

# HEA Transforming Assessment In Higher Education

Symposia Series, 2017



## *Call for contributions*

UK Higher education is currently undergoing a period of significant challenge and transformation. It is likely that these challenges will, in a comparatively short period of time, lead to changes in the ways in which the student learning experience is, accessed, mediated, and assessed. Assessment will undoubtedly have an important part to play in supporting such change and will itself need to reflect this shifting environment. Yet, whilst assessment increasingly occupies a status of importance in higher education, it remains the area perhaps least effectively engaged by efforts at change. Managing change of any kind in higher education is challenging, being difficult to model, initiate and sustain. Engaging in a process of transformation in assessment can have a positive impact upon student learning, as well as on student satisfaction. It can help ensure that staff and students have a greater understanding of and confidence in, academic standards, making it a necessary focus for any stakeholders concerned with furthering or ascertaining learning.

To this end, the HEA's Transforming Assessment in Higher Education symposia series aims to bring together cutting edge examples of effective efforts at sustainable and manageable change at programme, school/faculty/college and/or institutional-level with regards to assessment and feedback. Specifically, the one-day symposia series aligns with the themes emerging from the national HEA summit for Transforming Assessment in Higher Education (May, 2016), namely challenges pertaining to:

### **"Assessment literacy"**

*Symposium One – York, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017*

Assessment literacy as it is considered in this symposium encompasses: an appreciation of the relationship between assessment and learning; a conceptual (and theoretical) understanding of assessment; understanding of the nature and meaning of assessment criteria and standards; skills in self- and peer-assessment; familiarity with new and established assessment techniques; and the ability to select and apply appropriate approaches to assessment tasks; an understanding of attribution and plagiarism (Price et al., 2012).

Submissions could relate to one or more of the following questions:

- What is the relationship between assessment literacy and learning?
- Is assessment literacy cross-disciplinary, or do students need to develop different, and possibly conflictual, disciplinary literacies?
- How does assessment literacy relate to the epistemic assumptions held by students and staff and thereby their perspectives on the nature of knowledge and knowing?
- How is assessment literacy best developed?

## **“Technology enabled/electronically managed assessment”**

*Symposium Two – York, Wednesday April 12<sup>th</sup> 2017*

This symposium will consider innovative ways to improve the operational effectiveness, efficiencies and consistency of assessment processes through available technologies underpinned by sound pedagogies. This might include efforts towards electronic submission, marking and feedback, as well as investigation into the integration of systems (notably the institutional virtual learning environment and student record system).

Submissions could relate to once or more of the following questions:

- How is the adoption of EMA being increased, its functionality developed and reliability improved? Where the gaps and what are the priorities for developments in this area?
- How are barriers to stakeholder engagement in EMA processes being overcome? How are institutional culture and stakeholder attitudes being changed?
- What marking technologies are being used to generate consistent and timely, yet personal and helpful, forms of feedback? How is technology supporting and encouraging student engagement with both assessment criteria and making use of their feedback?
- What processes and workflows are being improved as a result of EMA adoption? How is technology improving the stakeholder experience around assessment, marking and feedback?
- How is technology enabling innovative forms of student assessment and feedback? How are assessments being designed with technology in mind?

## **“Enhancing student engagement through assessment”**

*Symposium Three – York, Wednesday May 24<sup>th</sup> 2017*

Student engagement is recognised here as a multi-dimensional concept. When applied to assessment these might include, for instance, strategies which focus on developing approaches to assessment and feedback which harness and foster: students’ enthusiasm for and enjoyment of active involvement with subject content; learners’ active participation in evaluating and directing the processes of their own learning; and student participation in the governance and (co)construction of assessment.

Submissions could relate to one or more of the following questions:

- What principles underpin your specific model of student engagement in assessment and feedback? (This could include an examination of relevant theoretical and conceptual frameworks informing your work)
- What is the relationship between student engagement in assessment and feedback practices and learning outcomes?
- How can we effectively measure learning gain through a focus on student engagement in assessment and feedback?
- How do we promote staff engagement in assessment and feedback practices?
- How do we develop inclusive assessment feedback practices?
- How does your discipline impact your student engagement in assessment approach(es)?

- How can the lessons learnt from student engagement within assessment within your discipline be translated and adapted for use in other disciplines?
- How can assessment design promote staff and student engagement in learning?

We welcome submissions outlining discipline-specific innovations in devising and facilitating alternative approaches to assessment design, practice and administration within these broad themes, as well as examples detailing wider institutional initiatives aimed at strategic and systemic change. We would be particularly interested in examples of inter-disciplinary approaches, as well as examples that cross the boundaries of two or more of the core themes.

### ***Aims of the series***

Hosted at the Higher Education Academy in York, the aim of each one-day symposium is: a) to provide an open and supportive environment within which to share and discuss contemporary practice-based programmes and initiatives in these priority areas; and b) to begin to craft a principled, and evidence-informed, approach to devising subsequent support and guidance for change(s) with regards to transforming assessment in higher education.

### ***How to submit a case study for the symposia series***

#### ***Submission Deadline dates:***

Symposium 1: Assessment Literacy – *January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016*  
Click [Here](#) to Submit a Case Study

Symposium 2: Technology enabled/electronically managed assessment – *March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017*  
Click [Here](#) to Submit a Case Study

Symposium 3: Enhancing student engagement through assessment – *March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017*  
Click [Here](#) to Submit a Case Study

In no more than 500 words, please position your case study against one of the three core themes above by identifying the following:

1. Which of the core themes does your case study align with?
2. What is the context of your study (discipline; generic issue; UG/PG; country(ies)?
3. What is (are) the central issue(s) your case study responds to within this theme?
4. What framework(s) have you used to help frame the issue?
5. What is the approach/process you have undertaken in the case study?
6. What are the findings?
7. Can you outline the key messages from the work undertaken?
8. How might the findings of the case study be transferred to other disciplines/levels?
9. How could this work be developed further; what are the next steps?

**NB:** Please be sure to include in your submission full contact and affiliate details for all contributors.

## **Outputs and publications**

For those whose case studies have been selected for the symposia there will be further opportunities for the work to be considered for a HEA Transforming Assessment case studies series resource to be made available to the sector in late 2017. Those selected for the case studies series will be notified by the end of May 2017.

### *HEA Case study series*

Editors: Carol Evans and Sam Elkington

- Selected case studies should be a maximum of 1000 words in length
- Each case study should identify and provide email details of two possible reviewers

**Deadline for completion of final versions of selected case studies is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017.**

### **Special Edition of the Higher Education Pedagogies Journal**

A selected range of successful submissions will be invited to develop full articles for a special issue of [the Higher Education Pedagogies Journal](#) for release in early 2018 subject to approval via the HEP journal peer review process.