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A Framework for Higher Education Course Design

Dr. Marc Laperrouza, Senior scientist & Lecturer, EPFL

Tallinn & Lausanne, October-December 2025

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Today



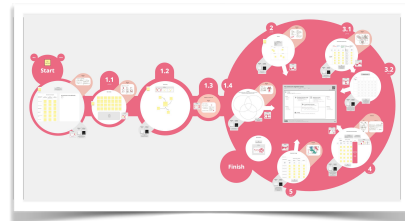
- Debrief on T&L strategy
- Assessment strategy
- Assignment and next time

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Housekeeping



- Confirmation of participation
- Have your own MIRO board open (e.g., board 21)
- Have the general MIRO board open (<https://go.epfl.ch/coursedesign>)



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Key learning on T&L strategy

Please complete the following task(s):

- **Reflect** individually on the definition of the T&L strategy for your course and **write one key learning** in MIRO
- Share an **open question** you may still have regarding the T&L strategy and/or FAIR model



<https://go.epfl.ch/coursedesign>

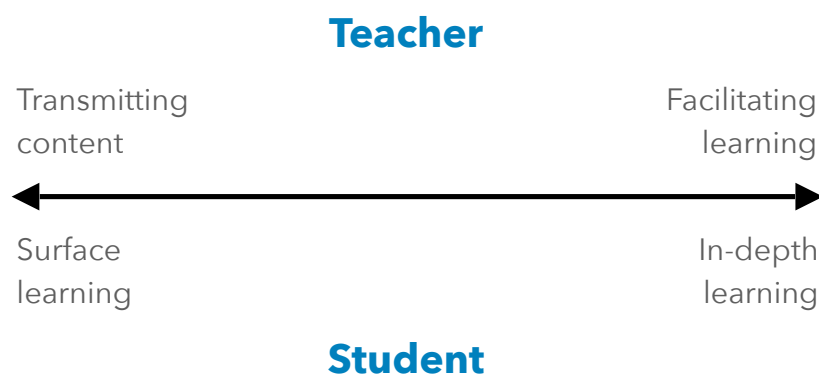
5 minutes

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Debrief on T&L strategy

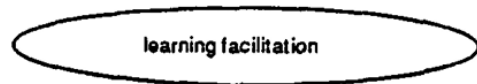
Teacher-centered vs. student-centered



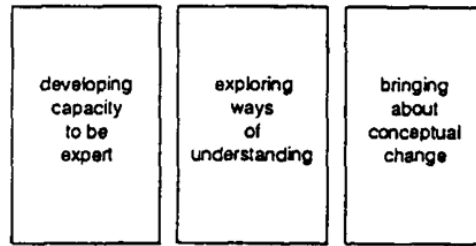
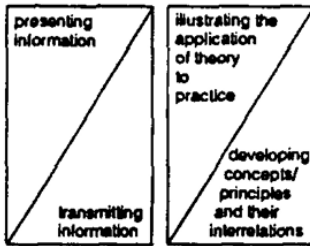
**TEACHER-CENTERED /
CONTENT-ORIENTED**

**STUDENT-CENTERED /
LEARNING-ORIENTED**

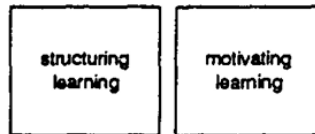
Gow & Kember (2 papers)



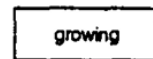
Dal' Alba (1991)



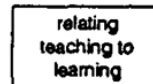
Dunkin (3 papers)



Fox (1983)

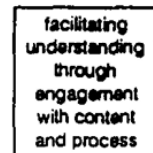
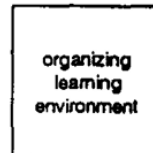
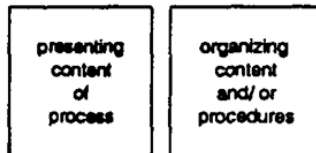


Marin & Bala (1991)

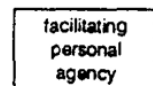
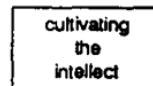
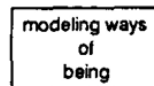


