

# Assessment Case Study

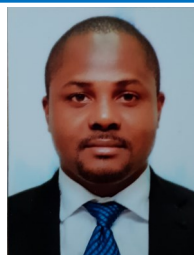
## *Joining the dots: Enhancing assessment and feedback in a business module*

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**Course:** BSc International Business Management

**Module:** 3000SSL: International Business Strategy (3000SSL)

**Level:** Undergraduate (Level 6)



### AN EXAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT THAT INVOLVES...

- Authenticity
- Inclusivity
- Feedforward
- Ongoing feedback
- Promoting assessment literacy

### AIMS

In the assessment for this module, the lecturer saw potential for improvement on numerous levels. Although the two written pieces of coursework (CW) (CW1 worth 30% and CW2 worth 70%) were aligned with the module learning outcomes, they only related to a **few of the many topics** explored during the module.

CW1 and CW2 each focused on different topics, which meant that there was little scope for students to apply the feedback received on the earlier submission to the later piece of work. This raised questions about the **validity and reliability** of the assessment for the module and whether the feedback could effectively support students as they moved forward.

In addition, CW2 required students to focus on an example of a business from one of two specified countries (Canada or Argentina). The lecturer realised that this may (dis)advantage particular students, as well as potentially limiting **the authenticity** of the assessment.

### ACTIONS

A redesign of the two pieces of coursework was undertaken. In the new version of CW2 student would be able to focus on a FTSE 500 business **from any country**, which they were free to choose. This would make the assessment more authentic and inclusive, as well as reducing the risk of plagiarism. The lecturer also recognised that providing students with a **degree of choice** can promote student engagement and a sense of ownership in relation to the assessment.

CW1 and CW2 were revised so that they were more constructively aligned with one another. Whilst CW1 remained a summative assessment, it was redesigned so that students would get **“practice” in the skills** required to succeed in the later (and more heavily weighted) CW2.

The lecturer also paid attention to the **opportunities for feedback** which were available to students. Each student was given personalised feedback following CW1 via email, and then a 1:1 video call after CW1. This helped to promote “feedforward” feedback, such that students could draw on their learning from CW1 and apply it to CW2. This resulted in

more meaningful uptake of the feedback, as well as demonstrating a **dialogic approach** to feedback practice.

### IMPACT

Giving students flexibility on the country in question made the assessment **more authentic and inclusive**, as well as reducing the risk of plagiarism. The lecturer also recognised that providing students with a degree of choice can promote student engagement and a **sense of ownership** in relation to the assessment.

By demystifying the assessment marking as students undertook CW1, **students’ assessment literacy** was developed at an earlier stage in the module. This also made for an inclusive approach, as it helps to maximise students’ opportunities to demonstrate the learning outcomes.

The feedback methods employed helped to promote **“feedforward” feedback**, such that students could draw on their learning from CW1 and apply it to CW2. This resulted in more meaningful uptake of the feedback as well as demonstrating a dialogic approach to feedback practice.



Image: Jamie Street, unsplash.com

### SCALABILITY

This practice is sustainable and **transferrable to other modules**, allowing for deeper learning and mitigating plagiarism. Whilst those teaching on the module might have to spend more time engaging with the students, this can potentially be done during some of the seminar classes.

### MESSAGE TO PEERS

- **Design assessments with students in mind.** Where possible, Module Leaders should take ownership of the assessment for their own modules.
- Ensure assessments enable students to apply a range of theories, concepts and frameworks, and are **well aligned** with lectures/seminars.
- Give students opportunities to **review assessment marking criteria** and allow them mark sample CWs. This enables them to engage with the mindset of the lecturer and gives them insights into the “secrets” to producing a good CW.