Higher Education Academy

TRANSFORMING TEACHING
INSPIRING LEARNING

Innovative pedagogies series:

Innovations in student-centred assessment

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Introduction

This report provides an account of an original form of student self-assessment with integrated peer/tutor feedback that was developed in higher education (HE). This will be referred to throughout the report as the 'Integrated SSA model'. This model innovates in terms of the process itself, in terms of the timing in relation to grading of assignments, and also in the manner of integration with existing assessment practices and accreditation.

This report provides details of the process of Integrated SSA, which promotes students' understanding of their work and peer and tutor feedback within accredited, summative assessments. I will also make comparisons with other self-assessment practices, to show how this new model can complement existing methodology. I will refer to the common practice model of self-assessment (as originally developed in the 1930s, assiduously disseminated by Boud in his 1995 book, and also discussed in Cowan 2006) as the 'Standard SA model'. This report will show that the Integrated SSA and Standard SA models are both compatible and supportive, but that the Integrated SSA model addresses problems with absorption and adoption of feedback, and student autonomy and empowerment which are lacking in the Standard SA model.

The Integrated SSA model has been developed within the context of language learning in HE, and I'll discuss how it has evolved through its dissemination to other subject areas and departments as part of a Teaching Fellowship (TF) at the University of Sunderland. Subsequent adoptions of this model, including that outlined in the published PhD from Sweden demonstrate the flexibility and far-reaching implications of this innovation.

This model was developed as a way to align pedagogical practice with theories of learning, teaching and assessment, and relies upon the principal tenet of student-centred learning. In turn, this innovation reflects back to theory and challenges our understandings and beliefs about assessment and self-assessment, and the alignment between our assessment practices and our learning theories.

Innovating in student self-assessment

I developed the Integrated SSA model because the Standard SA model does not address or resolve any of the issues arising at the point when tutors return student work with corrections and a grade. In order to better understand the context of this model, it is important to outline the process of the Standard SA model.

In the Standard SA model, students are required to author a self-assessment (SA) document to hand in simultaneously with their work. In this document, they compare their work to agreed criteria and standards, assess how well they believe they have done according to these, suggest what could be improved for the future, and (optionally) provide a grade. Tutors will then correct and grade both the work and the SA, and the student would have no further contribution to the assessment process apart from being involved in discussions, if these actually take place.

I found that when I used the Standard SA model, problems arose in the understanding and negotiating of feedback comments and the grade. Within the standard model students were 'telling' staff, and after feedback and grading, tutors were 'telling' students and both were finding it difficult to find a neutral ground. The standard model seemed to be adding a wedge between tutors and students, rather than bringing them together, because students would often use their SA to support their own expectations in terms of grades, which could be based on a misunderstanding of the criteria. Their SA seemed to be seen as proof and justification for their beliefs about their work. For example, if students had graded their own work as 65% in their SA and given an explanation as to why, then it was difficult for them to accept other arguments either

from peers or tutors, if they were then awarded a 50%. Their SA had convinced them that their original assessment was the right one.

Although tutor feedback could be an issue, the real problem was that of grades. Grades are not just a final judgement, they also represent a level or standard, and thus understanding and accepting grades is an essential aspect of ethical and fair assessments.

I developed the Integrated SSA model in order to help students to reach a clear understanding of the quality of their work and, through peer and tutor feedback, enrich their thinking and understanding of quality before a final grade was given by tutors. Thus, SSA begins when problems are likely to occur, that is, at the point when tutors return students' work. Within HE in the UK, graded work for accreditation is normally returned within four weeks of submission. Four weeks is a long time in a context of intensive and focused work, therefore, it is likely that students do not have a clear memory of their work. If the work is returned with comments and grades, the disappointment of the results may cloud their interaction with and acceptance of their feedback.

Creating a common, negotiated understanding of feedback

The moment of returning graded work is probably one of the most difficult for students. In order to ensure shared understandings of quality, I developed the following integrated feedback process which is inclusive of students, without increasing the time burden for tutors at any stage of the process. The process is implemented within a 50-minute class.