Source: Kember, D. (1997). A reconceptualisation of the research into university academics' conceptions of teaching. *Learning and Instruction*, 7(3), 255-275. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-4752\(96\)00028-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-4752(96)00028-X)

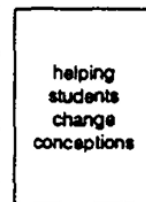
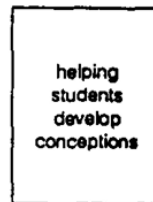
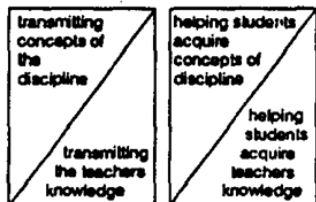
Marin & Ramadan (1992)



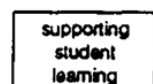
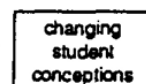
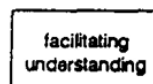
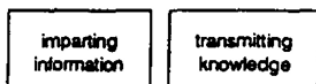
Pratt (1992)



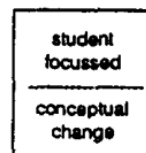
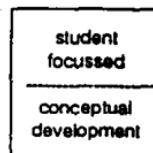
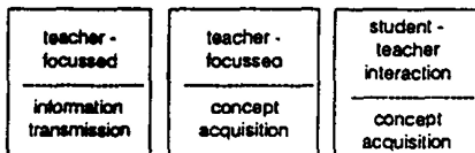
Prosser et al (1994)



Samuelowicz & Bain (1992)



Trigwell et al (1994)



Source: Kember, D. (1997). A reconceptualisation of the research into university academics' conceptions of teaching. *Learning and Instruction*, 7(3), 255-275. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-4752\(96\)00028-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-4752(96)00028-X)

Session #04 learning outcomes



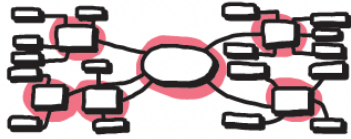
- Explain the difference between assessment modalities and criteria
- Formulate the assessment strategy of a course

Design
Assessment strategy



Designing your course in 6 steps

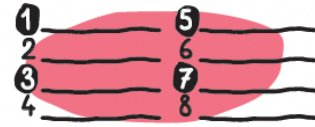
Assessment strategy



1. Identification of key concepts



2. Identification of contextual elements



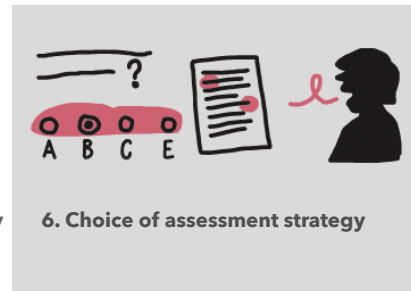
3. Definition of intended learning outcomes

Cont. Obj.	C1	C2	C3
O1	X		X
O2		X	

4. Content-outcomes alignment



5. Choice of teaching & learning strategy



6. Choice of assessment strategy

Assessment can serve different functions



Diagnostic assessment

To determine the students' level of knowledge before the course or learning cycle begins



