Assessment & Feedback Cases

Learning & Teaching Practice Exchange

2014

Community Learning Project

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Title: Community Learning Project

Lecturer: Catherine Gorman

Programme and year on which assessment was offered

BSc Tourism Marketing, Years 1-2
BSc Tourism Management, Years 1-2

Description

Primarily this assessment involves a poster, a reflective report before they start and at the end where they address specific questions, and a final short report. These are primarily first years and the objective is to bring them into the community and for them to think about tourism in this context. Students are encouraged to look at a community's needs and wants and depending on the particular project they develop ideas of how to increase tourism in these particular areas. Catherine Bates from Community Learning is very helpful in identifying appropriate communities. It is very important that there is feedback to the community at the end of the project. Linking in with the community can also have a positive side effect as people from these communities become more aware of what programmes we offer. The reflection does not get a mark but if it is not done the project won't be marked so it is a required element.

Why did you use this Assessment?

- To provide an interesting assessment for students and to bring them into the community
- To encourage students to be reflective
- Helps with transition from secondary to third level

Why did you change to this form of assessment?

Used to visit places and write projects on this but this one now results in more active learning for students and develops closer links to the community and students feedback their findings and it develops a social consciousness among students.

How do you give feedback to students?

Written feedback on the posters using a template. Students also mark each others posters with a chocolate prize and often the one the students pick is the same as the one that gets the highest mark from the lecturer.

What have you found are the advantages of using this form of assessment?

- Gets students to think differently/innovatively/outside the box
- It enthuses students

- You get to know students better
- It is interesting for lecturer
- Students feel as if they are giving something back

What have you found are the dis-advantages of using this form of assessment?

- Can be difficult for lecturer as you can be unsure what amount of work students are doing and also how they interact with the community
- Lecturer is guiding process but you are unsure what will be produced and feel you have made commitments to the community. The key is that the community is clear on what is being offered.
- Lot more work for lecturer

If another lecturer was using this assessment method would you have any tips for them?

- It needs to be modified depending on the student group – for example some years projects may not be so good so may not profile them as much whereas a few years ago there was an event organised to feedback the results to the community.
- It is better with smaller groups
- Lot of extra work, planning, contact, e-mails, more meeting with students
- Don't be over ambitious – maybe do it with 3rd or 4th years and then it would be less time consuming than doing it with first years

Do you have any feedback from students about this assessment?

Have collected a large number of feedback forms and they like it the only issue can be that it has a heavy workload.