Formative Assessment Toolkit: An Annotated Menu of Possibilities

This annotated menu is intended to provide a helpful introduction to some practical approaches to formative assessment. It is not intended to be in any way prescriptive or exhaustive – there are many other examples that could be added to the menu. However, it attempts to provide some guidance on some of the more widely used and 'proven' types of formative assessment that have been used effectively at UEA or in other HEIs. The menu provides constructive 'tips' on how to use the assessments, as well as some insights into their advantages and disadvantages for tutors and/or students. It may also be useful, when designing formative assessments, to think in terms of a list of all the possible dimensions that an assessment task has and which need to be considered:

- Does the student complete the task by working alone or in a group?
- Is the task written or oral or practical?
- Is the task time-constrained or not?
- Are all, some or none of the details of the task determined by the student?
- Is the task assessed by the tutor, the student, the student's peers or the representative of an outside agency?
- Does the student perform the task inside or outside the classroom?
- Does the student perform the task inside or outside the university?
- When the student performs the task, does s/he have access to notes and books or not?
- When does the task take place during the module?
- How is feedback delivered and how is the 'feed-forwards' element (i.e. the link with a subsequent summative assessment) emphasised?

Course and module teams may wish to refer to this list when designing their assessment strategies and the formative assessments that are integrated into them.

N°	Formative Assessment Type	Tips to make it work	Pros	Cons	Other comments
1	**In class group quiz using 'Clickers'** (Students work in small groups to work through a series of multiple choice questions in class, in 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' format, using wireless 'clickers' or Audience Response Systems. Use of this kind of approach in an Oral Diseases course at Liverpool Univ encouraged high levels of student participation and the ready application of learning to real clinical situations. *"Initial feedback from the students showed a unanimous preference for this style of teaching over the more didactic knowledge delivery")*	• Students need to have clear guidance with regard to the purpose of the quiz and its formative function. • The link between the quiz and the module 'content' or 'learning outcomes' needs to be made explicit. • Tutor needs to make link between the learning developed by the quiz and subsequent summative assessment(s) clear – one feeds into the other. • Whilst exercises like this can be used at any point during a module or a course, there may be particular value early-on as an 'ice-breaker' – a method of facilitating communication and integration. Gives students a chance to 'get to know each other'.	• *Turning Point* software is easy to use by staff and 'clickers' are easy for students to use. • Quiz responses provide tutor with instant insights/feedback on how much students have learned or progressed. • Clickers guarantee anonymity – no 'loss of face' or embarrassment in getting answers wrong. • Feedback is instant – tutor can explain in class the basis of 'correct' answers or explain why more than one answer might be correct. • Emphasis is on inter-activity and participation in the classroom and 'active learning'. • Quiz format is informal and 'fun' element can be emphasised. • Provides lots of opportunities for students to ask questions in class – tutor can use these to open-up for wider discussion.	• Relies on availability of 'clickers'. • Quiz questions need to be carefully designed. • Tutor needs to familiarise themselves with *Turning Point* software (or equivalent). • Time needs to be found in class to conduct the quiz without it being rushed. • Some students may be resistant to use of group-work in class.	• **Front-loaded assessment** – requires care and time to design but quick/easy to mark or provide feedback. • The quiz is less focused on achieving a mark – emphasis is on testing knowledge and understanding and be provided with immediate feedback in class. • Getting students to complete the quiz in pairs/small groups facilitates team-working skills. • Promotes group cohesion and may be used to promote integration of certain groups – e.g. international students and minorities.
2	**Early draft of summative assignment** (Student submits an 'outline' draft of the assignment which they are later required to submit as a summative assessment for formal marking)	• Students need to have clear direction/guidance with regard to both the purpose and content of the formative submission. A clear word limit and instructions re layout etc. are needed to	• If submitted via Hub, can provide evidence of robust 'engagement'. • Provides opportunity to provide timely feedback on a draft outline – student has a clearer sense of what the	• Time-consuming to mark and provide useful, diagnostic feedback. • Has to be carefully managed so as to avoid marking the same submission twice. • Risk of student acting on	• **Back-loaded assessment** – quick and relatively simple to set, but time-consuming to mark. • It is recommended that the draft submission is