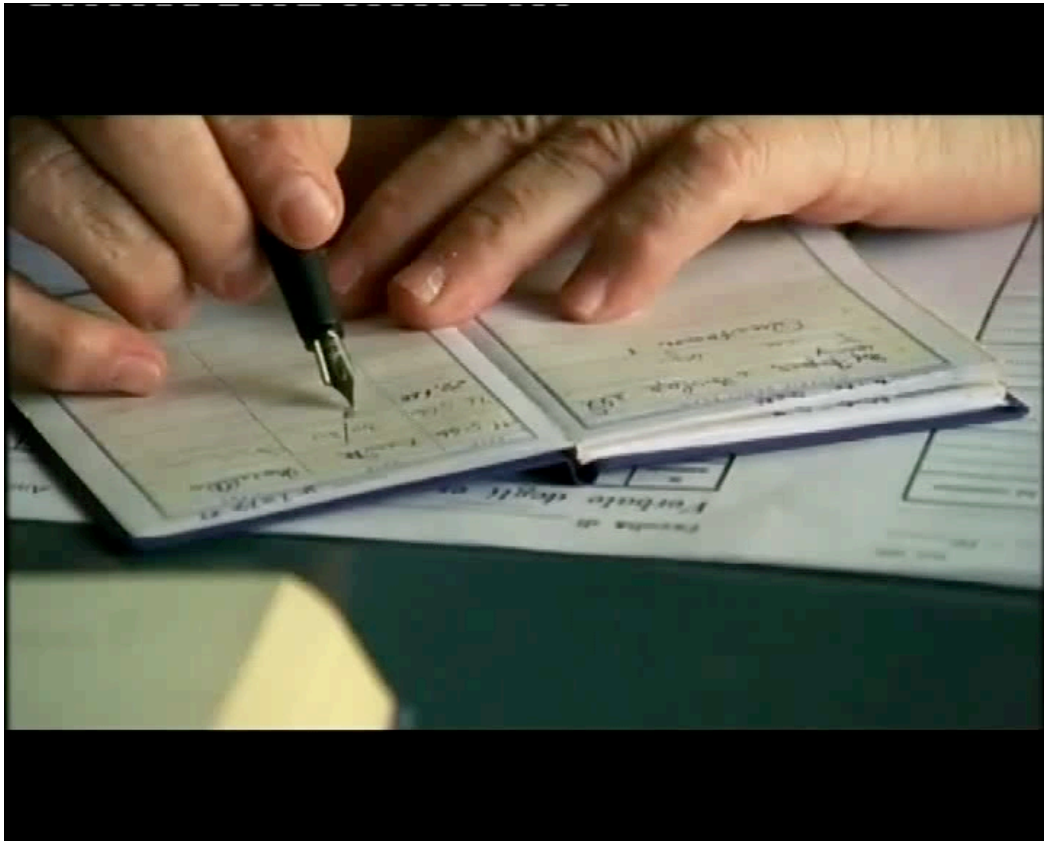
Formative assessment

To manage the learning process, to help students progress



Summative assessment

To certify a certain level of mastery



Source: La meglio gioventù (2003)

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Assessment

What does the movie clip spark in you?

5 minutes

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Assessment

What are some of the assessment biases you experienced
(as a teacher or as a student)?

5 minutes

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Potential assessment biases



The effect of :

- Fatigue
- Order of correction
- Contamination
- Halo
- Stereotypy
- Pygmalion
- Central tendency
- Blur

Source: Rege Colet & Sylvestre (2013)

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Validity and reliability



Validity (coherence)

Compatibility with pedagogical objectives

Takes into account the relative weight of objectives

→ Ensures that what needs to be assessed is assessed properly

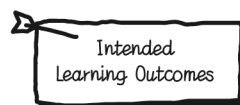
Reliability (consistency)

For the teacher carrying out the grading (intra)

Between grading teachers (inter)

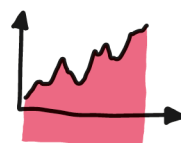
→ Ensures consistent assessment

Four steps for establishing an assessment strategy



1. Determine which learning outcome needs to be assessed

How do you identify the learning outcome that needs to be assessed?



3. Analyze proof of learning

How do you check that the learning was effective?



2. Obtain proof of learning

How do you assess the learning?



4. Give feedback on student learning

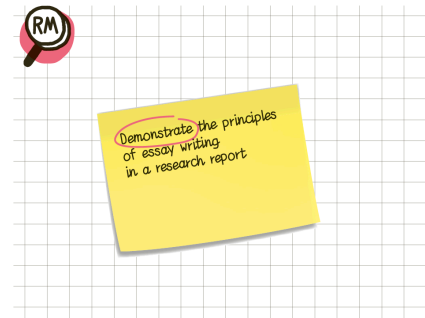
How do you give feedback to students about their learning?