1. Although tutors will have assessed students' work and provided feedback comments and a grade, it is only the original student work which is returned (the feedback comments and the grade are retained by tutors on a separate sheet).
2. Students are asked to re-read their original work and make any changes they see fit.
    a. Peers are then asked to read two or three pieces of other students' work. Changes to the original student work can be made in different coloured pens so that it is possible to keep track of who made the changes.
    b. While reading any of the work, students are free to ask each other for clarification or advice. However, they are requested not to involve tutors unless they cannot resolve their queries together.
3. Tutors give each student their comments, but no grade.
4. Following discussions, students use their annotated work (from their re-reading and from peer readings) and they self-assess their work on a separate sheet.
5. Students will add their peer grade onto the self-assessment sheet of the students' work they read. These sheets are given to tutors.
6. Students compare their own and their peers' comments to those from tutors and discuss any discrepancies.
7. Finally, students receive the tutor grade.
8. The collection of different grades can be discussed, either privately or publicly.
9. If students have evidence that the tutor grade is inaccurate, then this can be adjusted and used as part of the paper trail for internal moderators and the external examiner.
10. The transparent, ethical and inclusive process is complete and misunderstandings have been clarified.

I used this process in my undergraduate French language and translation modules across a three-year range. Initially, I used it mainly within written and reading skills contexts because I thought it was easier for students. As will be discussed later, this turned out not to be the case.

The Integrated SSA model is an innovative and original model of student self-assessment for a number of reasons. Firstly, while the Standard SA model requires students to self-assess at the time when they complete

their work, under the time-pressure of an impending deadline, the Integrated SSA model gives the students the benefit of hindsight. Students reread and reengage with their work prior to receiving feedback from their peers or their tutors after a reasonably long time lapse and this allows students to have gained a distance from their work, and perhaps feel less emotionally linked to it and so become more detached and better able to see their work in a different light. This is the case also in other contexts: when articles sent for review are returned, the comments from reviewers force the academic to reassess their work, not only by the merit of the feedback, but because of the time elapsed and experience gained since the work was submitted.

Secondly, having reengaged with their work, students read two or three of their peers' work in order for them to understand and compare different forms and levels of quality. Discussions among peers generally clarify many queries students had not answered for themselves. The process within the classroom, particularly when students have done this a few times, is very dynamic and integrated, with students jumping from their own work to their peers and making comparisons more systematically in order to clarify the understanding of their work. In addition to understanding other viewpoints through peer discussions, students develop their powers of reasoning while defending their work. They are learning about assessment by practicing it in small, safe peer groups.

Importantly, tutors do not intervene during these discussions unless students specifically ask the tutor for clarification. These points of clarification can be dealt with for the class group in a relatively short time prior to receiving tutor feedback. When students receive tutor feedback, they are not provided with the grade. The grade is such an emotional aspect of assessment that it eclipses and impedes any focus on the feedback. Since students have a relatively clear understanding of their work, the tutor feedback becomes much more easily understood and even the jargon often used by tutors is less opaque as they understand the context. Again, peers are at hand to clarify.

Finally, students now peer-grade and self-grade their work. This is important because, as noted above, grades help to provide an understanding of standards and the level at which they should be working. Students give tutors their peer-grade and self-grade and tutors give students their own grades. If students have understood their work, these should not be a surprise. To complete the cycle, students compare the grades, and if they can provide evidence for changing the tutor grade, tutors are morally bound to do so. Generally, students under-grade rather than over-grade and these discussions do not often arise.

This innovative, Integrated SSA process saves tutors a huge amount of time in a number of ways. Firstly, the process was always completed within a 50-minute class. Secondly, if students are clear about the quality of their work and how it relates to the criteria, they will understand the appropriateness of the grade. Everyone is aware that one dissatisfied student who complains about their grade can take a great deal of time over a long period. Thirdly, it saves tutors discussing their comments with students individually. Although students may find one-to-one sessions with tutors helpful and useful, they do not encourage students to think or to be autonomous and independent.

