**Self-assessment - Engage in Assessment - University of Reading**

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Self-assessment

Self-assessment requires students to reflect on their own work and judge how well they have performed in relation to the assessment criteria. The focus is not necessarily on having students generate their own grades, but rather providing opportunities for them to be able to identify what constitutes a good (or poor!) piece of work. Some degree of student involvement in the development and comprehension of assessment criteria is therefore an important component of self-assessment.

Reflection is the key to self-assessment

Developing reflective skills provides students with the ability to consider their own performance and to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and areas that require improvement. Students can then to use this knowledge to influence their future work, whether on a program of study or in employment, by playing to their strengths and/or directing their efforts in areas they have already recognized as needing further improvement. You could consider self-assessment as a teaching and learning exercise, as much as an assessment method and its inclusion within a course provides your students with the opportunity to develop a core lifelong learning skill.

Self-assessment takes many forms

You could use self-assessment in the form of reflective exercises, such as logs or diaries, or by encouraging your students to assess how well they've met the assessment criteria in more traditional tasks such as essays and presentations. Audits or essay feedback questionnaires that students complete on submitting a piece of coursework are particularly helpful as you can compare your perception of their work with your students' views on how well they have performed. You could use self-assessment in a stand-alone context, or in conjunction with peer assessment.

Making self-assessment a success

In order to self-assess effectively, students must have an understanding of the criteria that they gauge their performance against in order to be able to evaluate what makes a piece of work good or poor. Internalizing these criteria encourages deep rather than surface learning, greater autonomy and helps them to better engage with feedback from you and your colleagues. In order for this to take place the assessment criteria must be transparent and comprehensible to students so that they can effectively judge how well they have met them. Where possible, student involvement in the formation of these criteria is desirable to enhance student's understanding of academic standards and the expectations you have of them.

References

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