1. Determining Which Learning Outcome Needs to Be Assessed



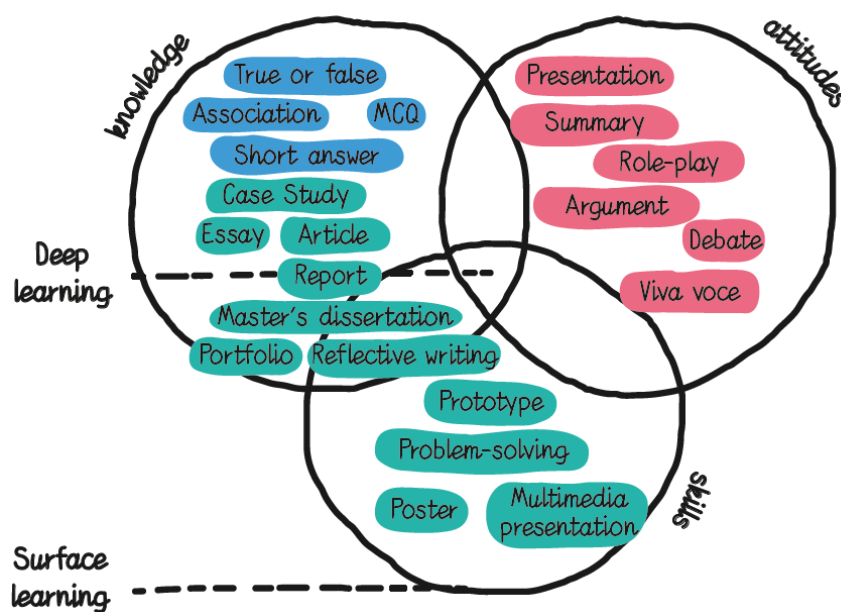
p. 127

- The learning you need to assess is determined by the ILOs
- Assessment can focus on the actual result of learning, which corresponds to how well the students achieved the outcome, or on the progress made between two learning stages



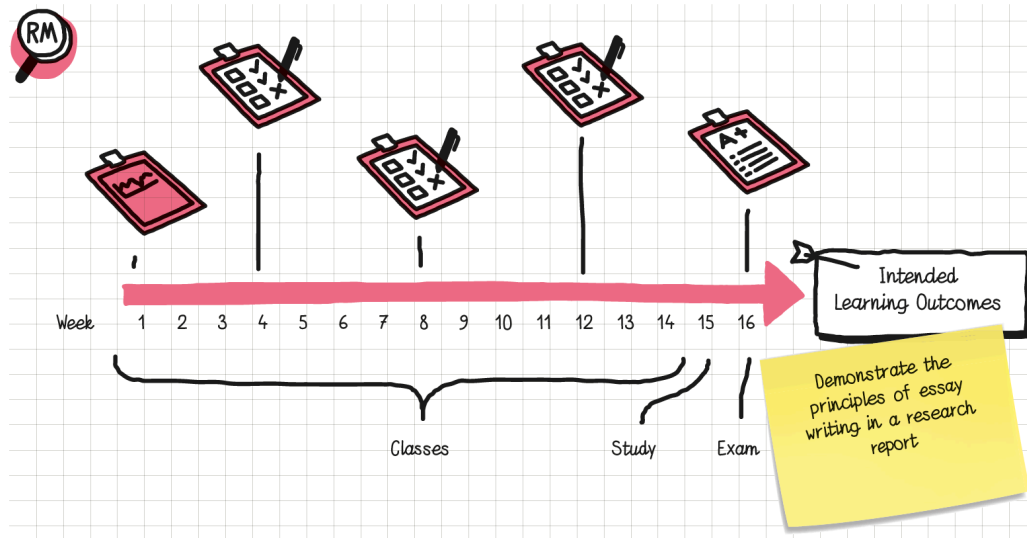
2. Obtaining proof of learning

How do you assess the learnings?



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Diversifying the assessment strategy



➤ Allows to act on the feeling of competence

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3. Analyzing proof of learning



Specifying assessment modalities and criteria is about:

- Clarifying what is important to assess
- Making direct links to learning outcomes
- Providing a (relatively) detailed description of what is to be learned/acquired/mastered/constructed

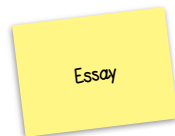
Defining assessment modalities



You can use the following sentence to help determine the modalities:

In order to determine whether the student is capable of

as part of an



Demonstrating the principles of essay writing in a research report



Mini-break

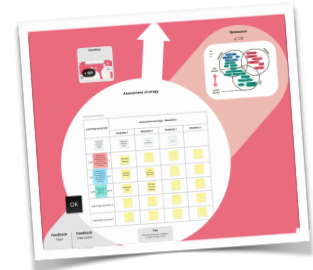
5 minutes



Defining your assessment strategy

In your MIRO board:

