

Seeking Educational Excellence: Developing Self Assessment for Analytical Essays

Abstract

The aim of the project was to design, pilot and evaluate self referenced assessment tools, which will minimise the opportunity for the inappropriate use of materials and foster the development of reflective learners who understand and respect the process of knowledge creation. I was seeking educational excellence through the development of an understanding for the process of creating knowledge. The first objective was to develop innovative and authentic tasks, which will be individualised for each student. The second was to develop self-assessment tools in order for students to reflect on their learning and output. I found that students who already had very good analytical skills evaluated their strengths and weaknesses. Students who had poor analytical skills tended to over-value the strengths in their work, but often recognised the weaknesses in their work. Within the context of this research, while all of the students participating in the study were third years, some had not written a theoretical or analytical essay since first year. In future, students would need a trial run in which learning is reinforced with evaluation and feedback. I concluded that self assessment is likely to work with students at third year level and later who have similar analytical, theoretical and critical thinking background. In this paper I will briefly discuss the findings of the main writers/researchers on student self assessment, the method employed in this research and the findings from my research.

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