Assessing Real World Learning Experiences Validly and Reliably

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Outline

- What is real world learning?
- Objectives of real world learning
- Assessment – Methodology
- Assessment – Validity and Reliability
- Continuum of Real World Assessment Tasks
- Conclusions and Future Thoughts
What is real world learning?

- Tasks that give all students experience in the professional practice of their discipline
- A combination of open-structured learning involving
  - Professional contexts
  - Active learning
  - Student reflection
  - Supportive environment

Objectives of real world learning

- Primary aim is to expose students to learning experiences that replicate or mirror situations encountered in the workforce

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<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
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<td>Application of theory in a controlled environment</td>
<td>Lack of parity/consistency of tasks</td>
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<td>Opportunities for observation &amp; feedback</td>
<td>Between students</td>
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<td>Individualised learning</td>
<td>Assessors – objectivity</td>
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<td>Multiple assessors</td>
<td>Assessors – consistency</td>
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<td>Development of multiple skills</td>
<td>Difficulty in modelling real world assessment</td>
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Assessment - Methodology

- Crucial to define purpose of assessment
  - Summative
  - Formative
    - Criterion-referenced
- Valid, reliable, practical, cost-effective, fair & useful

Assessment – Validity & Reliability

- Validity = does the task achieve its purpose
- Reliability = is the measurement consistent
- Difficulty lies not in the validity but in the reliability
  - Availability of tasks from student-to-student, year-to-year may vary
- Reliability can be improved by:
  - Standardised assessment criteria
  - Detailed assessment rubrics
  - Well constructed marking schemes
Continuum of Real World Assessment Tasks

Knowledge and theory
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Knowledge and process
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Process only

Case study: Psychology
Case study: Engineering
Case study: Bus. Studies

Conclusions & future thoughts

- Real-world learning experience can compliment, extend & enhance student learning
- However, further consideration of the following is needed:
  - Hurdle requirements rather than graded tasks
  - Student's self-assessment
  - Model better represented as a graph than as a continuum
  - Anything else??
“Not only should assessment practice be student-centred and based on outcomes, but the teaching program should be directed at achieving the desired outcomes of student learning”

(Nightingale et al. 1996)