- List your **2 learning outcomes** (in the first column)
- Indicate the assessment modality/modalities envisaged for **2 outcomes** - write one assessment modality per post-it (you can have several modalities for one ILO)



Think about the different functions of assessment (diagnostic, formative, summative)

10 minutes



Sharing your assessment strategy

1. Explain your assessment strategy to your colleague
2. Your colleague will provide feedback
3. Modify your assessment strategy (add/modify/remove post-it notes) on the basis of your colleague's comments
4. Place the post-it notes (assessment modalities) in the central canvas

5 minutes x 2

Defining assessment modalities and criteria



You can use the following sentence to help determine the modalities and criteria:

In order to determine whether the student is capable of

as part of an

Essay

the production must be analyzed according to the following criteria

Demonstrating the principles of essay writing in a research report

Coherence of links between concepts

Relevance of concepts

Relevance of sources

Hierarchy of concepts

3. Analyzing proof of learning

Reducing subjectivity with an assessment rubric



Demonstrating the principles of essay writing in a research report

Criteria	Descriptors			Performance grading going from non-achievement of the criteria to total achievement
	Needs improvement	Meets expectations	Exceeds expectations	
Relevance of concepts	The concepts employed indicate an incomplete or out-of-date literature review.	The concepts employed indicate a relatively complete or up-to-date literature review.	The concepts employed indicate a complete and up-to-date literature review.	

Reducing subjectivity with an assessment rubric



Specifying descriptors:

- Serve as a "second lens" for examining learning evidence
- Clarify possible performance
- Are directly linked to distinct levels of competence
- Provide a relatively detailed description of the level of mastery/ acquisition/learning
- May comprise two or more levels
- Can be quantitatively or qualitatively different

Oral Presentation Rubric College of Science Purdue University



Student: Course/Context: First Presentation

Evaluator: Date: Final Presentation

Criteria ¹	Level			
	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Proficient 3	Mastery 4
A. Content Importance of topic, relevance, accuracy of facts, overall treatment of topic	Topic lacks relevance or focus; presentation contains multiple fact errors <input type="radio"/>	Topic would benefit from more focus; presentation contains some fact errors or omissions <input type="radio"/>	Topic is adequately focused and relevant; major facts are accurate and generally complete <input type="radio"/>	Topic is tightly focused and relevant; presentation contains accurate information with no fact errors <input type="radio"/>
B. Organization/Clarity Appropriate introduction, body, and conclusions; logical ordering of ideas; transitions between major points	Ideas are not presented in proper order; transition are lacking between major ideas; several parts of presentation are wordy or unclear <input type="radio"/>	Some ideas not presented in proper order; transitions are needed between some ideas; some parts of presentation may be wordy or unclear <input type="radio"/>	Most ideas are in logical order with adequate transitions between most major ideas; presentation is generally clear and understandable <input type="radio"/>	Ideas are presented in logical order with effective transitions between major ideas; presentation is clear and concise <input type="radio"/>
C. Completeness Level of detail, depth, appropriate length, adequate background of information	Presentation does not provide adequate depth; key details are omitted or undeveloped; presentation is too short or too long <input type="radio"/>	Additional depth needed in places; important information omitted or not fully developed; presentation is too short or too long <input type="radio"/>	Presentation provides adequate depth; few needed details are omitted; major ideas adequately developed; presentation is within specified length <input type="radio"/>	Presentation provides good depth and detail; ideas well developed; facts have adequate background; presentation is within specified length <input type="radio"/>
D. Grammar/Mechanics Correct grammar and usage that is appropriate for audience(s)	Presentation contains several major grammar/usage errors; sentences are long, incomplete or contain excessive jargon <input type="radio"/>	Presentation may contain some grammar or sentence errors; sentences may contain jargon or are too long or hard to follow <input type="radio"/>	Presentation has no serious grammar errors; sentences are mostly jargon-free, complete and understandable <input type="radio"/>	Presentation contains no grammar errors; sentences are free of jargon, complete and easy to understand <input type="radio"/>
E. Documentation Proper support and sourcing for major ideas, inclusion of visual aids that support message	Little or no message support provided for major ideas; visual aids are missing or inadequate; little or no sourcing provided <input type="radio"/>	Some message support provided by facts and visual aids; sourcing may be outdated or thin; visual aids need work <input type="radio"/>	Adequate message support provided for key concepts by facts and visual aids; sourcing is generally adequate and current <input type="radio"/>	Effective message support provided in the form of facts and visual aids; sourcing is current and supports major ideas <input type="radio"/>
F. Delivery Adequate volume, appropriate pace, diction, personal appearance, enthusiasm/energy, posture, effective use of visual aids	Low volume or energy; pace too slow or fast; poor diction; distracting gestures or posture; unprofessional appearance; visual aids poorly used <input type="radio"/>	More volume/energy needed at times; pace too slow or fast; some distracting gestures or posture; adequate appearance; visual aids could be improved <input type="radio"/>	Adequate volume and energy; generally good pace and diction; few or no distracting gestures; professional appearance; visual aids used adequately <input type="radio"/>	Good volume and energy; proper pace and diction; avoidance of distracting gestures; professional appearance; visual aids used effectively <input type="radio"/>
G. Interactions Adequate eye contact with audience, ability to listen and/or answer questions	Little or no eye contact with audience; poor listening skills; uneasiness or inability to answer audience questions <input type="radio"/>	Additional eye contact needed at times; better listening skills needed; some difficulty answering audience questions <input type="radio"/>	Fairly good eye contact with audience; displays ability to listen; provides adequate answers to audience questions <input type="radio"/>	Good eye contact with audience; excellent listening skills; answers audience questions with authority and accuracy <input type="radio"/>

