

Self-Assessment and self-evaluation portfolio

This portfolio will go into detail of the importance of self-assessment and self-evaluation when referring to an effective learner. The principles involved will be explored in more detail throughout this portfolio. The entries within this piece of work will show my journey of learning within a higher education setting over the past few years. I will also reflect on the important feedback received through various assignments. Purwanti (2015) defines assessment as a process of gathering data to effectively understand the strengths and possible weaknesses of a student's learning. Assessment in the classroom has a number of different purposes it is used to measure achievement and to also enable learners to become aware of how they learn. A student's experience of Higher education makes assessment one of the most significant influences as noted by Cottrell (2019). Critical thinking is looked at as an important skill in the process of a student's learning. It is best developed through the learner having access to a varied area of knowledge as mentioned by Fahim (2012). The first year in a university setting ensures the development within the student of foundational skills and working towards effective study and becoming independent learners Duchatelet (2019). Reflecting on one's own learning is an important part of becoming an effective learner as Cottrell (2019) states that when reflective learning takes place in higher education a student needs to take responsibility for their own performance and their own development. According to Moon (2008) reflective thinking provides students with a vital view into evaluating and analysing their own learning processes and assists the monitoring of their own development.

What is Self-Assessment

According to McMillan & Hearn (2008) self-assessment means more than simply students grading and assessing themselves. It can be more accurately defined as a process that students undertake when they monitor and evaluate the quality of their own thinking and behaviour when it comes to learning, and to also acknowledge ways of which to improve their own understanding and skills. Self-assessment takes place when students judge their own work in order to improve their own performance as they are then capable of recognising any faults between how they currently perform, and how they wish to perform McMillan & Hearn (2008). Therefore, self-assessment identifies the future learning targets that students can apply to then improve their own achievements. Self-assessment can increase the student's level of motivation and interest, which in turn leads to better academic performance, and will assist in the development of the critical skills needed to analyse their own work. Jain et al (2016) defines that the term self-assessment is used to cover a learner's piece of work by their own judgements, it continues to support a student's learning and is one of the vital skills that is required for students to be equipped with for their professional development and lifelong learning, as this skill will develop the capacity to become assessors of learning. Wride (2017) suggests in his guide to self-assessment that strong models of self-assessment enable students to carry out self-assessment that is based on marking provided with the criteria standards. The lecturer provides the essential feedback using the grading criteria as evident in image below. The criteria knowledge submitted by the student is given a mark for e.g. out of 15 and the feedback received will establish if the criteria has been met, and will be marked accordingly to establish if the learner i.e. myself have met the criteria fully. If the mark is low then upon reflection I will examine feedback and note areas of much needed improvement and evaluate my own performance and improve in the areas that require it. There are three vital components to self-assessment, and these are self-monitoring which is a skill that is required in order for self-assessment to be effective. It involves a focused attention towards the aspect of the student's behaviour or thinking. Fahim (2012) explains that part of what students do when they self-assess is

self-monitoring which is the student having that awareness of their own thinking and progress at the time it occurs. Karime, D. & Lujan, S. (2012) mentions that self-monitoring is students having the ability to reflect on their own learning by encouraging themselves to become autonomous learners rather than relying on their teachers or peers. Self-monitoring is also a vital skill for the students that can use various learning strategies and to regulate their own learning. It is a strategy in its own right for students of all ages Karime, D. & Lujan, S. (2012). Self-monitoring works hand in hand with what is known as self-regulation and Hadwin et, al (2018) defines 'self-regulation as a student adapting his/her own behaviour when required to make a judgement in order to meet a goal. An individual's ability to self-regulate involves the processes of planning, monitoring and evaluating and according to Arslantas & Kurnaz (2017) self-regulation is where learners set their own learning goals and are able to regulate their own behaviours and motivation in order to reach those goals. Wride (2017) also suggests that self-regulation used as a tool towards self-assessment is more than a technique to enhance ones learning, when looking at self-assessment as a critical reflection it is something worth striving for as it is more than the teaching and learning, it is transformative and confronting.

The principles involved in Self-Assessment

For self-assessment to be successful Nicol (2009) devised 12 principles underpinning self-assessment especially in the first year for students in higher education. The principles define the need for teachers/lectures to make clear from the very start of what good performance is, and to deliver high quality feedback that assists learners to be able to self-correct. To encourage time as well as effort on challenging tasks. To provide opportunities for learners to act on feedback and to close the gap between any current and achievable performance. Another principle is to ensure that summative assessment has a positive impact on the students learning, to encourage the interaction and dialogue around the learning (peer and teacher-student) the teacher/lecturer needs to also facilitate the development of self-assessment and reflection in the learning. This will then encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem. Looking through the above principles Nicol (2009) stresses the importance of high-quality feedback and that it needs to be constructive and encouraging towards the student becoming persistent and to become more self-aware. Nicol (2009) also suggests the principle for providing feedback is also essential for the development of an effective learner. By making times for students to engage with feedback will determine how they then use that feedback for future assessments. Therefore, it is vital that students be made aware of how to interpret feedback and then how to use that feedback in practice.

