

Authentic assessment: creating a blueprint for course design

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Abstract

Authenticity has been identified as a key characteristic of assessment design which promotes learning. Authentic assessment aims to replicate the tasks and performance standards typically found in the world of work, and has been found to have a positive impact on student learning, autonomy, motivation, self-regulation and metacognition; abilities highly related to employability. Despite these benefits, there are significant barriers to the introduction of authentic assessment, particularly where there is a tradition of testing 'decontextualised subject knowledge. One barrier may be the lack of conceptualisation of the term authentic assessment sufficient to inform assessment design at the individual course level. This article tackles that omission by a systematic review of literature from 1988 to 2015. Thirteen consistent characteristics of authentic assessment are identified leading to the classification of three conceptual dimensions: realism, cognitive challenge and evaluative judgement. These dimensions are elaborated and used to propose a step-based model for designing and operating authentic assessment in individual higher education subjects.

Palabras clave

Palabras clave de autor: Authentic assessment; higher education; workplace

KeyWords Plus: HIGHER-EDUCATION; 5-DIMENSIONAL FRAMEWORK; FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT; ASSESSMENT STANDARDS; SELF-ASSESSMENT; STUDENT; FEEDBACK; PERFORMANCE; EXPERIENCES; CURRICULUM