¹Evaluation standards may be based on disciplinary frameworks and defined at program level.



Writing Rubric

Date: _____

Rater: _____

Course: _____

Student: _____

TRAIT	0-1	2-3	4-5	6-7	Score
Logic & Organization	Does not develop ideas cogently, uneven and ineffective overall organization, unclear introduction or conclusion	Develops and organizes ideas in paragraphs that are not necessarily connected. Some overall organization, but some ideas seem illogical and/or unrelated, unfocused introduction or conclusions	Develops unified and coherent ideas within paragraphs with generally adequate transitions; clear overall organization relating most ideas together, good introduction and conclusion.	Develops ideas cogently, organizes them logically with paragraphs and connects them with effective transitions. Clear and specific introduction and conclusion.	
Language	Employs words that are unclear, sentence structures inadequate for clarity, errors are seriously distracting	Word forms and sentence structures are adequate to convey basic meaning. Errors cause noticeable distraction	Word forms are correct, sentence structure is effective. Presence of a few errors is not distracting.	Employs words with fluency, develops concise standard English sentences, balances a variety of sentence structures effectively.	
Spelling and Grammar	Writing contains numerous errors in spelling and grammar which interfere with comprehension	Frequent errors in spelling and grammar distract the reader	While there may be minor errors, the writing follows normal conventions of spelling and grammar throughout and has been carefully proofread	The writing is essentially error-free in terms of spelling and grammar	
Development of Ideas	Most ideas unsupported, confusion between personal and external evidence, reasoning flawed	Presents ideas in general terms, support for ideas is inconsistent, some distinctions need clarification, reasoning unclear	Supports most ideas with effective examples, references, and details, makes key distinctions	Explores ideas vigorously, supports points fully using a balance of subjective and objective evidence, reasons effectively making useful distinctions	
Purpose	The purpose and focus of the writing are not clear to the reader	The writer's decisions about focus, organization, style, and content sometimes interfere with the purpose of the writing.	The writer has made good decisions about focus, organization, style, and content so as to achieve the purpose of the writing.	The writer's decision about focus, organization, style, and content fully elucidate the purpose and keep the purpose at the center of the piece	

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4. Giving feedback on student learning



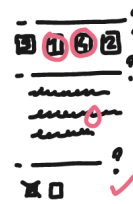
How do you give feedback to the students about their learning?



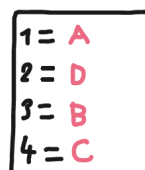
Feedback from the instructor to the whole class



Feedback among peers



Automatic feedback after a quiz



Answer sheet



Grade from a test or exam

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Q&A on assessment strategy

To keep in mind



Assessing and grading student performance are complex activities!