Self-evaluation and Self-regulation and its importance

According to Arslantas (2017) student-centred learning environments within higher education institutions aim to provide student self-efficacy and self-regulation. By analysing the process that students use to facilitate their own learning whether in the classroom or asynchronous will determine how they regulate their own learning skills. Hawe & Dixon (2017) express the importance of the development of a lifelong self-regulated learner being a valued result of higher education. While students are responsible for their own learning, they are expected to take part in activities that provide them with opportunities to show control over their own learning. It was found that students that have goals to reach helped the students know the direction they needed to take. Examples of previous work assisted the students understanding of the need for quality work and an

insight into what was expected. While self-regulation is needed inside the classroom it is also needed when working online, and it has become a common interest around the world in the last decade with the innovations of computer technologies and internet. According to Inan et al (2016) research was carried out of how self-regulation skills impact on a students success and satisfaction in an online learning environment. Online learners have responsibility and in control of their own learning and unlike traditional classrooms the online learning environment requires students to be self-regulated in order to be successful. Inan et al (2016) also identified that characteristics of successful students that are online are the ones that are aware of their responsibilities and successful in managing their time effectively to complete assignments, to seek help if required and able to monitor their own learning progress, this all results in good self-regulation skills. Time management is also another important factor of self-regulation and refers to managing time effectively to complete activities set to a deadline Duchatelet (2019). Self-regulation is another important component of self-evaluation and is referred to as the skills the student possesses when monitoring their own performance and continually evaluates their own progress towards the learning. The findings from Inan (2016) was that students that plan their work was found to be the most important component of self-regulation. Duchatelet (2019) also found that planning is one of the important factors that has an impact on students achievements. Time management was also found to be an important component for student achievement whilst learning online for successful learning to be achieved. Inan (2017) finally finished by explaining that self evaluation is one of the important components of self-regulation that is mostly achieved by successful online learners. Upon reflection of this last year of studying online due to the COVID19 pandemic I agree that planning is very important especially due to assignment deadlines and asynchronous learning. Both are equally important and the learning carried out online requires excellent time management in order for learning to be effective and self-regulation to be effective. The asynchronous learning that is set is always in relation to the relevant module criteria and therefore has to be completed in order to gain the essential knowledge that is required. Evaluative judgement also known as self-evaluation can be viewed as a pedagogical approach to formative assessment practices that take place in the classroom. This occurs when one is able to judge their own work and also the work of others. This is only successful if the knowledge required of developing ones own assessment capability has been achieved.

Engagement with reflection and learning

Cottrell (2019) explains that a strong emphasis is based on a great level of understanding whether in the classroom or throughout the learning objectives, a level of understanding is also required for the specification details of assignments to ensure an effective learner. Boud (2003) states that when learners take responsibility for their own learning and goals they would then engage with the results and be able to judge the outcomes to recognise room for improvement. As it can be seen in image below please see the feedback from an assignment in my first year of higher education. A few errors noted by the lecturer where there is clearly room for Improvement , and as a student these errors need to be addressed and evaluated and reflected upon for future improvements. A meeting was offered by the lecturer between us and then which was arranged. I attended the meeting and the referencing errors were discussed in detail for future learning and improvements.

For improvement to be successful learners are required to be aware of their own learning styles to be able to reflect on areas of improvement and possibly adopt a change in their learning behaviour. Time at a university level the learning is very much based around independent study and for students to be effective in this strategy. Cottrell (2019) emphasises the responsibility for ones own success and to be able to identify ways of improving ones own work and performance. To also make effective use of feedback and to learn from the errors that are present. Cottrell (2019) also mentions in order to improve from one piece of work to another requires reflection to reflect on the learning performance and how to improve in areas that require it. Reflecting on the learning and what one is doing what is working and what can I do better.

Above is another image which is another piece of my work from later on in the first year at university. From the feedback it is clear to see there has been a bit of improvement in the learning outcome from the previous image. Self-evaluation has taken place and has been effective here as the feedback is more positive and detailed of how I can improve my work for the next assignment. The improvement on this piece of work mentions refining and expanding more critically for future improvements. The knowledge and understanding of the subject has been made clear and that the assignment has covered the criteria needed. Cottrell (2019) explains that critical writing can cost more marks if not correctly implemented, and to avoid too much descriptive writing when completing assignments. A balance of both is required to create the basis of a good piece of work.

