st class degree, even after controlling for other factors such as prior attainment and social disadvantage. The varying degrees of the gap between providers highlights the role that universities can play to address it. Through gauging Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority student perspectives at the Bailrigg campus on a variety of topics including assessment and feedback, this study provides some insights and recommendations to address the awarding gap at LU.

## Time:

11:25 to 11:55

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 6

# 2.d. Using standardisation approaches to support effective team marking

## Presenters:

Susan Armitage, Simon Allan, and Stephen Bulman

## Chair:

Dr Amanda Chapman

## Subtheme:

Marking and Feedback

## Abstract:

‘Calibration within the higher education sector is an approach that aims to ensure consistent standards for judging the quality of student work. A ‘calibrated’ academic is able to make grading judgments consistent with those of calibrated academics in other institutions across the UK. The aim of calibration is to achieve comparability of academic standards across institutions and stability of standards over time.’ (Bloxham, S., Reimann, N. and Rust, C. 2018)

Standardisation approaches aim to harness peer discussion in order to reach a common understanding of standards and thresholds among markers. It is a process of calibration conducted internally within an institutionally defined marking team, and is distinctive from moderation practices that typically take place at the end of the marking process. Standardisation practices are based on the whole team marking a sample of live or historic assessment artefacts in a semi structured environment, prior to the process of marking and moderating the full cohort.

This project explores the notion that a shift from moderation towards standardisation and calibration is a means to reduce variability in making standards judgments. (Sadler, 2013) It builds on research on related practices that offer some evidence of decreased variability, and indicate improved marker confidence in making reliable judgements about standards. (O’Connell et al, 2016)

There is also evidence to suggest that student involvement in standardisation exercises has the dual effect of achieving common understanding of standards amongst markers, and heightening students’ understanding about how standards judgements were being applied to their work, improving their confidence in the marking system. (Bamber, 2014)

Our investigations suggest similar benefits across a range of contexts. In this session we provide insights into several standardisation practices that are being used by colleagues at Lancaster University, and discuss the effects of such practices on:

• The robustness and transparency of marking decision making.

• Any reduction in variability or inconsistency in making standards judgements.

• Consistency relating to feedback and marking team practices.

• Staff and student assessment literacy pertaining to academic standards.

• The impact on overall marking and moderation workload.

## Time:

11:25 to 11:55

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 10

# 2.e. In search of learning-focused feedback practices: a linguistic analysis of higher education feedback policy

## Presenter:

Joseph Arthur Davies

## Chair:

Dr Sandra Varey

## Subtheme:

Marking and Feedback

## Abstract:

Feedback can have one of the biggest positive influences on higher education learners. Despite this, teachers and students consistently report being dissatisfied with feedback. In response, there has been a theoretical shift in how feedback is conceptualised and discussed within the research literature. Older transmission-focused models have evolved into more learning-focused approaches. However, the extent to which higher education feedback policy, and subsequent practice, embrace such current thinking is unclear. This research adopted a corpus linguistics approach to analyse how the term ‘feedback’ was used within 50 UK higher education institutions’ feedback policy texts. Sketch Engine was used to analyse ‘feedback’ collocation frequencies. To investigate differences between research-intensive (Russell Group) and more teaching-focused (non-Russell Group) universities, separate corpora were also compiled and compared. Quantitative results showed that the most frequent feedback collocations related to outdated transmission-focused feedback practices. However, qualitative deductive thematic analysis found that many feedback policies did present learning-focused feedback practices despite using transmission-focused language. Feedback appears to mean different things to different higher education institutions which could lead to confusion for teachers and students. The research concludes by presenting key practical implications for practitioners involved in feedback policy design and enactment to improve practice.

## Time:

11:25 to 11:55

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 20

# 3.a. Customised notepacks for formative assessment

## Presenters:

Mark Shackleton

## Chair:

Simon Allan

## Subtheme:

Academic Integrity

## Abstract:

I have developed customised individual notepacks (with inputs specific to each candidate). In conjunction with Moodle databases, I can capture (and give feedback/grades) on their formative work over the course of the term. I will demonstrate this and challenge the audience to change their own approach to "Edtech".

## Time:

12:00 to 12:30

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 1

# 3.B. Generative AI: The Art of the Possible

## Presenter:

Brian Green

## Chair:

Phil Devine

## Subtheme:

Using AI in Assessment Design

## Abstract:

The rapid development of generative artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized numerous industries, from art and music to healthcare and finance. In this presentation, we will delve into the origins of generative AI and explore its remarkable capabilities.

We will explore the specific ways in which Lancaster University can leverage generative AI for its benefit. We will delve into various domains where generative AI can make a significant impact.

We will showcase and ideate with YOU on how generative AI could drive innovation, improve efficiency, and foster creativity within the university ecosystem.