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		ensure that students understand what is required of them. • There needs to be an explicit link with the summative assignment that follows – and students need to understand that the feedback on the draft will have an immediate 'feed-forwards' function.	summative submission should contain. • Ensures that there is a record of an assignment's development – limits likelihood of plagiarism. • Encourages 'time on task'. • Enables tutor to gain insights into level of academic 'engagement' early-on. • Promotes forward planning and discourages 'last-minute' drafting of summative work.	feedback on the draft and still gaining a poor mark – resulting in dissatisfaction with the usefulness of the formative feedback. • Students may choose not to complete it if it is not a 'requirement'.	no longer than half the word length of the summative assignment. This encourages student to 'focus' on key issues/themes in a skeletal outline and avoids marking same text twice. • Timing in critical – students need to receive feedback on the draft sufficiently early to apply it in the development of the subsequent summative submission.
3	**Online Quiz using Blackboard** (Students engage with tutor-designed quiz online via Blackboard, in their own time. Experience in other HEIs shows that regular completion of Quizzes by students can transform their subsequent performance. For example, at the University of the West of England, quizzes were integrated into a Law programme. The results were striking: *"The results are spectacular. Those who opted to take the quizzes performed very significantly better than those who did not. This difference is not just seen in the module in which the quizzes were included but throughout the first year, and it was still very evident at the point of graduation. The outcomes are all the more*	• Quiz needs to be easy to access via Blackboard site. • Online quizzes are most effective when students receive automated feedback as they are completing it. • Tutor can limit time available for completion and the number of attempts permissible – strategy needs to be driven by the aims of the assignment. • Whilst a 'mark' might be achieved it may be preferable to focus on designing the feedback on each question so that the outcome is improved learning, not a mark which won't be recorded on SITS anyway.	• Can be easily 'monitored' as evidence of robust 'engagement'. • Quiz responses provide tutor (and students) with insights on how much students have learned or progressed. • BB can guarantee anonymity – no 'loss of face' or embarrassment in getting answers wrong. • Feedback is instant and automated – student receives explanations or comments on each question as they complete the exercise. • Emphasis is independent study – learning outside of the classroom at a time/place of the student's choice.	• Relies on students accessing Blackboard. • Blackboard provides a Quiz facility but its flexibility is limited. • Time-consuming to design quiz questions in Blackboard and the feedback on each question. • Time needs to be found in class to review the quiz and the quiz answers, group's performance etc. • Link with subsequent summative assessment needs to be reinforced. • Difficult to be sure that it is the student who has completed the quiz rather than a third party.	• **Front-loaded assessment** – requires care and time to design but no time at all is required to mark or provide feedback. • The quiz may less focused on achieving marks than on testing knowledge and understanding and immediate feedback.

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	dramatic when the nature of those who took quizzes was examined. Quiz takers had virtually the same A level entry qualifications as non-quiz takers and yet performed far better – challenging the idea that it would be the 'better' students who took advantage of the quizzes") See: http://www.ukcle.ac.uk/resources/assessment-and-feedback/online-formative-assessment/	• Students need to have clear guidance with regard to the purpose of the quiz and its formative function. • The link between the quiz and the module 'content' or 'learning outcomes' needs to be made explicit. • Tutor needs to make link (e.g. feed-forwards) between the learning developed by the quiz and subsequent summative assessment(s) clear. • Find time to review and 'unpack' the quiz in class and revisit answers, group performance etc.	• Can be completed anytime/anywhere – at least anywhere where there is a link to the WWW. • Can be mobile-device friendly – student can engage with it on the bus or during a coffee break. • Quiz format is informal and 'fun' element can be emphasised. • Provides opportunities for students to subsequently ask questions in class – tutor can use these to open-up for wider discussion. • Can be used as a form of exam revision/preparation.		
4	**Formative 'Wiki' Exercise** (Students work individually or in small groups to enhance an existing wiki resource (e.g. on Wikipedia) or develop a new one. At Liverpool University Wikis were used recently in a Level 3 history module. The students built an online Wiki resource that formed the basis of discussion in workshops. Each workshop was divided into sub-topics (threads) and 3-4 students collaborated on each, posting their findings on the Wiki)	• Blackboard VLE can be used to develop group Wikis. • There may be great inherent 'value' in pooling the students' expertise to enhance, refine or expand an existing Wiki such as a group of pages on *Wikipedia* as a way of contributing to the 'common good'. • Students in their 1st or 2nd year may feel more comfortable working in small groups/pairs. 3rd years or PG students may have the skills/confidence required to work independently. • A Wiki enables students to develop their learning in a	• Makes good use of e-learning technologies. • Students gain insights into how Wikis evolve and can be used –real problem, real solutions. • Students have an opportunity to develop something of 'real value' to others outside the institution. • It develops the transferable skills of advanced text editing and critical textual analysis. • Can be linked directly to a summative assessment (e.g. the final Wiki pages), or may run 'parallel' to the summative assessment process.	• Relies on students accessing Blackboard or *Wikipedia*. • Blackboard provides a Wiki facility but its flexibility is limited. • Time needs to be found in class to review the Wiki. • Link with subsequent summative assessment needs to be reinforced. • If completed in groups, it may be difficult to monitor or be sure how much each group member has contributed (as in any group-work exercise). • Close monitoring of Wiki content may be required by the tutor.	• **Neutral assessment** – requires care/time to design and monitor the Wiki exercise and to mark or evaluate and/or provide feedback. • The formative element may involve weekly or fortnightly reviews of the Wiki in class or online. • The summative element may be the final 'product' in terms of the newly developed Wiki pages. • The Wiki may focus less on achieving marks

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		non-linear manner – e.g. just as one often navigates Wikipedia in a non-linear fashion by clicking hotlink key words/phrases – tutors may wish to emphasise this as part of the exercise.	• Can be easily 'monitored' as evidence of robust 'engagement'. • Emphasis is on independent study – learning outside of the classroom at a time/place of the student's choice. • Can be completed anytime/anywhere – at least anywhere where there is a link to the WWW.		than on testing knowledge and understanding and providing feedback. • The 'value' of the Wiki to others is a crucial aspect of such a formative exercise.
5	**The Jeremy Paxman Interview** (Rather than asking students to write an essay on 'Plato's attitude to women in the *Republic*', why not take advantage of a more 'creative' approach which requires students to write, instead, a short 10 minute radio script for an interview between Paxman and Plato?)	• This could be used as a form of formative assessment in which students can play with ideas and concepts in a relaxed and 'fun' context. • It could be particularly 'fun' if students had an opportunity to 'act-out' the screen play in class. • The 'acting-out' process could be used as the 'summative' element of the assessment, with the script itself being a strictly formative element. • Detailed guidance may be required and 'exemplars' of radio scripts provided so as to provide a sense of what is expected.	• Like the poster presentation, this kind of assessment draws on different learning styles (e.g. visual, audio, kinaesthetic). • It enables students who respond less positively to traditional 'essay' tasks with alternative ways of demonstrating their learning and their enthusiasm for the subject. • It requires students to demonstrate the same kind of understanding of and insights into Plato's ideas and arguments, but within a highly entertaining radio 'debate'. • If video-taped, the acted 'performed' screen plays could be shared with a wider audience via BB or the School website.	• Students may find this an alien form of assessment, especially those outside of the Humanities. • Less confident students and those uncomfortable with role play and 'performance' may find the acting-out of the radio script a considerable challenge. • Time needs to be dedicated to the process in order to do it justice. Time in class is particularly important especially if the students are required to 'act-out' the script. If done in pairs the time commitment could be considerable. May, therefore, be suited to small groups rather than large ones. However – the writing of the script is something that can be done regardless of cohort size. •	• **Back-loaded assessment** – requires little time to design but reading and providing feedback on the scripts could be comparable with that required for an essay. • **However,** if the script is 'performed' feedback could be oral and happen in class – quick and simple.

