

Recent development in assessment and evaluation in higher education: making exams fair and fit-for-purpose

Abstract

University teaching is characterized by a strong emphasis on competence development. Recent curriculum changes in higher education programs consistently stress the importance of achieving high level academic and professional outcomes. Educational technology has not changed this endeavour, but has played a major role as a catalyst to promote this emphasis on high quality learning and instruction. This is expected to deliver graduates that reflect mastery of a complex set of competences. These competences imply the mastery of a large knowledge base, adequate skills, strong attitudes and this in a variety of academic professional settings. But ... are current higher education evaluation approaches consistent with the above trends? Are large scale multiple choice exams still fit-for-purpose? Is an emphasis on final assessment during the typical exam periods in January and May-June a valid way of assessing the competency-based frameworks of contemporary curricula in medicine, veterinary science, law ... ? And how does technology foster, support and play a role in these development?

During this "causerie" we will present the conceptual base to look at the new developments in higher education and present a large number of examples of how assessment and evaluation is changing in higher education. Examples will address skills lab assessment in veterinary sciences and the medical field, self- and peer assessment, ePortfolios, peer review cycles ..; next to traditional approaches that are now supported with technological tools to guarantee relevance, validity and a stronger emphasis on their fit-for-purpose.