

Enhancing student learning via assessment

Research tells us very forcefully about the importance of assessment in higher education. It shapes the experience of students and influences their behaviour more than anything else. Therefore we should look to our assessment methods if we want to improve student achievement and engagement. Higher education assessment practice has proved surprisingly difficult to change, made all the more difficult by increasing class sizes. How can we use assessment to engage students and promote learning without creating an undue workload for staff? What approaches can be used to involve students in their own assessment, while at the same time directly supporting their learning? How can assessment work effectively for diverse students and 21st century learning outcomes? This workshop presentation will draw on current research to consider these challenges. It will particularly focus on lecturer-friendly examples of integrating teaching, learning and assessment. It will provide an opportunity to discuss the challenges of, and share pragmatic ways, of providing feedback on progress which is essential for student learning and engagement.

Professor Sue Bloxham

Sue Bloxham is Emeritus Professor of Academic Practice at the University of Cumbria and an educational consultant. She taught in higher education for many years, developing a particular interest in assessment. Sue has published widely in the field including the best-selling [*Developing Effective Assessment in Higher Education*](#) (Open University Press) with her Cumbria Colleague, Pete Boyd, and was awarded a UK National Teaching Fellowship in 2007. Sue's interest in assessment focuses particularly on how we manage our higher education assignments and examinations to support the achievement of students from under-represented groups. She has also researched and published on matters such as feedback, course design and marking. In recent years, her interest in what students need to do to succeed in university assessment has inspired research into how tutors recognise quality in their marking and the use of standards by academics. This led to her appointment as principal investigator for a recent UK [review of external examining arrangements](#) for HEFCE. She was also a co-author of the Higher Education Academy's [A Marked Improvement guide to transforming assessment in the University sector](#). Sue has been chair of the international Assessment in Higher Education Conference since 2008. She is regularly invited to speak on the topic of assessment at Universities and conferences in the UK and abroad.