## Time:

12:00 to 12:30

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 4

# 3.c. SWaNS into Butterflies: The *Affirmative* and *Affective* in Assessment and Feedback Practices.

## Presenters:

Abdul Aziz Hafiz and Paula White

## Chair:

Dr Brett Bligh

## Subtheme:

Decolonisation of Assessment

## Abstract:

This paper proposal builds on previously published provocations/meditations on college-based HE - a site for the possibilities of prosociality, reciprocity, and solidaristic practices, in response to the circulatory patterns of precarity, and more broadly, neoliberal exclusion (Hafiz, 2017, 2018). In this paper, these ideas are extended through a consideration of decolonising teaching and learning practices, focusing on assessment and feedback (Fomunyam, 2019; Shain, Yıldız, Poku and Gokay, 2021; Lange, Reddy and Siseko, 2021: 173-200; Shahjahan, 2023). I draw from, and aim to contribute to practices consistent with ‘assessment for social justice’ (MacArthur, 2015; Darder, 2017). On the basis of a case study, this paper hopes to extend these values into an evaluation of assessment and feedback practices supported through the use of Academic Coaches. Such roles not only provide support, but also, the *translation* of feedback for students.

The existing literature on the role of Academic Coaches is limited, but does demonstrate divergent interpretations and ‘namings’ for these roles. Their impact has been evidenced in students’ metacognition outside the classroom (Howlett et al., 2021), student success on online programmes (Broussard and White-Jefferson, 2018) and persistence (Lehan, Hussey and Shriner, 2018). Regardless of the namings attached to these roles in supporting undergraduates outside of the classroom, these colleagues are essential to the effectiveness of assessment and feedback practices.

Morgan (2015) succinctly highlights the experiences of Foundation Degree to BA(Hons) top-up model students, who report ‘not being good enough’, ‘feeling guilty’ ‘not fitting in’ and ‘trying to balance it all’. Correspondingly, teachers are aroused with negative emotions associated with written summative feedback. These formal practices are deemed to distance them from their students, and while the affective encounter in dialogic feedforward is challenging, such practices are acknowledged as self-transformational (Hill et al., 2023). It is amid these tensions, contradictions and dilemmas that the Academic Coach is required to straddle the ‘ongoing power struggle between limited power, powerful relationships, and empowering preparation for the future’ (Warren, 2019). This hints to the potential elitism and power dynamics between ‘proper academics’ and support mentoring teams.

Using data collected from the imaginaries of teaching staff in college-based HE, our aim is to foreground assessment and feedback practices in the lived experiences and auto-ethnographic accounts of Academic Coaches and their mentees.

## Time:

12:00 to 12:30

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 6

# 3.D. Belonging through Assessment: Pipelines of Compassion

## Presenter:

Vikki Hill

## Chair:

Dr Brett Bligh

## Subtheme:

Inclusive Assessment and Feedback

## Abstract:

In February 2021, colleagues from University of the Arts London (UAL), Leeds Arts University (LAU) and Glasgow School of Art (GSA) secured funding for the 2-year QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project – Belonging through assessment: Pipelines of compassion. The project began against the backdrop of the pandemic as the team identified shifts in assessment practices across the three participating arts institutions. This offered an opportunity to further our work, in collaboration, to address social justice, belonging and inclusion through compassion. The project aimed to:

1. Identify areas of enhancement in assessment policies and practices to promote student sense of belonging and tackle issues of social justice.

2. Link this relational work with attainment gap/awarding differentials agendas in the creative arts.

3. Develop collaborative, dialogic, polyvocal and affective resources for staff development across the HE sector.

Three research strands emerged from themes relevant to our own institutional priorities, mutually informing the project and institutional practice and policy. These were pass/fail grading, trauma-informed policy and compassionate feedback.

In this presentation, project lead Vikki Hill will offer an overview of the three research strands, reflect on learnings from the project and share resources that have been produced to support the development of compassionate assessment pedagogies, practices and policies across the higher education sector.

Access the digital book, podcasts, website and prompt sheet here: https://www.qaa.ac.uk//en/membership/collaborative-enhancement-projects/assessment/belonging-through-assessment-pipelines-of-compassion

## Time:

12:00 to 12:30

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 10

# 3.e. Creativity in assessment and feedback - lessons to learn from our students, and from one another

## Presenter:

Alison Montague

## Chair:

Dr Amanda Chapman

## Subtheme:

Creative Approaches to Assessment and Feedback

## Abstract:

From the list of areas of interest suggested for this year’s Conference, for me the word ‘creativity’ in particular leapt from the page; and to fuse creativity with the notion of assessment and feedback I find especially appealing. Reading the two words together within the same sentence suggests that this combination is not only ‘allowed’ but desirable, despite the sometimes suffocating, target-driven ethos of accountability in which we work.

In my presentation I will a) outline some basic premises to do with assessment theory and practice and b) build on these to support the idea that we can be creative in the ways we assess our students by taking inspiration from the students themselves. Creativity can also be used in how we assess and evaluate fellow practitioners. Peer observation of Teaching is a form of assessment: I propose we rethink, creatively, traditional models associated with PoT.

I will begin by raising the profile of specific factors considered essential to any learning environment; I will then challenge, or perhaps defend, some of the claims we make to our students about assessment and feedback; I will then suggest some ways in which all teachers can be persuaded to be creative in their thinking, if not in their actions; and I will end by suggesting that creativity can have positive, if not transformational impact not just on our students but on our own practice and Continuing Professional Development.

## Time:

12:00 to 12:30

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 20