Impact

My work has been judged to have world class impact, making it pertinent across social, cultural and educational contexts:

> The case study in the area of assessment theory and practice indicated the achievement of outstanding impacts in terms of reach and significance *(REF 2014).*

The impact of the Integrated SSA model is important within two theoretical contexts:

1. as part of an original theoretical framework which unites summative, formative and self-assessment;
2. within discourses of inclusive and proactive student-centred learning, aligned within learning theories.

The original self-assessment model is a paradigm shift linking practice and theory supporting student learning and inclusion in assessment. An original theoretical framework for summative, formative and self-assessment represents a second paradigm shift.

The Integrated SSA model is a paradigm shift because, unlike the other self-assessment models (Taras 2010a, 2015a) this model requires students and tutors to rethink their understanding of the following:

- who may be involved in accredited graded work;
- how students can grade from an informed position, i.e. when students have understood their work and possible opinions about it;
- how assessment literacies can be developed and communicated among student peers and with tutors.

It is the alignment of discourses, including linguistic and cultural influences on perceptions of assessment, and theories with assessment practices, which provided coherence for the development of the Innovative SSA model. Although previously theory supported student-centredness, the prevailing discourse did not explicitly clarify how students could be involved in the assessment and grading process.

The work of Dragemark Oscarson (2009) in Sweden is the most formalised study of the Innovative SSA model outside the UK. This was an intervention study where 17 to 20-year-old students were introduced to the model over an academic year. The results were positive and the main aspects of this innovative integrated model that were found useful by tutors and students, were:

- exploring their work with minimal or no feedback: as this allowed students to revisit and think more constructively about their work (Dragemark Oscarson 2009, p. 214; p. 228);
- withholding the grade: as this meant that students had a more neutral attitude to feedback since it showed them which areas tutors prioritised (Dragemark Oscarson 2009, p.228; Taras 2001);
- the understanding that the process and discussions gave them of the assessment criteria, and therefore quality, in their context (Dragemark Oscarson 2009, p. 211).

There is considerable evidence that the Innovative SSA model has impact on debate, staff development and academic practice in universities and schools both within the UK and internationally. My own professional practice in teaching and research roles have also had considerable impact within my university through the TF and subsequent seminars. My work has had impact on debate and practice in HE and schools, nationally and internationally through invited presentations and conferences[1].

How this practice evolved

Early in my career, while teaching English for Academic Purposes in HE in England and studying for an MA in Applied Linguistics, I explored ways of supporting student autonomy and independence. Within the context of HE, it is inappropriate to treat students as anything other than responsible adults. Furthermore, HE discourses have focused on learner and learning-centred pedagogies. Dearing (1997) provided the contextual, theoretical and practical references for these discourses. Since assessment is of central importance to tutors, learning and supporting learning, and to students in particular, it seemed a logical decision to turn to self-assessment as a practice which helped students on the road to autonomy and independence.

In the early 1990s, I introduced the Standard SSA model to my students. The practical elements of introducing it did not appear daunting: clarifying tasks and involving students in task design was part of involving students in an inclusive curriculum. Preparing, discussing and co-generating assessment criteria

[1] See: **http://www.sunderland.ac.uk/research/areasofresearch/thecentreforpedagogy/staffprofiles/drmaddalenataras/**

were also an essential starting point to preparing students for a new course. The requirement to publish criteria in the course guides did not diminish either the need or the importance for students to discuss and generate their own criteria, as it helped them to understand the priorities of the course. Subsequently, it was possible to compare their criteria with the published ones, and, as often transpired, their criteria and the published ones generally coincided with each other (Taras 2001, 2003).

Much of the work of students and tutors is channelled into preparing and assessing work which is used for validation of the course for summative purposes. Since both student and tutor concerns and efforts are centred on student assignments, efficient communication around these is of the essence. Students spend vast amounts of their time on their assignments, as do tutors: within curriculum development, supporting students through the stages of preparation, and finally, providing comments and grades on the work. However, the word 'finally' is inappropriate. Tutors may heave a sigh of relief on completing comments and grading of students work, but often, this is where problems may begin between students and tutors.

