15 Nov 2017: 07:00AM UTC/GMT

Getting it right: guidelines for online assessment

Jane Terrell & Dave Snell
Massey University, New Zealand

Just to let you know:
By participating in the webinar you acknowledge and agree that:
The session may be recorded, including voice and text chat communications (a recording indicator is shown inside the webinar room when this is the case). We may release recordings freely to the public which become part of the public record. We may use session recordings for quality improvement, or as part of further research and publications.

Webinar Hosts
Professor Geoff Crisp,
PVC Education,
University of New South Wales
g.crisp[at]unsw.edu.au
Dr Mathew Hillier,
Office for Learning & Teaching,
Monash University
mathew.hillier[at]monash.edu
Getting it right: developing guidelines and tool for online assessment in NZ tertiary contexts

Jane Terrell & Dave Snell – Massey University
Karen Haines, Bettina Schwenger & Mark Smith – Unitec
Deborah Hay - AUT
Online assessment: our definition

Using online tools in assessment for and of student learning: tasks, feedback, and marking/grading
Online assessment

Online teaching and assessment in some form is... only likely to increase in size and significance

(Barber, Donnelly, & Rizvi, 2013; Guiney, 2013; Johnson et al., 2013)

Effective online assessment can offer a range of benefits to both students and teachers including more interactive assessment and feedback, increased efficiency and reduced workload

(JISC, 2010)

How does this relate to your context?

What issues are you experiencing?
Issues in online assessment

- Pedagogical skills
- Technical skills
- Matching appropriate assessment tasks to tools
Project 65

Aim
To support student learning through improving online assessment practice in tertiary contexts

Outputs
1. a set of guidelines for teachers
2. an interactive tool
Getting it right: Guidelines for Online Assessment

This project was funded through the Ako Aotearoa Regional Hub Project Fund 2018.

https://akoaotearoa.ac.nz/
https://akoaotearoa.ac.nz/download/ng/file/group-4/getting-it-right-guidelines-for-online-assessment.pdf
“The Guidelines” are in 4 parts

Background and how to use

6 evidence-based principles

10 guiding questions

12 case studies
Shifting to a sustainable model of assessment

References key literature underpinning the development of the guidelines.

From acquisitional…
- Assessment for acquisition
- Assessment of learning
- Individual
- Problem solution
- Abstract
- Fragmented
- Focus on marks
- Teacher as expert

…to participatory
- Assessment for development
- Assessment for and as learning
- Collaborative
- Problem formation
- Contextualised
- Holistic
- Focus on learning
- Teacher as co-creator
Evidence-based principles

6 evidence-based principles of good practice in online assessment, drawn directly from the case studies and referring to the literature
Evidence-based principles

1. Be clear about why you are doing online assessment
2. Make the best use of technology
3. Design for student learning
4. Ensure you are present in online environments
5. Make use of support from colleagues and institution
6. Find out about current practice
10 Guiding questions

Designed to help you consider some of the elements of good assessment practice and how you might translate these to the online environment.

In this section particular reference is made to the recently developed eLearning Guidelines

http://elg.ac.nz/
10 Guiding questions based on:

1. Purpose
2. Programme alignment
3. Course alignment
4. Authenticity
5. Individual/group
6. Task and marking descriptors
7. Role of students
8. Academic integrity
9. Product and process
10. Feedback
12 case studies, each focusing on how a different Auckland-based tertiary teacher uses an online tool for designing and implementing an assessment task.

The Appendix contains definitions of each online tool, notes on how each is used for teaching, and further useful web links.
12 case studies - 4 institutions

- **Apps** for practical assessment
- **Blogs** as a reflective tool
- **ePortfolios** to support on-going learning
- **ePortfolios** to expose the hidden curriculum
- **ePortfolios** for an industry-based project
- **Forums** to develop communication skills
- **Gaming** to practise real world skills
- **Glossaries** for peer critique and feedback
- **Quizzes** to support learning
- **Turnitin** for marking, feedback and peer evaluation
- **Video** to develop real world skills for employability
- **Wikis** to assess teamwork
Case studies

**USING BLOGS AS A REFLECTIVE TOOL**

**CHALLENGE**
For a course based on developing interpersonal skills and cultural awareness, fostering the student's ability to reflect is critical. Learning to reflect requires students have something useful and meaningful to reflect on, as well as an appropriate tool to do so. Creating this tool is essential.