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6	**Annotated bibliography** (Students develop an annotated bibliography which summarises their reading up to a given point in time. The bibliography can be closely linked to the theme/focus of a subsequent summative assignment).	• Students may be entirely unfamiliar with the concept of an annotated bibliography. The structure and purpose of the toll may need to be clearly explained and examples/templates may need to be provided so they can articulate its value with respect to their own studies. • Tutors should consider how the annotated bibliography can be directly linked to a summative exercise/assessment in order for students to perceive its full benefits. • It may be desirable for the students to include the date they accessed each source so that the tutor can gain insights into how their reading has evolved over time, and how 'effort' has been spread between weeks. • The annotated bibliography can be peer-evaluated. It is also possible to 'pool' them into a single group resource (if this is deemed appropriate).	• Students have to read, summarise and evaluate sources – a key transferable skill. • Can be submitted as an 'appendix' (if needed) to the summative assignment. • Enables tutors to see clear evidence of students reading and their understanding of what they have read. • Acts as a check against plagiarism/collusion – there is an 'audit' trail showing how the student's engagement with the disciplinary literature has evolved over time. • Tutor can provide a ready 'template' for students to use. • Can help students to 'structure' their future note-taking and build resources of real value in building future assignments. • Students develop critical reading skills. • Can easily be submitted via Hubs and demonstrate evidence of engagement.	• If the link between the annotated bibliography and a summative assignment isn't made explicit, students may struggle to perceive its benefits. • Students may need guidance not only in terms of how to use the annotated bibliography, but also with respect to how they might want to make choices about what to include/exclude.	• **Back-loaded assessment** – quick and relatively simple to set, but time-consuming to mark and provide feedback on. • Develops a range of important transferable skills. • Develops a 'way of working' that might dramatically improve learning in future. • The bibliography can be submitted either <u>prior</u> to the linked summative assignment, or as part of it (e.g. as a separate appendix).
7	**The Patchwork Text** (This involves a structured series of short pieces of work produced over the course of a module. These are varied in style and form (e.g. presentation, critique of an article or newspaper column reflective	• The exercise can be completed by individuals or by small groups. • In a group, individuals can 'pool' resources to be included in the Patchwork Text.	• The patchwork itself – the bits contributed – may form the formative element of the assessment. The 'retrospective' overview may be treated as the <u>summative</u> element.	• This may be an 'alien' form of assessment for some students. Careful management may therefore be required on part of the tutor. • Detailed guidance may be	• **Neutral assessment** – requires care/time to design the exercise and to mark or evaluate and/or provide feedback. If the reflective, retrospective

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	review of a teaching session, summary of a group discussion). These pieces are discussed by students, then, at the end of the module the edited pieces are submitted along with a reflective, retrospective commentary 'stitching' it all together. Can be completed in groups or individually. At Liverpool Univ staff have reported that it encourages participants to "*get involved in critical evaluation throughout the module, and that it is highly motivating and results in work of a very good standard*")	• In a group students can collectively (or individually) write the retrospective commentary which 'stitches' the pieces together and which teases out 'meaning' or 'salient themes' from the assemblage. • By including the date when pieces were contributed, the students can create an 'audit trail' which shows how the resource evolved over time and how they distributed 'effort' hours.	• The assessment is open, therefore, to some flexibility in terms of how it is conducted and assessed. • It enables students to each contribute in a meaningful way to a common resource which may have value outside of the group. • The exercise enables students to draw on 'topical' items in the media – this lends a sense of relevance and immediacy to the learning process. • The process of collecting and contributing resources ensures that students have something to focus their efforts on between class sessions. • The group-work approach encourages peer support as well as peer competition. It is easy to identity 'free-loading' students. • Can easily be submitted via Hubs and demonstrate evidence of engagement.	required regarding the assignment parameters, what should be included in the 'Patchwork', and how the retrospective account should be structured. • Some students may contribute more materials than others to the Patchwork – tutor may need to include an element of peer assessment (e.g. using WebPA). • Groups may become dysfunctional. An intervention strategy may be required by tutor.	account is kept reasonably brief (e.g. 1,000 words), then it could be relatively quick to evaluate. If only the Patchwork is submitted as a formative exercise, feedback on the choice/range of sources/evidence may be needed. • The approach has worked well in other HEIs.
8	**Students Write Next Year's Exam!** (In the middle of a module, ask students to reflect on the module content covered so far. Ask them to design an Exam paper that can be set for next year's students which might pose a robust test of their learning in relation to the first half of the module. Ask them to justify and explain their choice of questions etc., and to	• This kind of exercise gets students to think rather differently – in this case they are required to take off their 'student' hat, and put on their 'assessor' hat. This is a healthy process that forces students to think very carefully about the issues, concepts, ideas, debates etc	• Build group-work and team-working skills. • Students have to think carefully about the nature of exams, and how module outcomes can be demonstrated. • Provides an excellent form of exam revision for their own exams.	• This kind of exercise is almost certain to be 'alien' to most students, but is entirely appropriate as a way of addressing students' awareness of the nature and purpose of assessment. • For the exercise to have maximum benefit, sharing examples between student	• Students do sometimes wonder why exams are necessary at all since they require skills and require students to work in a format which is rarely required in the workplace. This kind of exercise provides a means by which tutors