I would spend hours commenting, marking and grading student work. Having asked them to provide an SA document as part of the Standard SA model, I would additionally spend hours reading and commenting on their SA, and then find that students had misunderstood, misinterpreted, or appeared to just refuse to engage with my comments which explained their grades. If there were problems, this is where they gravitated.

In addition, the Standard SA model has the disadvantage of doubling tutors' work-load, by requiring them not only to assess and comment on the assignment, but also assess and comment on the SA. This has formed a barrier to many tutors adopting the Standard SA model, but others have seen the value, and added this increased work to their timetables. Although the Standard SA model can provide an efficient means for students to check their work, reflect on the quality, and ensure the criteria have been addressed, students may turn the SA into a confessional and reveal their inner thoughts which may also be to their disadvantage (Reynolds and Trehan 2000; Taras 2010b, 2015). Perhaps, more problematically, this internalisation and self-reflection may convince students of a certain standard for their work which may be misplaced (Taras 2010b, 2015).

The initial and primary aim of the Integrated SSA model was to ensure that students had a clear grasp and understanding of tutor feedback prior to receiving the grade for their work. Research had identified that students fixated on the grade to the detriment of feedback (Rowntree 1987). I had observed that if students had high grades, often they did not feel the need to engage systematically with tutor feedback; students with poor grades were generally discouraged and might feel that there was too much for them to grasp, and in between grades might produce varying reactions, but not all conducive to close scrutiny and engagement with tutor feedback. My own frustration was matched by similar reactions by my peers from different subjects and institutions. I thus sought to examine whether excluding grades when returning work would help students. At the same time, I hoped that my hours of work providing feedback would also be rewarded by more systematic scrutiny and understanding of the feedback that I had provided.

This was the context in which the original Integrated SSA model was developed, however my approach and implementation of the model adapted in response to student needs and my growing experience in this area. Initially, I found it more challenging to implement the model with lower-level students; and they also found the SSA exercise more challenging. As a result of this, I followed the Integrated SSA process less frequently with lower proficiency groups. However, as I gained more experience using the model with stronger groups, the increased confidence in the model allowed me to support all levels of aptitude through the process, and I began to use the model consistently across all groups.

I was very happy with trials in most of my French language classes, and when the opportunity arose, I applied for a teaching fellowship (TF) proffered by the university, to disseminate an innovation in other areas of the university. By 1995 when the TF began, I had clear ideas that this model was helping students and tutors and

was keen to see how it could be adapted and adopted in different subject areas, year groups and departments.

In my implementation of the Integrated SSA model within my modules, I also included the Standard SA since it had always been a useful means for students to check their work and think about what they had done. Thus, the Integrated SSA model had not replaced the Standard SA model, but was used as an additional process to support students. This was implemented as follows:

1. students would hand in their assessment, with their SA, outlining their initial impressions of how their work related to the criteria, at the point of submission.
2. after the tutor had been given time to assess all of the work (usually four weeks), the Integrated SSA session would take place, with the students re-reading both their assessments and their SAs, and discussing them with their peers.

However, for the purpose of the TF, it would have been too complicated to promote both models concomitantly; therefore dissemination focused on the Integrated SSA model as the process most conducive to help untangle feedback issues.

The process of adoption involved talking to tutors at team meetings or other subject gatherings and asking for volunteers to be a part of this innovation. In addition, individuals that I had met previously were also targeted, and I suggested that they invite me to their subject meetings to talk to the tutors. During this exercise, it was highlighted once again that time was considered the primary barrier to tutors for the adoption of self-assessment practices. This led me to change the way I presented the Integrated SSA model to encourage participation. I engaged tutors' participation by developing a minimalist model handout (Taras1999, p. 79); which highlighted the simplicity of the process and described that the extra time required was minimal for tutors (see Taras1999, Table 2)

I obtained more than the required number of tutors for the first year, and when the TF was renewed, I similarly had a good number who continued using the Integrated SSA model for a second year, and also new volunteers in different subject areas. A full report is available in Taras 1999, but two examples show how SSA was adapted to areas which I had not considered and which also challenged my preconceptions and extended my understanding of my own practice.