Peer assessment and its important role for learners

According to Chin (2016) peer assessment is receiving feedback from different sources these could be in the form of tutors, mentors, lecturers, etc. These can greatly enhance the learning process for students. Moon (2008) states that when teachers take an effective use of questioning involving students in discussions on understanding and by making use of different forms of reflection could then engage students in a meaningful critical learning and thinking process. Peers are also another source of feedback and when provided by peers it can boast a number of educational benefits. Boud (2003) mentions that peer assessment can be a vital part of an important strategy in the range of avenues to learning and teaching. Moon (2008) looks at peer assessment as being a process that allows learners to critically reflect upon the learning of their peers, and will then in turn increase the students own understanding, and will enable the student to reflect on their own understanding and achievement. Boud (2003) also mentions that self and peer assessment are being used more frequently in higher education, which will benefit students to then become more effective learners. Peer assessment can take place inside the classroom it can include peer discussion when a collaborative discussion takes place between lecturer and peers. Upon reflection of peer assessment there were many occasions of class discussions/debate to hear other opinions on certain topics /issues. Chin (2016) mentions that students respond in a positive manner when the inclusion of peer support is present in an academic module. Upon reflection of such an example I refer to the image below which is a group presentation. The collaboration of peer learning and interaction was essential for this presentation to be successful. Collaboration of a group presentation was evident in the group channel I shared with my peers. The opinions of myself and two other members of the group were vital in the learning strategy of the assessment. According to Hawe & Dixon (2017) when considering the regulation of learning there is more to it than 'self' and in order for the development of self-regulated learning to be successful the 'others' is vital. This is achieved through interaction with others and this will assist the learner not only to be able to perform a task, but to also learn how to regulate their own actions. Collaboration work with others successfully will achieve this outcome. Due to the Covid19 pandemic peer assessment through part of year two and currently in year three has taken a different form as we are studying remotely from home and lessons are carried out online through a microsoft teams channel. Discussions between lecturers and peers are very different online than being in a classroom. We have used a strategy called breakout rooms which allows students to continue to work in groups and collaborate together over various discussions around various topics. The lecturer will then allow us to discuss our findings while online in the main teams channel. This peer interaction has been vital for the continuation of learning to be successful. Throughout the modules we have access to the team channels to continue any discussions with peers whilst not online.

According to Chin (2016) peer assessment can be both formative and summative and students can view it as an arrangement for them to consider and to specify to themselves the level, value or the quality of their own work and that of their peers.

The importance of formative assessment in becoming an effective learner

Formative assessment can also be known as assessment for learning and it can be recognised as a strategy that facilitates learning in the classroom not just at primary or secondary level but also in higher education settings. Durga & Kumar (2020) explains that formative assessment is a means for

teachers to assess what the learner has understood from the learning objectives and can find any gap in the learning that needs to be looked at in order for the learners knowledge understanding and skills to improve to close the gap. This can be achieved through observation in the classroom and discussions. Durga & Kumar (2020) mentions that formative assessment is a tool that monitors students progress without the use of grades, and by using the information gained the teacher can adapt the teaching and the learning in order meet the needs of the students during a task or activity. Formative assessment can significantly improve the way students learn by them gaining a better understanding through the process. As mentioned by Lambert (2012) tools for formative assessment is a guide for teachers/lecturers to use to gain a better understanding of how the students are learning and achieving and to adapt the teaching if required. Upon reflection of the tools mentioned there are quite a few that have been used that I have witnessed in the classroom while on my learning journey. One of these is known as a quiz which could be questions in class in my case this has taken place and also Kahoot challenges which are used via an app called kahoot where the learners sign in with a class code and answer multiple choice questions based on a subject or topic area previously learned. This gives the lecturer a greater understanding of how well students have understood what they have learned and areas which may need improvement on both parts. Another tool that has been used is Think-write-pair-share where students are required to think individually and then write what they have thought of, pair up with someone and discuss the findings and then share with the class. This kind of formative assessment happened in most lessons. Oral questioning is a very common tool also used in my lectures on almost every topic, the lecturer gains an insight into what we as students think what we already know about the topic what we want to know and for ourselves to listen to others to gain a greater understanding to become effective learners. Therefore as mentioned by McManus (2008) formative assessment is a process which is used by students and teachers during lessons that provides essential feedback that will adjust the teaching and learning going forward, that will then improve the students achievements and learning and the teachers teaching. Dolin et al (2018) expresses the importance of formative assessment including the feedback that the student receives from the lecturer as it should give students the relevant information they need to improve their work and take their learning forward. This is an essential aim of using assessment to assist learning. Dolin et al (2018) explains that students should be involved in the formative process and this is achieved by the learning criteria being broken down and explained along with the success criteria related to to the learning criteria for e.g. please see image below for the criteria of a past module. By looking at the column on the right the knowledge and understanding skills have a criteria mark out of 30 and I achieved a mark of 14 which is lower than expected, and even though the feedback shows I have demonstrated a reasonable range of knowledge there is clearly room for improvement to improve my learning. The need to expand my knowledge of the subject area in order to demonstrate a greater level of understanding. The other mark of criteria for cognitive and intellectual skills is also lower than expected and the feedback explains that my range of facts and figures have not been explained in enough detail to outline my reasoning for looking at these in the first place making my work confusing to understand. Again I need to expand on my knowledge and critically evaluate the relevant information that I am using and interpret it correctly in my work. This following criteria is what was expected from myself for a previous module, it was a group presentation so the criteria mentions for Practical application skills that I would be required to work in a group and be a team player. The evidence required of working as part of a team should be evident, and going by the mark of 13 out of 15 I achieved this outcome. Due to this presentation being completed as group but online due to the pandemic there was little opportunity to engage with an audience but there were relevant diagrams and images throughout my part of the presentation to engage the lecturer in my knowledge and learning of the subject. According to Myers (2008) visual images that are presented effectively are a compelling invitation to