Some "tips":

- Inform students as early as possible about the assessment methods and grading system
- Remember (and remind students) that the grade is not a value judgment of the person but a measure of performance
- Associate each numerical value with a qualitative assessment
- Provide a general assessment of the performance
- Offer a meeting space after exams to discuss the results
- Document and keep a record of your teaching exam results (instructions, questions, results, good/less good work)



Your open questions



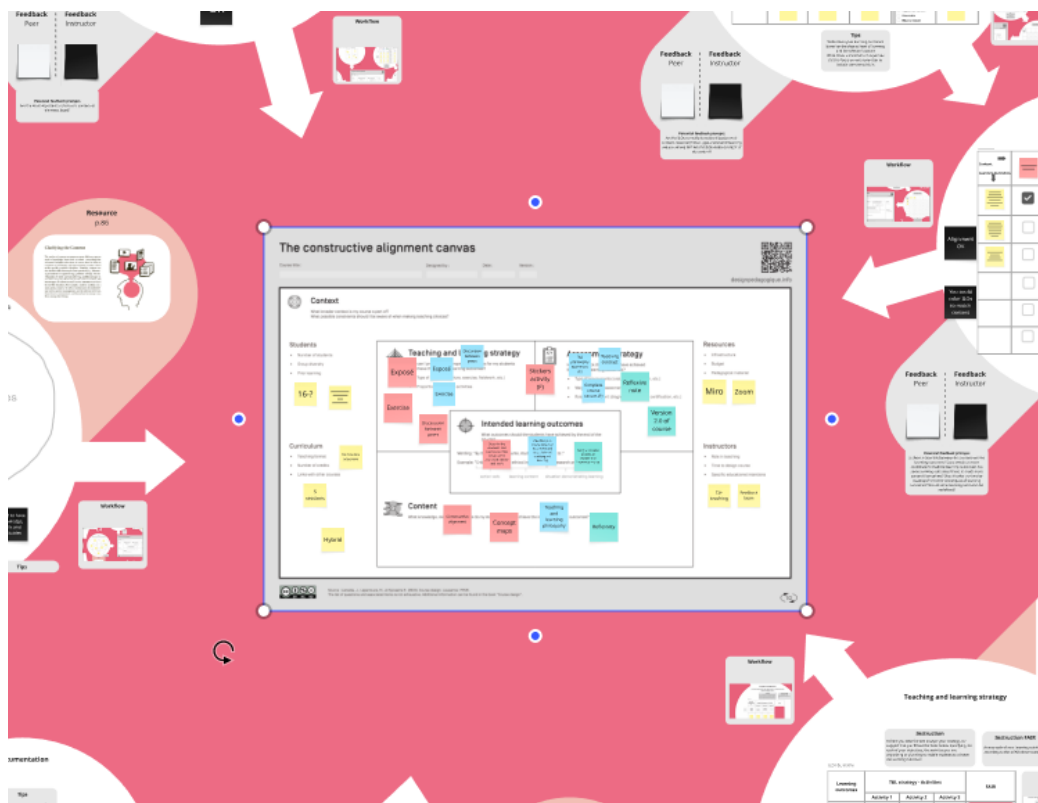
Assignment

- Indicate the assessment strategy - the modalities for all your ILOs - (5)
 - If you have time, start working on the criteria for each modality
 - If you have a lot of time, you can work on the descriptors!
- Look at your buddy's assessment strategy
- Complete your the canvas (bring all the elements to the central canvas) - you will use your final canvas on December 5

Deadlines:

- 2 December, 5PM for participant
- 4 December, noon for coach

Individual MIRO board - 60 minutes (est.)



Next time

Setting a continuous improvement mindset

- Debrief on assessment strategy
- Contextual changes
- Continuous improvement
- Your next steps
- Conclusion and feedback on webinar

@TalTech (on-site only) - 5 December - 11.00 AM



The present activity is concluded under the Education and Youth Programme and the list of measures of the Cohesion Policy Funds Implementation Plan, measure 21.4.4.2 “Links between education, society and the labour market”, intervention “Quality of higher education, internationalisation and doctoral schools”, action “Quality of higher education and internationalisation”.



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