Use of the integrated SSA model within Pharmacy

Two tutors from Pharmacy agreed to use the Integrated SSA model with their students. After discussions, both agreed to use the model for feedback for lab reports. The new application of the model for lab reports proved to be unproblematic and straightforward.

In response to this, one of the Pharmacy tutors elected to pilot the model in yet another new context. This module had proven to be problematic for giving feedback: different tutors provided seminar support and thus graded and commented on their own groups, while the tutor involved in the study was responsible for providing overall feedback for the assignments to the students. This involved running the SSA session in a lecture hall with more than 150 students, thus in a much larger group than the Integrated SSA model previously had been trialled.

The trial was a success. Using the Integrated SSA process during the lecture session turned out to be straightforward, positively received by students and unproblematic for the tutor. She was very happy as she felt it reduced many problems that might have led students to query the grades they were given. When the tutor left the university, she expressed her intention to continue to use the Integrated SSA model in her new position.

Use of the integrated SSA model within Drama

I received an enthusiastic welcome from the Drama team. They felt that the Integrated SSA model was a logical progression of their current practices and emphasis on student engagement and student-centred learning. They were very focused on developing the criteria with the students, and helping them to understand how these related to their practice, and had previously implemented the Standard SA model. The Integrated SSA model would provide the next step in linking the engagement and discussion to grading and formal assessments.

The Drama department's application of the Standard SA model and their intention to implement the Integrated SSA model for practical work challenged my preconceptions. I had previously avoided using self-assessment for French speaking exercises, as I had believed it would be too difficult to adapt the model to this context. The Drama team proved that I had been imposing false limitations on the Integrated SSA model. This discussion with the Drama team led to my having a greater awareness of the way in which individuals self-assess – I began to register that even outside of traditional educational contexts, we will often assign a grade to our own practice or achievement. This is also the case when tutors are reflecting on their own practice, and making our processes explicit, especially our own, is an important step in clarifying, understanding and improving what we do.

As a result of this, I began using SSA within my practical oral classes successfully. With students, we discussed criteria, how best to record areas of excellence and problems during the orals and how this would lead to grading: effectively, it was the same process as with other assessments whatever the context or subject area.

Teaching fellowship tutor feedback

The first year of the TF involved the dissemination of the integrated model. In the second year, new tutors were recruited to use SSA, and tutors from the previous year agreed to continue the trial. Tutor feedback was positive and all agreed that it was not time consuming: this is very important since time constraints were frequently raised as an impediment to engaging with either peer or self-assessment. It was found that the SSA process could be integrated easily so tutors and students felt it was a logical part of their course. This is essential to any change in practice. Tutors also agreed that with little effort, it helped students understand, engage with and discuss their comments. Tutors valued knowing where their comments were useful for students, and seeing the benefit of the time and effort they had invested (Taras 1999, p. 72).

Tutors found that it was weaker students who were more reluctant to engage with the Integrated SSA model, although they would derive the most benefit. All but one tutor agreed that the benefit of the Integrated SSA model was cumulative and would be increasingly useful as students became proficient with the process (Taras 1999, p. 75).

TF Student feedback

The student feedback at the end of the first year was overwhelmingly positive. The early stages of the process were generally accepted, however, there were mixed reactions to being asked to give grades (Taras 1999, p. 76). When it came to grading, the stronger students had no issues, whereas the weaker students seemed more reluctant. If students had worked hard, the fact that they had not achieved their desired level was frustrating for them: this was confirmed after further research where time and effort loomed large in students' consideration of grades, even when they were clear that this criterion was not applicable to their work (Taras 2003).

Students found SSA for final assignments to be fruitless and frustrating, as they would not be able to use the feedback, and it felt like dwelling on their failures (Taras 1999, p. 76). A small minority felt assessment was the tutor's job, but seeing other students so enthusiastic was a strong influence in changing their minds.