become invested in the learning being presented. Delivering a effective group presentation was critical for peer assessment to be successful.

The importance of summative assessment in becoming an effective learner.

Summative assessment and formative assessment are known as important factors of assessment for learning and assessment of learning they are an approach that is used within education and is a continuing process to teaching and learning. According to Durga & Kumar (2020) summative assessment is used to measure what students have learned. It takes place after a piece of work has been completed giving feedback of the learning and teaching process. Therefore summative reveals the end results at the completion of the learning process which evaluates the students learning against a standard criteria and grading system Shieh (2017). As also mentioned by Wride (2017) summative assessment plays a vital role in the evaluation of whether students are capable of completing a degree course successfully and to go on to graduate. Furthermore Shieh (2017) states that if summative assessment methods are used along with formative it will provide students with a vital perspective of their work as it has emerged over time, which indicates that if formative and summative assessment are integrated together it will maximise the final outcomes for students learning.

Conclusion

To conclude this portfolio of my reflection through my higher education journey through using self-assessment and self-evaluation, it can be viewed by research that these approaches are very important to the continuous development of a learner. Students develop throughout their higher education journey, and research shows that self-assessment takes place when a student is given a set of guidance or criteria to meet in order to complete an assignment. Self assessment if implemented correctly allows the student to gain skills for monitoring, planning and independence. Another area that students develop in is self-evaluation and when this is carried out correctly the student can improve within their standard of work in areas that may require it. Self-assessment and self-evaluation as a whole whilst I reflect on my learning journey throughout my higher education, I can see the importance of engaging with self-assessing and self-evaluation to develop myself as an effective learner. Going back into education after such a long time has been a steep learning curve for me especially to work independently and have the confidence in myself to be able to use the self-assessment and self-evaluation effectively to create my best work. Some areas of my development still need improvement and is an ongoing goal to become the best effective learner I can be. Some modules have resulted in better outcomes than others, but I look at all the feedback constructively and going by small errors made in the first year of my degree I like to believe that I have improved in those areas. Self-evaluation for me still needs a little work as I am still making errors of punctuation and spelling on occasions so this is an area that I need to focus on going forward in order to improve the quality of my work. Proof reading has been mentioned throughout a few of my feedback sections so upon reflection of this I need to take more time to self-assess my work. My critical writing has been looked upon as an area that needs improvement and expansion on the knowledge gained to enable me to progress with my learning and achieving better outcomes. Feedback received has always left me disappointed not in the feedback but in myself as I always feel I could have done better or how could I make such errors etc. I feel a sense of achievement after each assessment has been completed, but then left deflated at times when I view the overall mark.

Upon doing this assignment I have realised the feedback is much more important as it gives me goals to aim for to make my next piece of work better and not to look at feedback negatively. The areas of improvement have always been explained in a detailed manner and support from lecturers have always been offered to improve my outcomes. I realise the importance of improving my performance must come from myself. As a higher education student independent learning is a massive part of that journey. Therefore the skill to self-assess and self-evaluate my own work and performance is essential to my growth. Participating in modules whether face to face or online has been paramount to my understanding of the self-assess and self-evaluation principles that are required. Without attending the modules and learning and reflecting I would not be able to successfully implement the important skills that are required to become an effective learner. Through implementing the self-assessment and self-evaluation tools it can benefit myself as a whole towards my learning as a mature student. I have developed as a learner and will look to improve any areas using my self-assessment and self-evaluation tools to improve my future outcomes until I reach my goal of becoming an Educational professional.

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