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	provide some indication of what a model answer might comprise. The end result is an annotated exam paper with questions, justifications, and some indication of what model answers should contain).	that they have engaged with and how the module outcomes in question can be achieved via an assessment process – this case an Exam Paper. • This is probably best done in small groups, with students pooling their ideas and producing an agreed final 'product'. The exercise therefore also builds team-working skills and negotiation skills. • The final product may be limited to 2 sides of A4 – inc questions and justifications/bullet points. • Providing some guidance and some 'exemplars' may be necessary so that students have a clear sense of what is expected in the form of an end product.	• The short/small size of the end product (e.g. 2 sides of A4) means that the task isn't too daunting. • This might actually produce some really good ideas for future exam papers!	groups is likely to be necessary/desirable. • Dedicated time in class to review examples is likely to provide a very effective way of providing feedback, but may be time-consuming.	can demonstrate the value that exams have as a tool for assessing learning. • The annotated exam papers produced by students may provide useful teaching materials for the tutor to use with future groups.
9	**Poster Presentation** (Completed by individual students or in small groups).	• Poster presentations can be genuinely 'empowering' for students since they enable them to demonstrate learning in an unconventional format with considerable freedom in design etc. Some tutors provide a basic 'design template' for students to utilise – this results in a more consistent visual style, but can limit creativity. • Posters often appeal to students who favour a	• These can be used to give students the chance to explore issues outside of those addressed in lectures, or can provide opportunities for students to reflect on (revise) topics already covered in class. • They require students to consult relevant sources, draw on their developing understanding of their topic, discuss it with members of the group.	• This might be an 'alien' format of assessment for some students and requires them to work in a different way. • Students require clear guidance on how to choose topics, what to include, and how to layout the poster itself. • Time and space need to be dedicated to reviewing the posters in class. Tutors need to consider if there are ways	• **Front-loaded assessment** – requires care and time to design but can be relatively quick to mark - especially if peer-assessment is employed. Feedback can happen orally in class. • A number of websites now offer free download templates for poster

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		'visual' learning style – and also facilitate the exercise of a greater range of skills than those used in the traditional 'essay'. Tutors may wish to consider carefully what proportion of the marks available should be awarded for 'creativity or originality' and 'quality of design'.	• Students have to present ideas, concepts, findings etc it in a different format, using transferable 'design skills'. • Posters can be 'exhibited' and discussed in a class session and/or shared more widely. • Peer feedback can play a valuable role. • Poster sessions can be fun and have the flavour of an 'event', especially if they include external participants, refreshments and prizes. In other HEIs students have highlighted how much they value assessments of this kind.	that key elements of 'content' can be covered using posters, rather than tutor-led lectures etc. • The 'feedback' process can happen orally and may include extensive use of peer feedback (students commenting on each other's posters). • Posters may be difficult to submit in e-copy format via e-Vision due to file-size constraints.	presentations. • Extra 'value' can be gained by 'exhibiting' students' posters in the School of Study. This has two major advantages: firstly students' work is exposed to a wider audience; secondly staff and other students can be invited to 'score' or 'provide feedback' on the posters too – something which could be built into the formative feedback process.
10	**Media Log** (Students collect items relating to the module as reported in media such as newspapers, blogs, magazines, websites etc. Each student contributes one item each week and explains or justifies its inclusion into a group media Log)	• It is important that students understand and appreciate the 'relevance' of the subjects they are learning and the module content. One way of achieving this is to set in place a group Media Log. This can be entirely informal, but gives each student an opportunity to contribute. This could be developed in Blackboard VLE. Students could be invited to comment and provide feedback on the new items added to the Media Log each week. The final product is a valuable, concrete resource of value to the whole cohort. It could	• Very student-led, with emphasis on students taking responsibility for their own learning. • Informal but fun way of taking advantage of the reading, web-surfing and TV viewing of students on a weekly basis. • Gives everyone a chance to contribute. • End 'product' is a real value. • Could be a useful revision tool. • Could also be useful for subsequent cohorts. • Tutors could moderate and provide feedback on	• Requires students to engage in the process without the expectation of receiving a 'mark' for their contributions. • Monitoring of the Log and provision of commentary/feedback requires some commitment of tutor time. • Some contributions may need to be 'moderated'.	• The use of Media Logs of this kind is becoming increasingly common in HEIs. • It has the effect of 'pooling' the reading that students are collectively engaged in. • It provides a useful resource of topical materials that could influence the 'teaching materials' used by tutors in future years.