How self-assessment is situated within theories of assessment

Assessment has generally been much slower and less efficient at joining 21st century thinking compared to learning and teaching. There are many reasons for this, not least of which is that assessment has been considered the sole prerogative of tutors. The official nature of student work used for accreditation has seemed to exclude serious considerations of student involvement in assessment. Assessment has remained the last bastion where students are excluded or at least kept on the margins. In addition to this, whereas most tutors would readily discuss theories of learning, discussing assessment literacies is greeted with less enthusiasm. A body of research is available demonstrating that tutors, both in HE and the compulsory sector, do not have shared or consistent understandings of assessment (Hargreaves 2005; Maclellan 2001; Taras 2008b; Taras and Davies 2013).

Generally, both HE and the compulsory sector cite and accept Sadler's (1989) definition of formative assessment which is based on Ramaprasad's (1983) definition of feedback and requires learners to bridge the 'gap' to complete the feedback cycle. However, Sadler, apart from developing Ramaprasad and relating his definition of feedback to goals, standards and criteria, does not relate formative to summative assessment, except to say they are different (Taras 2012c).

The original distinction between formative and summative assessment was made by Scriven (1967), but he is variously interpreted to support different viewpoints (Taras 2012c). Taras (2005) uses arguments from Ramaprasad (1983), Sadler (1989) and Scriven (1967) to develop a theory of assessment which relates summative, formative and self-assessment within a coherent rationale based on processes of assessment, which can be monitored, controlled and thus regulated and improved.

Black and Wiliam (1998; 2009) have based their theoretical discussions of assessment on functions of assessment. This discourse was developed in the compulsory sector where assessment is very different to HE and therefore, it will not be discussed here.

Therefore, to summarise for HE, the theories may be represented as follows.

Theory of formative assessment (Sadler 1989)

Sadler uses Ramaprasad's (1983) definition that formative assessment = feedback used, to produce the following formula for formative assessment:

Formative assessment	=	assessment linked to goals, standards (criteria)	+	self-assessment	+	feedback used

There is a problem here that summative assessment is hardly mentioned, therefore the assessment process becomes implicit).

Theory of formative, summative + self-assessment (Taras 2005)

Taras uses Scriven's (1967) definitions of formative and summative assessment, and also asserts that assessment and feedback MUST be negotiated for understanding and take-up by the learner.

Formative	=	summative	+	Feedback negotiated, decided	+	feedback used

Theories and empirical research agree that student self-assessment is mandatory for the assessment to be formative.

How the Integrated SSA model is situated within theories of self-assessment

Although the Standard SA model has been available since the 1930s, even now it is far from being used either comprehensively or systematically (Boud 1995; Cowan 2006; Brown and Harris 2013; Taras and Davies 2013). Self-assessment either tends not to involve grading, or if grading is involved, then it tends to be partial and represent a relatively low percentage of the total grade. This is also true of peer assessment.

Assessment, feedback, and learning are inextricably linked: for learners to understand one, they must understand all aspects of the other two. Classroom practices support students systematically through their understandings of all aspects of their learning journeys. Students discuss tasks and how best to organise and research them, they analyse and evaluate criteria through rubrics, level descriptors and standards (Merry *et al.* 2013; Panadero and Jonsson 2013; Sadler 2013). There are innovations which help students draft and redraft their work and make the most of feedback (Duncan 2007; Merry *et al.* 2013), and finally, peer and self-assessment have also been available for a long time. However, few self-assessment models focus on final, assessed work and allow students to engage with assessment literacies of expert assessors (Taras 2010b, 2015a): this is the primary innovation of the Integrated SSA model discussed here.

The Integrated SSA model is situated within (socio)constructivist, but also behaviourist learning theories and requires learners to be active and proactive in order to question and develop systematically their understandings of processes and products. It fills a crucial gap at the end of the learning and teaching timeline when most tutors feel that the learning is over, that is, in accredited assessments. Even if the assessments do not lead to other work within the course or degree, it is still an important learning process which consolidates thinking and is necessary, ethically, for students to have understood all aspects of their graded work. In addition, it avoids students' misconceived feelings of being unjustly assessed in their work, which can lead to painful and time-consuming complaints processes. Therefore, the integrated model is important for closure of any assessment, course or programme of study. Assessment is not an addition at the end of a course, and including students in assessment is not a choice if we respect our discourses within inclusive and ethical education. It is worth noting here, that it is important to engage students in self-assessment for all assessments during a course. As mentioned above, students often felt frustrated when only participating in Integrated SSA at the end of the course, when there was no further opportunity to incorporate the lessons learned into future work, however, ensuring that the focus of their discussions moves from the specific understanding of the assignment in hand to how this might help them work in the future, may help to dissipate these feelings.

