



# LEARNING AND TEACHING CONFERENCE

2021



# Self-reflection as an assessment: have we reflected on why we are doing it?

Alistair Jones and Ros Lishman  
Dept of Politics, People and Place

Contact details: [anjones@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:anjones@dmu.ac.uk)  
[rlishman@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:rlishman@dmu.ac.uk)

# Opening Exercise

- While we wait for colleagues to attend this workshop, please reflect upon the following:
  - What are your thoughts on the conference today?
- Pause and reflect for a minute or two. Then, if you would like to share, please put something in the chat or raise your hand to speak

# What did you focus upon?

- (Anonymised) Capture of reflection
  - Too many things on in the day
  - Self-reflection on individual practices
  - Missed the ‘hubub of people’

# What did you focus upon?

- The panels you have attended (or missed)?
- Your own paper/workshop?
- Your participation in any panel/workshop?
- A particular paper/presentation that has stuck in your mind?
- A practical takeaway?
- How the session facilitator made you feel?
- A generic overview of the conference?

# Overview

- The aim of this workshop is to focus upon self-reflection as a form of assessment



# Overview

- We could work through the literature and give a presentation
- Instead we have made this an interactive workshop



# Plan



- We have two separate scenarios on student self-reflection, based on actual assignments
- How would you assess these reflections?



# Comment on the scenarios

- We cannot present the information about the two scenarios as there is a chance students could be identified
- Here is some brief generic feedback:

# Feedback

- The scenarios asked around how you distinguish between perceived self-reflections, especially if there are discrepancies
- How do staff assess these discrepancies in their marking of such work?
- If problems have been raised by students, to what extent should this information be taken on board in the marking processes?

# Scenario 1 module

## Learning objectives

1. Develop critical skills and perspectives in politics and public administration through various approaches of learning.
2. Develop intellectual ability and management skills by integrating and synthesizing the knowledge and skills acquired from other parts of the course.
3. Demonstrate group work and teamwork skills through extended and structured exercises.
4. Develop excellent communication skills.
5. Reflect critically on their personal employability.

## Assessment criteria

1. Local politics in action (20%): engagement with the concept of politics in action and the application of the UN SDGs at a local level.
2. Skills development (50%): identification and reflection of the graduate level skills you have developed during the project and critical reflection of your skills for future employability.
3. Communication (20%): ability to produce a submission which presents a reflective piece of work appropriate to the self-selected assessment format.
4. Academic skills (10%): ability to locate and evaluate relevant sources, adhere to the principles of good academic practice, through appropriate referencing, attribution of images, checking for errors.

# Scenario 2 module

## Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of European integration.
2. Recognise the role of the various EU institutions and the member states in shaping the course of European integration.
3. Explain the theories relevant to the study of the EU.
4. Apply their resulting analytical expertise to write and comment with authority on the subject of European integration.
5. Develop skills in finding, using and evaluating a variety of information sources.
6. Enhance skills in written and oral communication, problem solving and collaborative working

## Information on Simulation

- The simulation is designed to increase student abilities on group work, as well as make the policy issues more real in decision-making terms.
- Students will participate in an extended negotiating activity over 1 day that will provide them with an ability to deepen their understanding of group work dynamics, the negotiating context of the EU and working in a team environment in a time-constrained environment.

# Feedback/Comments from Workshop Participants

- Reflection is always going to be a perception
- To what extent should emotions be included in the self-reflection by the students?
- An understanding of 'self'
- Subjectivity
- Need to be clear about the aims of the assignment and what is being assessed
- Reflection is all to do with the angle of the mirror
- Links to employability
- Is it possible to fail a self-reflection assessment?

# Our concluding reflections for students

- Pedagogy and assessment criteria matter!
- Students need to be aware of, and to be able to use, the tools of self-reflection e.g. SWOT analysis, mind-mapping, a journal, etc.
- Clarity upon **what** students should be reflecting and **why** they are undertaking the task e.g. developing employability skills, such as for interviews. POD: What sets you apart from the rest?
- Students will need to be reflective practitioners in the workplace. Like us, for example, they will undertake appraisals. It is a norm in the workplace and reflective assignments will help to develop such a skill. Lesson-learning is critical to performance enhancement.

# Our concluding reflections for staff

- Evaluating self-assessment is not necessarily as easy as first envisaged. Simple things such as use of language may differ compared to more conventional forms of assessment e.g. use of the word 'I'.
- To what extent do you – or should you – check the veracity of student submissions? (note, as well, the anonymity factor)
- It can be highly subjective **and** emotional!