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		also inform students' summative work.	additions to the Log on a weekly or fortnightly basis. • Could 'spark' ideas for future projects and dissertations.		
11	**The 'Whole School Project'** (This could involve all BA years working together in teams to produce a designed 'product'. At Liverpool Univ the Architecture Dept focused on student teams developing an educational 'Architectural Game'. The groups were around 7-8 in size with at least two from each year, and the year 3 students acted as managers. The exercise lasts a week and ends with presentations by each group, and judging, with prizes awarded. This is an excellent way to help deliver and encourage key skills such as group working, management skills, presentation and so on. There was a vote at the end of the project and over 95% of the students thought it was a good project to have worked on, and thought it should continue.	• This kind of project can take place outside of the 'formal' assessment process on a course – it is simply an activity within the School that builds student engagement and employability-related skills. It is voluntary and develops a sense of School 'esprit de corps'. It builds entrepreneurial qualities and attitudes and may result in a product than can be commercialised. • Commitment is needed from the School with a small staff team overseeing its development and implementation. • The informal nature of the exercise (it does not necessarily result in a 'mark' or inform grades) is a real strength – it is about <u>learning and collaboration</u>, not achieving marks.	• This kind of project can be designed by staff but without a major input of staff time during its implementation. • The projects are student-led and can include an element of peer assessment. • The whole school project promotes school cohesion and loyalty. • Products may be of a commercial or potentially commercial nature. • Awards and prizes can be recorded on the HEAR and awarded at congregation. • Builds a real sense of healthy competition between students.	• A small staff team needs to develop and oversee the whole school project. • Buy-in is needed at senior levels within the School. • Prizes/awards need to be purchased – these could take form of studentships or cash bursaries or book tokens. • May be very difficult to involve all UG students. • Voluntary nature of exercise may result in a low take-up. • Time has to be set aside to evaluate the project 'products'.	• **Front-loaded assessment** – requires care and time to design but quick to judge or evaluate. • This kind of project, if used creatively, could transform students' perceptions of their School of Study. • It facilitates cross-cohort collaboration and combats the frequently noted problem of 'lack of contact' between Year groups in Schools (e.g. Year 1 students working together with Year 2 students). • PG students could act as managers, working with UG students…. • It 'adds value' to the student experience by providing informal learning opportunities which have tangible, concrete outcomes.
12	**Peer-feedback on Writing** (This peer assessment is particularly useful for the writing process. Students are paired and asked to read each other's	• Ask each student to write 500 words about a key theme/topic from a choice of three or four. • Then get students to review	• Student-led. • Requires students to use evaluative skills. • Gets students to work together (good ice-breaker)?	•Some students may be unfamiliar with the notion of peer assessment and providing peer feedback. Some may feel self-conscious about sharing	• This is a tried, tested and proven model of formative assessment that has been extensively employed in

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	written work. The reader must identify two things the author did well (stars) and one specific suggestion for improvement (the wish). Before implementing this strategy, students must be trained on the process of providing appropriate feedback to their peers. The teacher can use this strategy as a formative assessment by circulating around the classroom and listening to the conversations between partners)	• each other's work in class. • Allow time for students to discuss and carry-out reciprocal review of each other's work. • Then ask each student to award two stars and a wish (2 positives and 1 item for future development). • Tutor summarise some of the positives and all of the 'future development' items – provides a copy to the class as an aide memoire.	• Involves peer learning and collective input. • Requires students to think carefully about areas where their own work could be enhanced in future. • Involvement of tutor time is minimal in terms of overseeing the process.	their written work with fellow students – even if it is only 500 words. •Needs to be carefully managed – students may need some guidance and advice regarding the peer assessment process. •Time needs to be dedicated to ensuring sufficient discussion, and summarising at end of the process.	schools for many years. There is no reason at all why it should not be as effective (or even more so) in a HE setting.
13	**Reviewing 'Exemplars' of Student Work** (Circulate anonymised examples of essays/projects etc. and review/analyse in class with students. This kind of formative exercise has a powerful impact on students and is often highly effective in 'de-mystifying' the assessment process, assessment criteria, staff expectations, structure, analysis, written English requirements etc. Mock marking exercises can be highly effective – though it is probably best to give students a chance to indicate their preferred mark anonymously. Comparing students' marks with the real (actual) mark and feedback can usefully reveal differences/gulf between students' expectations and those of staff) As Sambell has argued, "Lecturers should be explicit about assessment methods and	• This is a strategy already employed on some modules, with considerable success. • Some staff favour sharing just 1st class 'exemplars' so that students understand better how they need to develop their approach to gain the highest marks. • Others prefer to share both weak and strong exemplars which illustrate both ineffective and effective study strategies. • Some staff combine with a detailed examination of the Senate Scale marking descriptors, or consider in relation to other ways of conceptualising student learning, such as Bloom's *Taxonomy*, which can be mapped against the marking bands on the Senate Scale.	• As one UEA colleague has noted from her own experience in HUM: "This practice consistently exposes and recasts first year expectations of degree level study - 'the paragraphs are much longer than I would normally do', 'I'm surprised at how many footnotes there are', 'there's no big words for the sake of it here', and 'I didn't know you were allowed to do this kind of thing', 'the essay was surprisingly interesting' - are frequent comments". • Copies of student work are readily available and anonymous submission means that scripts are often already 'anonymised'. However, exemplars need to be chosen carefully to demonstrate or	•Ideally, students should be warned in advance that their work may be used for this kind of purpose, or their permission should be sought. •Exercises like this require dedicated time in class or in seminars to explore fully the qualities of the exemplars and to give students opportunities to work in groups, unpack assessment criteria etc.	• **Neutral assessment** – relatively easy to design and can be discussed in class without need for written feedback. • One UEA lecturer has noted "Students coming into a new HE system need us to 'unpack' the expectations behind some of the words we used most often in assessment". This is a very effective way of doing just that.

