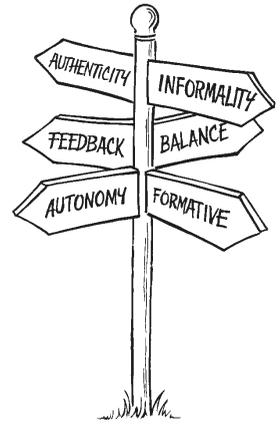


LEARNING THROUGH PEER ASSESSMENT

The league table approach



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“How might students engage with peer assessment to develop their own learning? How might we do this in a way that encourages a subject based community across year groups?”

Background

I teach on a three year undergraduate degree programme where the students study the theory and practice of Advice Guidance and Counselling. I wanted to develop an activity that involved students in setting performance criteria, using the criteria to assess another year group's work, and to feed back comments to the group being assessed. The challenge was to create a way of doing this so the exercise was not a "dry" piece of work, but engaged learners, hence the league table approach. I used this strategy in the assessment of posters, but it could work for any formatively assessed piece of work.

What I did

Students were given the task of doing some research into mentorship, and based on their own experience of mentoring, to design a poster or "rich picture" to the specification as set by the other year group. Second year students set the criteria for third years. Third year students devised criteria for second year students. After the posters were completed an assessment session was held, with the posters pinned up on the wall. Students working together in small groups were given the first round of marking sheets. The marking sheets listed the criteria they had devised with the numbers of **two** posters (e.g. Poster 1 v Poster 2). Students in small groups had to evaluate the two posters against the criteria, and decide which, if either of the two was the 'winner', writing down reasons for the choice. The winner of the pairing received two points, loser 0 points; if there was a tie then one point each.

Then the second round of assessment was held, with each small group comparing a different combination of two posters. In the same way every poster was compared to every other (i.e. poster 1 v poster 3, poster 2 v poster 3 etc). An individual student group might be involved in a total of up to 4 assessment decisions. The assessment was done in "rounds" with students feedback the scores and me keeping a running total of the scores on the white board at the front of the class after each round of assessment.

Keep in mind

- Preparation: each poster needs to be numbered and the marking sheets need to include every combination of two posters. In my session I arranged that each combination of two posters were assessed twice.
- Need to encourage a constructive feedback model, with students writing supportive comments for good points based upon the criteria set.
- Room layout needs to be big enough to allow students to move around comparing the different pieces of work.