



## Principle 2:

# Carefully consider appropriate timing, ordering and pacing of assessed work and feedback

### What the principle means

The ways in which you implement your assessment strategy within a course or module can have a profound effect on how well your students navigate the process and ultimately to what extent they are successful.



### Questions to consider with your course team and students

- ✓ Have you got the timing and sequencing of assignments right? For example, are you offering low stakes assessed activities early in a programme to support incremental preparedness for high stakes assessment tasks later on?
- ✓ Are your formative and summative assessed activities spread throughout the module or are they all bunched at the end?
- ✓ Are you asking your students to hand in work to the same deadline as those of colleagues on parallel modules, giving your students horrible clashes?
- ✓ Are you in a position to know this?
- ✓ Are the assessment activities timed to maximise the potential for learning from them (for example, so students can learn from feedback on one aspect before moving on to the next)?
- ✓ Where you have built in assessment activities that are new to your context or student cohort, have you built in sufficient time for briefings, risk-free rehearsals and Question and Answer sessions with both your fellow assessors and the students?
- ✓ Do you have a programme-wide view of where and how all the assessment in the different modules occurs, so it comes across as a coherent approach to students? (Whitfield and Hartley, 2019).

### Setting goals for assessment and feedback enhancement

Having reviewed and discussed Principle 2, as a team can you identify areas that you know to be priorities for enhancing your programme assessment and feedback strategy in the coming three years? All areas are important, but selecting too many can make genuine actionable proposals unachievable which is demoralising. Concentrate on what is feasible.



Once you have agreed on the priorities, you may wish to use the table overleaf to record your plans for enhancement under Principle 2.



## Principle 2 worksheet - Carefully consider appropriate timing, ordering and pacing of assessed work and feedback

Principle focus	Specific actions you will take:	Responsible leader:	Help/resources needed to make this happen:	Milestones (timescale for implementation):	Performance indicators:
e.g. Programme view of assessment	e.g. Capture the range of assessments that students are completing over the programme including information on timing and assessment type	e.g. Dr Jolanta O'Neill	e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Module outlines</li> <li>• Programme documentation</li> <li>• Support of Exams Office colleagues</li> <li>• Time to work as a programme team</li> <li>• Administrative support</li> </ul>	e.g. One academic year:	e.g. Document describing assessment across the programme



## About this resource

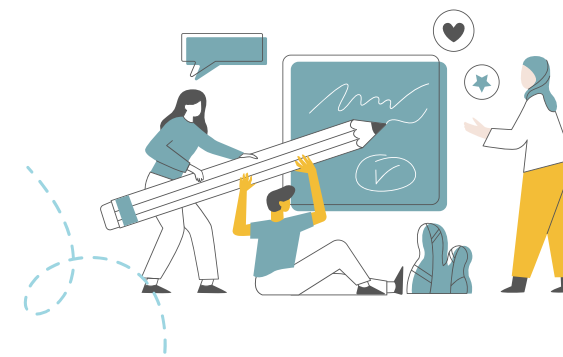
This resource is drawn from the *Principles-based Toolkit for Effective Assessment Design* (Brown and Sambell). This resource focuses on 'Principle 2 – Carefully consider appropriate timing, ordering and pacing of assessed work and feedback'. The resource can be used by teams who wish to review how this principle is enacted in their work, and who wish to plan to enhance their practice regarding this principle. The resource can be used as a stand-alone thinking and planning tool for teams, as well as being considered in the context of the toolkit as a whole.

As part of the Maynooth University 'Assess for Success' project, Professor Sally Brown and Professor Kay Sambell designed a toolkit for effective assessment design. This toolkit has been designed to provide course teams at Maynooth University with guidance on periodical review of their assessment and feedback practices, in support of student success. The toolkit involves twelve principles which were proposed by Brown and Sambell, and shaped and modified by the Maynooth University '[Assess for Success](#)' Advisory Group. The toolkit is available at in the Maynooth University [Assess for Success Hub](#).

The principles and the toolkit taken as a whole set a substantial agenda for action, but Brown and Sambell stress that the toolkit can primarily help local teams to set short- and longer-term prioritised targets to enhance assessment by focusing on activities that would help to ensure that assessment tasks, assignments and feedback could fully contribute to student engagement and positive outcomes.

## References:

Whitfield, R. and Hartley, P. (2019) 'Assessment Strategy: Enhancement of Student Learning Through a Programme Focus' in Diver A. (ed) *Employability via Higher Education: Sustainability as Scholarship*. Springer, pp. 237-253.



### How to cite this resource:

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