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	criteria and discuss these with students. Students need to be clear about what constitutes good work. It's not good enough to tell students what the assessment criteria are, they need to actively participate in deepening their understanding of what good work is."		illustrate key themes.		
14	**The Reflective Learning Log** (Students produce a reflective short written 'report' each week which contributes to a Reflective Learning Log. As one UEA colleague in HUM has noted: "it is not always possible to ensure that students fully engage with all of their modules, or, indeed, with all of the material on any given module. In addition, I have found often that the students lose sight of the aims of a module, or its overarching 'narrative.' The idea of the weekly log/report is to encourage the students to continue thinking about what they have learned in seminars from week to week, and to 'narrativise' the links across the semester")	• The weekly reports can be very informal, only 1 side of A4, and even handed-in anonymously. They can be collected on BB. • Tutors sometimes provide brief feedback on the weekly reports. • In some cases, tutors have tutorials to discuss weekly logs. • The 'formative' Log entries can be pulled together with a reflective narrative/analysis in a summative submission. • Students need to be guided with regard to the nature of the 'reflection' required.	• Enhances levels of continual engagement and 'effort' across the semester. • Encourages the development of continual reflection. • Helps students to take responsibility for their own learning. • Can link to a subsequent summative assignment. • Can be very informal, or submitted via HUB. • Provides evidence of engagement.	•Some students may struggle with the weekly demands placed on them to 'reflect' and provide learning reports. •The manner of providing feedback needs careful management if the time commitment is to be kept within reasonable bounds.	• **Neutral assessment** – relatively easy and quick to set the assessment and provide guidance. Regular brief feedback thereafter. • One HUM colleague has noted: "It allowed for a regular, consistent, intellectual and pedagogical conversation to be had … it resulted in 100% attendance as the students felt very strongly that this was their module that they were integral to; and the students were absolutely engaged with the material that we were studying".
15	**Self-assessment of formative essay submission** (One SCI colleague has used student self-assessment as a tool to enhance 2nd year students' understanding of what makes a really strong scientific essay or report. Some SCI students rarely write 'traditional	• A self-assessment checklist or 'set of criteria' can be provided to students which they complete prior to submission of the formative essay. The students reflect on how well they have met the criteria.	• Encourages reflection and self-assessment – important translatable skills of value in the workplace. • Encourages students to be more 'critical' of their own work prior to submission – helps to 'iron-out' common	•As the SCI colleague in question has noted: "Overall, students prefer feedback that includes specifics on how to improve; they find self-evaluation and reflection more difficult and are less likely to engage voluntarily with this	• **Neutral assessment** – relatively quick to design and set, and use of checklist means feedback demands are not overly onerous for the tutor. • The SCI colleague who

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	essays' in their 1st and 2nd years, which means they sometimes struggle to develop well-written dissertations in the final year. The formative self-assessed essay in the 2nd year helps to address this problem. The Self-Assessment Checklist used can be found in **Appendix B**)	• Tutor can then use the same checklist or criteria when providing feedback. This can be used to provide rapid feedback. • Some tutors combined the exercise with workshops where resources/evidence are reviewed, and aspects of the essay/report are unpacked in more detail. • Students need to be provided with some guidance on how to self-assess, and how to apply the criteria in the self-assessment checklist.	problems in writing etc. • Provides a clear reference frame against which students evaluate their performance. • Formative essay can be submitted via HUB and used to demonstrate robust engagement. • The use of the checklist form means that providing feedback is relatively quick and simple.	mode of formative assessment". •The value of the assignment for future modules (feed-forwards) needs to be clearly articulated for students to engage effectively and enthusiastically.	used this self-assessment strategy noted that: "essay writing was improved and no students who completed the self-assessment table had significant omissions in the coursework. • A high average formative mark of 64% was maintained over two year period despite significant increase in number of international (EAL) students in second cohort.
16	**The Mock Exam & De-briefing** (Mock exams will be more than familiar to most UG and PG students. However, the nature of the 'mock exam' can be tailored to maximise the 'feed-forwards' function and the impact on student learning. The de-briefing aspect is, arguably, the most important aspect to get right – this needs to focus on areas where students performed well and on areas where knowledge, understanding, insight or analysis were lacking. Reasons for strong and poor performance can be 'unpacked' along with a detailed reflection on exam techniques/strategies, and revision of key topics. Timing is critical – students need time to absorb and act on the de-briefing prior to their summative exam).	• The choice of questions needs careful design/planning in order to develop key knowledge, insights, etc, whilst not replicating too closely the summative exam. • Tutors may wish to consider whether the 'mock' is conducted under exam conditions or in the students' own time. Each approach may have advantages and disadvantages. • Tutors may wish to include a self-assessment or peer-assessment element (or both) prior to the students' submitting their formative scripts to the tutor or the HUB for marking/feedback. • Should the 'debriefing' and	• Prepares students for the particular challenges of the 'exam' format assessment – e.g. writing at speed using a pen (something students rarely have to do in other areas of their degree studies) • Builds insights into the purpose of exams, effective exam strategies, marking criteria etc. • De-briefing workshop or written de-brief provides an excellent opportunity for 'revision' of key topics, issues etc. • If the de-briefing includes a self or peer-assessment component, this can also build skills of reflection, peer evaluation etc.	•Time may need to be scheduled into the module schedule for the 'mock' exam in 'exam conditions'. •Time needs to be dedicated to the de-briefing process. •The de-briefing process may have limited value if not all the students attend. •Module schedules and pressures on contact time may limit opportunities to include a 'mock' and a formal de-briefing prior to the summative exam. •Designing mock exams is a time-consuming and complex process – not all staff may feel it is time well spent.	• In general it is desirable aim to ensure that students are properly equipped and prepared to undertake the summative assessments which influence their degree classification. In this sense, it is good practice to include 'mock' exams of this kind so that students can 'practice' the skills and strategies required in the exam room.