**BACKGROUND**
A teacher believes that an instructor should consider blogs as a platform for reflecting on their own, and others' learning, as they engage with the three skills necessary to develop interpersonal skills. Just because blogs are the most effective and transparent tool.

"Blogs facilitate the continuation of learning out of class as well as collaboration, and provide a way to monitor feedback"

**THE ASSESSMENT**
Blogs are used as a space for students to evaluate their learning based on evidence from their weekly blogs. Students are taught how to use blogs in their first class and then post weekly entries over five weeks, responding to tasks and questions. They record their observations of personal learning in class that includes their interactions with classmates and application of relevant theory.

"Blogs are only as good as the guided process and questions"

"The interactive nature of this particular blog fulfills the three core facets of interpersonal learning: expressing themselves and others, dialogic writing about themselves and viewing others' writing, and collaborative seeing classmates' responses to the same class content and learning from, and with each other."

**WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS**
Students enjoy the immediate nature of the blog as assessment, seeing evidence of their work and understanding the expectations. They are capable of managing the tasks, posting on time, and receiving feedback. The teacher also enjoys the flexibility of providing feedback on any post, allowing for more detailed comments.

**KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE**
A scaffolding process of regular, weekly feedback, guidance, and theory follows a prescribed timeline essential for students to see their own progress and development over time. Each teacher uses this tool to guide students in a way that integrates individual student's reflections on their own and with others.

"Open, transparent blogs allow students to learn from, and with each other."

**FINAL WORD**
This case demonstrates a creative use of blogs for assessing the development of reflective skills. Similar online tools for such purposes would be portal to systems that aim to compile a series of dated individual posts or journal entries. Many instructors advocate such integration of individual student's reflections, with those of their peers, as well as feedback from the teacher. Blogs create a dynamic environment where students can track their own development and changing attitudes along with those of their peers, both learning from and with each other. This process needs and ideally addresses the challenge of assessing the particular set of holistic competencies and capabilities integral to the student's learning outcomes.
Questions?
Comments?
“OATS”
Online Assessment Tool Selector

What is it?
An interactive online flowchart designed to guide a teacher’s choices re online assessment

How does it work?
Guided questions lead the teacher through a series of decisions to choose an appropriate online assessment
→ recommended options
Follow along... on your own device

oats.net.nz
Welcome to the Online-Assessment-Tool Selector (OATS)

Use the OATS tool now, click here

What is “OATS”?*

The Online Assessment Tool Selector (OATS) is an interactive online tool for teachers to identify online tools appropriate to their own contexts. It is a resource designed to be used in close conjunction with a second resource, the booklet “Getting it right: Guidelines for Online Assessment”, available at: AkoAotearoa.ac.nz Getting it right: Guidelines for Online Assessment. This is a set of evidence-based contextualised guidelines for good practice in design and implementation of online assessment.

Ako Aotearoa’s Northern Hub funded a team of Auckland-based tertiary teaching consultants and academic developers to produce these resources in order to enable New Zealand tertiary teachers to review and redevelop their online assessment practices. The OATS and guidelines were both extensively reviewed by tertiary teachers in New Zealand, and the team is grateful to the many who volunteered to trial them after hearing presentations at various conferences and gatherings throughout 2015 and early 2016.

How can OATS and the guidelines help me?

OATS and the guidelines are for tertiary teachers using, or planning to use, online assessment. Drawn from the New Zealand context, they are designed to either stand alone, or to be used together.

What is online assessment?

For the purpose of OATS and the guidelines, online assessment is defined as the use of online tools in assessment for and of student learning. This includes the use of online tools for assessment tasks, feedback and marking or grading. The guidelines contain case studies where online assessments are used in blended as well as fully online courses.

Getting started

As a tertiary teacher planning to introduce online assessment, you may like to begin by completing the OATS. This will help you identify which online tools may be appropriate to your own assessment context. You may then wish to find out more about deploying the tools selected for you by reading the appropriate sections of the guidelines.

What's in the guidelines?

The guidelines are in four sections, each of which can stand alone and may be read separately or together as required. The first section, “Getting assessment right”, references key literature underpinning the development of the guidelines. This is followed by a set of 6 evidence-based principles of good practice in online assessment, drawn directly from case studies and referring to the literature. The third section is a set of 10 guiding questions designed to help you consider some of the elements of good assessment practice and how you might translate these to the online environment. The final section is a set of 12 case studies, each focusing on how a different Auckland-based tertiary teacher uses an online tool for designing and implementing an assessment task. Definitions of each online tool, notes on how it is used for teaching and further useful weblinks appear in the Appendix following the final section.

