

Assessment Case Study

Keeping it real: Enhancing authenticity and engagement in a policing module

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Course: BA/HND Policing

Module: 209POL: Domestic Abuse

Student Level: Undergraduate (Level 5)



AN EXAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT THAT INVOLVES...

- Authenticity
- Reducing plagiarism
- Promoting assessment literacy

AIMS

The tutor set out to review and **enhance assessment and feedback practices** in this module, which typically attracts a varied cohort of students who usually aspire to a career in policing. Aspects such as assessment design, and feedback practices were considered, with a view to enhancing authenticity, assessment literacy, and student engagement.

ACTIONS

The assessment was redesigned to be **more realistic**. Previously, students were required to respond to a scenario (via a presentation: 40% of the final grade), and then follow up with a number of written elements (60% of the final grade). Amongst these elements was an “officer statement” relating to the interview of the victim. As part of the redesign, this was **removed as it was not authentic** to the role of a police officer. Instead, students are asked to interview the victim, who is played by a member of the course team.

On the basis of the interview, they must complete a DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour-based violence) risk identification form. This type of form is **used by serving police officers** to identify the level of risk posed to a victim, which then informs their response in terms of safeguarding the victim moving forward.

Proposed further changes

It is hoped that in the future, students will be able to produce a **reflective piece**, which can be submitted in various formats (e.g. podcast, video). The personal nature of the reflection means that the risk of plagiarism is minimised, whilst the flexibility in terms of format makes the assessment more inclusive. The review has also prompted the tutor to consider how **formative tasks** could be used to support the development of students’ assessment literacy. For example, peer assessment sessions (e.g. via virtual break-out room) will be introduced in order to engage students more actively with the module

assessment criteria. The tutor plans to actively gather **feedback from students** about the assessment (e.g. via questionnaires) to promote ongoing dialogue in this area.

IMPACT

Having proposed these more **practical forms** of assessment, the tutor considered whether similar innovations could be made at other levels of the course. Taking a course-based approach to the assessment would enable a scaffolded approach to learning across the different levels of study. It is hoped that the course team will be able to implement this in the future.

Also as a result of this redesign, the course team are considering the **potential for virtual tools** and games to be used, e.g. to replicate crime scenes or facilitate role plays. This has led to the use of such tools being considered for use in other Policing modules. Discussions about this, too, are ongoing, but there is clear scope for virtual environments to be incorporated into the course’s teaching and assessment practices, especially in the context of remote delivery.

SCALABILITY

As indicated in the previous section, the proposals outlined for this module have already sparked discussions across the **course as a whole**. Colleagues working in other subject areas could also consider ways of revamping their assessment practices to increase authenticity and student engagement by using similar interventions.

FEEDBACK

Student feedback is not available currently, as the module is yet to run with the redesigned assessment and feedback processes. However, colleagues who have reviewed the proposed changes have been impressed by their level of **innovation and potential for impact**.

MESSAGE TO PEERS

- Consider whether the assessment is using **real life skills** that replicate those required by the students’ future employers. It’s possible to use your industry experience to make an assessment more authentic.
- **Obtaining feedback** is also key– in this case, the tutor learnt from the students that they enjoyed the practical element of the assignment because they felt that it would be relevant to the role of a police officer.

EXTRACT FROM ASSESSMENT BRIEF: see next page.

EXTRACT FROM ASSESSMENT BRIEF

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Previous brief

You are required to participate in the follow up investigation of the scenario you faced in Assignment One. You will be given information about what you find at the scene on entering the property. Carry out the following tasks as part of the overall investigation:

1. You will be required to write your statement from your observations of the victim and the crime scene. (25%)
2. Using the case study information and the completed DASH form supplied to you, submit your investigation plan detailing your next actions and your rationale. (50%)
3. Based upon your knowledge of DV and the relevant legislation and procedures, identify relevant factors regarding the incident and the victim. (25%)



Image: @kingschurchinternational, unsplash.com

Current brief- with changes made

You are required to participate in the follow up investigation of the scenario you faced in Assignment One and carry out the following tasks as part of the overall investigation:

1. As part of the overall investigation you will interview the victim in order to complete a DASH form (Interview process 25% / Completed DASH Form 10%)
2. Submit your investigation plan detailing your next actions and your rationale: 2500 words (40%)
3. Based upon your knowledge of Domestic Violence and the relevant legislation and procedures, identify relevant factors regarding the incident and the victim. (25%)