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		feedback take the form of written feedback or happen orally/verbally in a de-briefing workshop? Or both?			
17	**Problem-Solving Exercise(s)** (This kind of approach to formative assessment involves setting students a series of 'problems' to explore in groups. The following provides an example employed at Heriot Watt University: In class (seminar style room) students split into groups of 4 for all classes and they work together – peer supporting. They bring along notes and support materials. It's an informal atmosphere and students can leave to source other material, eat/drink etc. Six exercises ("Problems") are set in two week long stints. Each session is slightly more complex than the previous requiring further preparation by reading in the notes etc. Exercises are problems that require knowledge from the materials provided, external sources and other parts of the course)	• For this kind of formative assessment to work most effectively, some care may need to be taken when splitting the class into groups in order to ensure 'balanced' groups. • Some guidance and preparation for the group-working process may be necessary – e.g. effective strategies, accommodating differences in learning styles, awareness of team role theory etc. • Careful planning re provision of 'problems' and group learning resources in required. • Student-led problem-solving workshops may need to be backed-up with group tutorials.	• Student-led approach – enhances student autonomy and self-directed learning strategies. • Takes the emphasis off tutor 'delivering content' and places greater emphasis on tutor as a 'facilitator'. • Students gain sense of achievement by solving problems presented to them. • Students gain profound insights into the subject/discipline. • Develops study strategies likely to be important for success in subsequent modules. • Emphasis on team-working and problem-solving develops employability skills and attitudes.	•Success of this formative assessment is highly dependent on students being equipped to work effectively in groups, and being provided with suitable 'problems' and resources required to explore them. •Groups may become dysfunctional – tutor needs to have strategies in place to deal with the problems that occasionally arise from groupwork. •Some students may not engage, some may invest more 'effort' than others. •Students are sometimes resistant to groupwork – but if the assessment if purely formative concerns about 'marks' being influenced by other 'free-loading' students can be ameliorated.	• **Neutral assessment** – in the sense that the requirement for feedback is spread across the semester. Some up-front design of problems, materials/resources is required. • In the Heriot-Watt example, students submitted an exercise every other week and got formative feedback the following week. All members of each group handed in an assignment every time. Each was looked at briefly and evaluated at Pass/Fail level and one from each group was selected for detailed feedback. Tutor visited each group to provide verbal feedback on each of the submissions.
18	**The 3-2-1 Discussion** **3** - Things you found out about the topic. **2** - Interesting things about the topic. **1** - Question you still have about the topic. (This gives students a chance to	• The whole 3-2-1 exercise can be done in 'real-time' in class, or can be set as a small exercise to be completed in time for	• This is a proven form of formative assessment with a long history of successful application in schools. • It is student-centred and student-led. The students' 3-	Very few disadvantages to this kind of exercise – except that, of course, it does require appropriate allocation of time in class/seminar.	• **Neutral assessment** – in the sense that the exercise is simple to set, requires no written feedback from the tutor, and involves no

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	summarize some key ideas, rethink them in order to focus on those that they are most intrigued by, and then pose a question that can reveal where their understanding is still partial or vague.)	discussion at the subsequent class session. • If students send their 3-2-1 points to the tutor, the tutor can then draw on them to structure the class session/seminar. • Experience indicates that this is highly effective in engaging students since the discussion is based around their own ideas, the information they have found, and the question(s) they flagged.	2-1 points can inform the entire structure of the class or the subsequent class session. • It is easy to set, and the tutor acts primarily as a 'facilitator' in the class session built around the 3-2-1 points. • Where students 'flag' things they are unclear about, it provides the tutor with an opportunity to 'target' these areas effectively prior to completion of an exam or summative assignment. • Students share their 3-2-1 points. This can be done anonymously so as to avoid any self-consciousness, anxiety or potential 'loss of face'.		'marking' as such. All feedback, guidance is provided orally in class.
19	**Question Time Debate (from Norwich)** Students are required to prepare an evidenced response around a particular question or statement in the format of BBC Question Time. In small groups, students have 5-10 minutes to present their view and argument. This is then followed by wider discussion and questions from the audience. And then other views/arguments are presented. Students also submit a 1-sided hand-out with the key substantiated arguments.	• The lecturer or students can create the questions and statements; • Some guidance for the types of 'questions from the audience' to ask supports students to generate open questions; • Students can be given the role of summarising the key features of the discussion at the end of the debate.	• Students have the opportunity to practice and rehearse the key arguments regarding particular concepts and issues; • Students have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding through the use of relevant literature and sources; • Students can develop synthesis of argument and summary-making skills; • Tutors are able to listen to students articulate viewpoints and understanding to formatively assess learning which is taking place; • Tutors can use the	• For an effective Question Time debate, tutors need to think of questions from the audience in case students don't develop many; • Students may be unwilling to ask questions and others will dominate discussion so it is important to develop a 'safe' atmosphere for the debate to be held in. It may be appropriate to establish some ground rules for the debate.	• **Neutral assessment –** This activity is simple to set and requires no written feedback from tutors. All guidance is provided orally by tutors and peers.

