

USING ASSESSMENT TO DEVELOP GOOD PRACTICE FOR TEACHERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

La evaluación como instrumento de buenas prácticas (para los profesores) en Educación Superior

A avaliação como instrumento de boas práticas (para os professores) no Ensino Superior

Rachel A. Bovill

The University of Sheffield, UK. +44 1142 220 428. Email: r.a.bovill@sheffield.ac.uk

Abstract

The Post-Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching is offered to probationary academics on employment at the University of Sheffield. Various forms of assessment are used at different stages to support the programme aims. This workshop will explore the ways in which trans-disciplinary approaches to formative assessment can be used to develop good teaching practice.

Keywords: *teacher training; formative assessment, Higher Education*

Resumen

La University of Sheffield oferta un Post-Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching [Certificado de Postgrado en Enseñanza y Aprendizaje] a los profesores en periodo de prueba. Para apoyar las metas del programa se utilizan varios tipos de evaluación en diferentes fases del mismo. Este taller explorará las formas en que puede utilizarse una aproximación transdisciplinar a la evaluación formativa para desarrollar una buena práctica docente.

Palabras clave: *formación del profesorado; evaluación formativa; Educación Universitaria*

Resumo

A University of Sheffield oferece um Post-Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching [Certificado de Pós-Graduação em Ensino e Aprendizagem] aos acadêmicos em estágio probatório. Várias formas de avaliação são utilizados em diferentes estádios do programa para apoiar seus objetivos. Este workshop irá explorar as maneiras pelas

Using assessment to develop good practice for teachers in Higher Education

quais abordagens transdisciplinares à avaliação formativa podem ser usados para desenvolver boas práticas de ensino.

Palavras-chave: *formação de professores; avaliação formativa; educação universitária*

Using assessment to develop good practice for teachers in Higher Education

Educators in English universities have often not always first and foremost chosen a teaching career. The most prestigious universities are ‘research-intensive’ and national ranking systems have traditionally been based on research excellence. Additionally, and particularly in the past, many new academics were unsupported as they took their first steps in teaching students, and throughout their careers. In the early 2000s the Dearing report introduced the idea that university educators should hold a teaching qualification, and these have been evolving in the sector ever since, with attendant teams of ‘education developers’ whose role is to enhance the learning and teaching offer across the institution.

This workshop will present a brief overview of the state and status of learning and teaching in the English HE sector. It will then discuss the origins and development of the ‘mandatory’ teaching qualification (Post Graduate Certificate in Education or Post-graduate Certificate in Academic Practice) for HE educators that most probationary academics are required to undertake.

The particulars of the current PGCert at the University of Sheffield will then be discussed with a focus on the assessment tasks that participants are asked to complete. The whole programme is a model of constructive alignment (Biggs & Tang 2011) and this model is at the heart of our teaching and assessment practices. Participants, who are themselves teachers, are encouraged to consider the model and to analyse their own practice and the practice of their wider teams and departments in relation to it. If we accept that assessment processes drive the learning experience and directly influence the amount and direction of learning any student undertakes, assessment is brought sharply into focus. The PGCert at Sheffield has carefully written programme assessment criteria that are designed to encourage reflection and self-awareness without the need for ‘hard-core’ reflective writing, and rely on participants supplying examples of and from their own practice to be able to pass the course. A portfolio is used as a combined summative

and formative collection of evidence in which informal learning is ‘made deliberate’ and becomes part of the assessment process (Ford & Russell, 2017). This leads to a one-to-one viva, a developmental discussion with the module tutor in which participants provide further detail about their own practice in order to meet the enhanced ‘Module pass’ assessment criteria.

The workshop will examine the role that some of these assessment tasks take in developing ‘good practice’ among new educators at the University of Sheffield. Copies of the programme’s ‘assessment guide’ and portfolios will be available for analysis and discussion during the workshop. The following questions, among others, will be considered:

- Is it always useful to consider formative and summative assessment as ‘different’ from each other?
- How does it help/hinder to assess teachers?
- What, is lost/gained when teachers do not complete a teaching qualification?
- Is it possible to teach someone how to teach?

The workshop will end with a view to the changing landscape in English HE considering external factors such as the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework and the implications of the Apprenticeship levy for teaching and learning in the sector.

References

- Bain, K., (2004). *What the Best College Teachers Do*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Biggs, J.B., & Tang, C. (2011). *Teaching for Quality Learning at University: what the student does* (4th edition). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Brookfield, S. (2006). *The Skilful Teacher on Technique, Trust and Responsiveness in the Classroom* (2nd edition). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ford, K., & Russell, N. (2017). Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching: Making the Informal Count. In S. Rutherford (Ed.), *Informal Learning:*

Perspectives, Challenges and Opportunities. (In press) New York, NY: Nova Publishers.

Land, R. (2004). *Educational Development: Discourse, Identity and Practice*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.