

Case Study Title: Innovating an authentic assessment for TNE students

Your Name: Dr Azwa Shamsuddin

Institution: Edinburgh Napier University

Subject area: Nursing

Programme/Course: BSc Nursing (Top Up) Singapore

Module/Unit: Law and Ethics in Nursing Practice

SCQF Level: 9

Assessment Name: Online group discussion

Contact email/LinkedIn profile: a.shamsuddin@napier.ac.uk

1. How would you summarise your practice case study?

The case study was around development of an authentic assessment for transnational education students based in Singapore. The original assessment for this module was a 3500-word written portfolio of an ethical dilemma students faced in practice and using ethical/legal/professional frameworks to resolve the dilemma. My aim was to develop this into an authentic assessment involving a group discussion of resolving ethical dilemmas in practice.

2. Why did you develop or enhance your assessment and what was your rationale?

There were a number of reasons why I developed this assessment, one of which was that students feedback indicated that they enjoyed discussing their ethical dilemmas during on-campus tutorials, citing it the best part of the module. I held meetings with the module team as there were concerns about the assessment with high academic integrity issues and a low pass rate. The module team suggested that a discussion would be more authentic for nurses in practice when facing a dilemma rather than a written assessment. Therefore, I coupled students feedback with the team's feedback for development of the assessment.

3. What enhancements or changes did you implement in assessment in making this more innovative, diverse or inclusive of diverse learner cohorts?

I devised the online discussion group to include a decision map that will support students' discussion with their peers. Students are given ample opportunity to meet with their group members both on-campus and in online tutorials to practice their communication skills with regards to resolving ethical dilemmas. Students with reasonable adjustments are advised that they are able to request a one-to-one visa with me as module lead or if they preferred a smaller group or needed more time than the 1 hour allocated to the group discussion.

4. What informed your approach to the changes you made, e.g. student feedback, observations of student difficulty, insights from literature or research findings, assessment pass rates etc.?

I incorporated student and module team feedback, as well as research findings and consulting with colleagues within the university and externally. For example, I spoke with a lecturer in Singapore leading a similar law and ethics module at another university which had a debate for their assessment. I also consulted with colleagues in the department of learning and teaching, the associate dean of education, and ran trial sessions with both students and staff groups. I also took advice from our learning technologist on which online platforms would work best for formative peer feedback and submission of the summative assessment.

5. What key changes have you seen as a result of this change to your assessment practice?

The assessment change has only just been implemented for students currently on the module and the assessment is set to run for the first time at the end of August 2026. From my engagement with students on the module, most have said they are nervous about the assessment as it is so different from other module assessments and they have not had an oral assessment before which indicates an innovative approach and a lesser risk for overassessment on this module. A notable difference is that student attendance to the on-campus tutorials have improved dramatically as I have informed them that they will be allocated to their assessment groups at the tutorials. For example, on a day with 80 students, only less than 5 students were not in attendance. Those who were not in attendance either got in touch with me to enquire about getting into contact with their group members or had peers on-campus include them in their groups, demonstrating increased engagement with the module and between students, strengthening a community of learning.

6. How are you evaluating the effectiveness of these enhancements or changes implemented?

One key evaluation is the module pass rate and satisfaction rate which we will find out at module evaluation by the end of this trimester, around autumn time. I would also like to see if there are any academic integrity issues and any improvement to staff time and effort to marking assessments.

7. Tips for practitioners:

I think it is important for practitioners to trust themselves and persevere through scrutiny of quality processes when making enhancements or changes to assessments. Take any setback as feedback and keep going, find people you can collaborate with and develop the assessment with their input.