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			opportunity to feed-forward.		
20	**Formative Post-It Notes** This activity is ideal for larger cohorts of students and suitable for lectures as well as seminars. After presentation of information, the lecturer asks students to summarise the concept of the lecture on post-it notes. Crucially, the summary should be approximately two sentences. The lecturer checks over then during a short break/activity and selects a sample of responses. Making sure they're anonymous, they then discuss them, gives a viewpoint and invites students to comment.	• The lecturer is able to informally assess the learning of the students and check levels of understanding; • This method gives students and the lecturer the opportunity to clarify any misconceptions	• Tutors can assess the learning and understanding of large cohorts of students in a relatively short time-period; • Any misconceptions of understanding can be addressed in a timely manner.	•Some students may need longer to absorb the learning and may not like being questioned on the spot. •To overcome this, lecturers can explicitly tell the students that this will feature towards the end of the lecture.	• **Neutral assessment** – this doesn't add to the lecturer's workload – it is simply a matter of changing, in a small way, the use of time in lecturers or seminars.
21	**Work in Progress (WiP) assignments** Students complete two essays. One is submitted mid-semester and one at the end. As part of the second assignment students are required to indicate how they have responded to feedback outlined in the first submission.	• This activity encourages students to reflect on aspects of feed-forward tutor comments. • Students have the opportunity to engage in formative/developmental process of essay writing	• Tutors can assess students' understanding and utilisation of the feedback.; • It provides students with an opportunity to develop an understanding of the feedback writing process	• Students may not wish to engage with the feed-forward comments. • Students may not understand the comments so guidance/ intervention needs to be provided so they have the opportunity to ask questions.	This involves giving feedback twice, but emphasis on final submission can be on tick-box system against learning outcomes (i.e. has student met the criteria?), with detailed written feedback concentrated on the formative assignment (1st submission).
22	**Designing a leaflet/pamphlet** This type of formative assignment requires students to write for a particular audience and this helps students to communicate, and make connections with ideas rather than just feeling that 'nobody really reads it, just lecturers'. In this assignment tutors specify a 'real' audience and ask students	• Give the leaflet a 'real-world' setting, for example an audience that they may encounter in future employment. • Tell the students that the best examples will be seen by a wider audience, or used 'for real'.	• Students often greet this activity with enthusiasm as they find it more realistic than the academic essay. • As students have to fully understand the subject matter to communicate it to the lay audience, tutors can see if students have fully	• Very few disadvantages to this kind of exercise, except for the problem that students will engage at various levels and with differing effort input.	• **Neutral assessment** – some thought about the purpose of the leaflet, or a 'design framework' might be required to provide guidance, but generally speaking this kind of assignment should not

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	to present concepts in a clear and accessible way, and without misrepresenting or simplifying the subject. Generally, this assignment seems to enthuse students and requires them to read around the subject because they are required to fully understand the literature to be able to present it clearly.		understood the topic.		add considerably to workloads – it could also be used as basis for a competitive element within the group, could promote groupwork etc. An early version might be formative, with more polished version having a summative function.
23	**Test to monitor personal progress** This activity enables students to reflect on their progress throughout their degrees. The same test, which is marked in relation to the standard of knowledge and understanding expected in the final year is given to students in years 1, 2 and 3. The pass rate is lower for students in the earlier years and this enables students to monitor their own assessment journey in relation to the expected standard. This enables students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and the areas they need to improve.	• Guidance needs to be given to students to ensure they understand the standards and levels of the test. Tutors also need to ensure that students understand that progress in terms of the score is expected. • Guidance needs to be readily available for when students have identified their strengths and weaknesses.	• Independently students can monitor their own progress and reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. • Tutors are able to assess students' level of understanding and address any issues with 'performance'.	•Students may not understand the standards and scores so guidance needs to be taken to ensure students do not feel despondent/ demotivated by their scores.	• **Front loaded assessment** – care needs to be taken in the design of the test, and in explaining its purpose to students. Ideally elements may be multiple choice or in short answer format so as to facilitate rapid marking and feedback.
24	**Oral Assessments** This formative activity draws on the use of individual 15 minute vivas, where the students are asked 'unseen' questions on the topic or wider subject.	• To promote student engagement, students can be asked to create their own questions as a class and the tutors can select from these.	• Oral assessments can be completed efficiently during a class or tutorial. • This type of assessment means students are given then opportunity to verbally communicate their understanding rather than writing it down like the tradition essay.	•Some students may find it difficult to articulate their understanding in this different format so care needs to be taken to ensure they are appropriately guided.	**Front loaded assessment** – time and care needed to establish the choice of questions to be asked, but feedback can be quick and immediate

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25	**Writing in groups** This activity enables students to work together on tasks rather than in isolation (as they often do when writing academic essays). Students are required to write short pieces about particular concepts and ideas and discuss these in small groups. For example, it could be a handbook on a particular subject. The summative assessment could be to individually write an introduction to the handbook and draw on the short pieces. The second piece could require students to critically reflect on their choices and the process.	• Give students an example of a handbook that represents an authentic document within the workplace.	• Similarly to the previous activity, students feel enthused at the prospect of a realistic activity as opposed to the traditional academic essay.	•Students may not wish to work in small groups and share ideas.	• **Front loaded assessment** – care and time needed to develop the exercise and give it a 'real world' feel and focus. Time then needed to provide feedback to groups and/or the individuals involved.