The Online Assessment Tool Selector (OATS) is one of two outputs of a project funded through the Ako Aotearoa Regional Hub Project Fund 2016. More information is available at AkoAotearoa.ac.nz Project Funding.
Online Assessment Tool Selector

Should I be using online tools for this assessment?
Before you use this tool, ensure you're prepared by checking our requirements:

1. Is using technology a barrier to students effective completion?
   - Do your students have: Access to digital tools including computers, internet...
   - The required technical skills
   - Technical support where needed.

2. Is this assessment measuring subject skills and/or knowledge directly connected to the assessed learning outcomes?
   - Yes/No

3. Does the online environment suit the task in terms of:
   - Content
   - Authenticity
   - Relevance

4. Is using technology for this assessment an enabler?
   - Does the task facilitate and add value to student learning
   - Do the tools enable students to more effectively demonstrate and use appropriate skills, attitudes and knowledge

5. Feedback mechanisms are appropriate in terms of:
   - Timeliness
   - Safe / secure ie, only those anticipated can provide feedback

Done? Get started then! »
Create an Assessment Task and see our Recommendations

Please provide details about your Assessment Task

1. Briefly describe what you expect the students to do

Complete portfolio of activities

2. Select the single option that best describes the skills the students will be developing and/or using:

- **Knowing**
  - Possible Assessment Tasks
    - observation and recall of information
    - knowledge of dates, events, places
    - knowledge of major ideas
    - mastery of subject matter
  - Question Cues:
    - list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc.

- **Understanding**
  - Possible Assessment Tasks
    - understanding information
    - grasp meaning
    - translate knowledge into new context
    - interpret facts, compare, contrast
    - order, group, infer causes
    - predict consequences
  - Question Cues:
    - summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend

- **Applying**
  - Possible Assessment Tasks
    - use information
    - use methods, concepts, theories in new situations
    - solve problems using required skills or knowledge
    - Questions Cues:
      - apply, demonstrate, calculate complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover

- **Analysing**
  - Possible Assessment Tasks
    - seeing patterns
    - organization of parts
    - recognition of hidden meanings
    - identification of components
  - Question Cues:
    - analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer

- **Evaluating**
  - Possible Assessment Tasks
    - compare and discriminate between ideas
    - assess value of theories, presentations
    - make choices based on reasoned argument
    - verify value of evidence
    - recognize subjectivity
  - Question Cues:
    - assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize

- **Creating**
  - Possible Assessment Tasks
    - use old ideas to create new ones
    - generalize from given facts
    - relate knowledge from several areas
    - predict, draw conclusions
  - Question Cues:
    - combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite

Back to start  NEXT
Create an Assessment Task and see our Recommendations
Please provide details about your Assessment Task

Evaluating: Select up to five skills that describe what the students will be doing
Note: You can select up to five skills

- Appraise
- Argue
- Assess
- Choose
- Compare
- Conclude
- Contract
- Criticize
- Critique
- Decide
- Deduce
- Defend
- Describe
- Determine
- Disprove
- Estimate
- Evaluate
- Explain
- Interpret
- Judge
- Justify
- Prioritize
- Prove
- Rate
- Recommend
- Reflect
- Relate
- Rule on
- Select
- Summarize
- Support
- Test
- Value

[Buttons: Back, Next]
Create an Assessment Task and see our Recommendations
Please provide details about your Assessment Task

Note: You can select more than one answer.

Are the students expected to complete this task by themselves or collaboratively?
- Individual [✓]
- Collaborative [ ]

Is the final product for this assessment presented as:
- Text based [ ]
- Multimedia [✓]
- Physical Resource (e.g. DVD) [ ]

Will the final product be submitted:
- Publicly [ ]
- Privately with class or cohort only [ ]
- Private teacher view only [✓]
- As a File [ ]
- As a Physical Resource [ ]

Will students receive feedback:
- Private teacher only view [✓]
- Private class or cohort view only [ ]
- Publicly [ ]

Will feedback be:
- Written [✓]
- Multimedia [ ]
- Automatically generated [ ]

Will feedback and grades be allocated for:
- Summative purposes [✓]
- Formative purposes [ ]
We recommend you consider the following Online-Assessment-Tools based on your assessment task:

**Recommendations**

- Blog
- ePortfolio
- Essay Question Quiz

[Click Here To Provide Feedback]
Blog

What is a Blog?