How others might adapt or adopt this practice

The Integrated SSA model is very flexible, and as demonstrated in the examples given earlier, can be fitted to many different contexts: different sectors, different subjects, different assignment formats, and different countries. There are also many further contexts to which it could also be adapted, for example, this model could be implemented as part of online learning, with the discussion taking place virtually, rather than in a physical classroom.

Below are suggestions for key areas to consider when seeking to adopt the Integrated SSA model.

Challenge your beliefs

My own experience has shown me that my own preconceptions can be the biggest hurdle when it comes to changing my practice. Similarly, it is difficult to convince others unless you are convinced yourself. Because of social, political and educational norms, it is not 'normal', despite educational discourses, to have students as partners in assessment.

Know your context

The Integrated SSA model is very flexible, and different implementations will be appropriate for different contexts. The model should be taken as a guide to best practice, and adapted as needed to fit the particular situation in which it is being used, rather than applied rigidly. Awareness of context is also important when it comes to the implementation of new practice: in some situations it may be appropriate to slowly introduce different aspects of the model within current processes to cause as little disruption as possible, whereas in other situations it might be easier to make the change all at once.

Exclude the grade

During the TF pilot, teams and tutors who were especially concerned about feedback were particularly welcoming of excluding the grade as they saw this as problematic for engaging students. This can be a simple and easy starting point: excluding the grade when providing feedback can be done as a change on its own, or before phasing in other aspects of the Integrated SSA model.

Include students and colleagues in the change process

Any pedagogic activity requires the collaboration and participation of those involved in order to work well: this is particularly true of assessment, where emotions run high and pressures come from all sides. It can be very helpful to engage with the students about the new process and let them know that the process is new to you too. Working together with colleagues can provide invaluable support through the process, and give further insight into how it can be adapted within your department.

Promote discussion

One of the areas which I found most challenging in the implementation process, was restraining myself from 'telling' in the discussion session. As much as possible, this should be student led, and it is important to change from instructing the students on how the assignment should have been completed to questioning the choices available, and encouraging students to examine for themselves what works and why.

Conclusion

In this report, I have outlined an original and unique process of self-assessment, referred to as the Integrated SSA model. This is an innovation in many ways. The process itself is unique, and is compatible with final, accredited assessments. The model is also original in that it involves students in the grading process: grades are withheld by the tutor until the feedback has been discussed and understood, and grades given by the student and their peers. This is putting theories of student-centred learning into practice.

The Integrated SSA model fills gaps which were not addressed in existing self-assessment practices (e.g. the Standard SA model): this is both in terms of alignment with theory, as mentioned above, and practically, as the Integrated SSA model does not have as much of a time overhead for tutors. It was also shown that these two models could complement each other, and be used effectively in concert.

I have demonstrated the flexibility of this innovation, by giving examples of a wide variety of contexts where it has been adopted: in different departments within the TF, and in a different country and sector in the Swedish study. In all the cases where this has been undertaken, there has been an overwhelmingly positive reception from both students and tutors.

This model of self-assessment was based in and has contributed to theoretical discussion. The epistemology and belief system of learning and learner-centred assessment was my primary motivation in developing the model, and examining the discourses surrounding self-assessment in order to support the development of the model highlighted the gaps and inconsistencies in the literature of formative and summative assessment. I have situated the Integrated SSA model within theories of self-assessment, and shown how self-assessment

is important in learner-centred assessment. Assessment in turn is inseparable from discussion of learning and teaching overall.

This innovation can be adapted to many contexts in a changing world, and has the potential to be applied to pedagogy far into the future.

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