A blog (a short form that combines "weblog") is an interactive website usually maintained by an individual who posts regular entries. These entries may be in the form of text or images and include uploaded materials, eg. videos. Blogs are mostly focused on particular subjects and are primarily textual. They may be public or private and may be used educationally in both formal and informal assessment.

How Blogs are used for teaching?
Assisted blogging can help to engage students in more challenging academic topics. Blogs may be used as either individual or group learning tasks, and with varying levels of public or private access, and for either formative or summative purposes.

• The most common use for educational purposes is as a type of online reflective journal or portfolio where collected entries are submitted or posted by the author, eg. individual writings or uploaded documents, artefacts or images. These can be accessed by the marker for feedback and assessment.
• Blogs also have become a useful means of keeping contact with distance students or those out on placements (eg. for clinical or teaching courses), where the student has an immediate forum for maintaining contact with their teacher.
• In each case, a blog creates a useful log of activity that can be used for feedback and assessment of developing skills over time.

Useful Web Links
University of New South Wales guide to assessing with blogs
http://wwwическиогазер.com

University of Edinburgh guide for using blogs in higher education
http://www.blogs.ac.uk/au/using-edupluggesguideuseblogs.html

Higher Education Academy (UK) - case studies on using blogs
https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/14699/Case%20studies%20using%20blogs%20and%20wiki

Why blogging is great for students, and 5 tips for making blogging a breeze
http://www.edulearners.com/how-and-why-teachers-should-blog/Experiences%20of%20reflective%20learning%20for%20students
http://slides.google.com/presentations/21518105/The%20next%20steps%20.html

Case Study: Blogs
Using blogs for reflection

CHALLENGE
For a course based on developing interpersonal skills and cultural awareness, fostering students’ ability to be reflective learners is critical. Learning to reflect requires students to have something useful and meaningful to reflect on, as well as an appropriate tool for making those reflections. For staff, those tools need to be accessible and assessable, providing a progressive record of development as evidence of learning. In this case, students have been using blogs to record reflections on their own and others’ learning as they engage with the core skills that are necessary to develop interpersonal competencies. Staff have used the course to design a learning environment where blogs are an effective and transparent reflective tool.

BACKGROUND
In this case, the English language learner was new to blogs since 2009. He had a level 5 intracultural competence course with a cohort of between 25 and 30 students in order to gather and give feedback in both formal and summative ways. Blogs create an online environment that allows students to reflect on their own learning alongside that of their peers. The aim is to develop students’ critical cultural awareness through regular reflective writing, integrating their own experiences with evidence and theory gathered in class.

THE ASSESSMENT
“Blogs facilitate the continuation of learning out of class as well as collaboration, and provide a way to monitor and give feedback.”
Learning outcomes assessed:

• Understand the concepts of values, norms and beliefs, and how they relate to patterns of behaviour in socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theoretical models and frameworks.
• Understand the potential of cultural perspectives and communication style and behaviour in authentic, authentic material or situations, and apply new learning to interpret, understand and interpret effectively.
• Develop an understanding of the human beings and respect for difference and the unfamiliar, abilities to interact and collaborate with others, and readiness to suspend beliefs about own and other cultures.
• Identifying values and beliefs, critically reflect on own identity and worldview, and self-assess any changes in understanding of own identity and perspective.

What students do:
Students are taught how to use blogs in their first class and their post-weekly entry over five weeks, responding to set tasks and questions. They record their observations of
OATS

Total views client side from
1\textsuperscript{st} March – 1\textsuperscript{st} November 2017 = 1269

Really not much more than at proof-of-concept stage

Are you interested in helping out with further development?

Contact: Dave Snell d.j.snell[at]massey.ac.nz
Bibliography


Contact

Jane Terrell – Project Leader
j.l.terrell[at]massey.ac.nz
Webinar Session feedback

With thanks from your hosts

Professor Geoff Crisp,
PVC Education, University of New South Wales
g.crisp[at]unsw.edu.au

Dr Mathew Hillier,
Office of Learning & Teaching
Monash University
mathew.hillier[at]monash.edu

Recording available
http://transformingassessment.com