

Evaluation of Student Experience: The Nutrition Fair



What are the aims of this project?

The Nutrition Fair is the culmination of the assessment package for Applied Nutrition 2 (a level 6 module). The Fair gives students the chance to select a topic of interest, develop an academic understanding of the theory, put together a stall (including, for example, leaflets, posters, food samples, demonstrations) to host at the Nutrition Fair and hosting the stall on the day for staff, students, the public and local and national employers. This project aims to undertake a rigorous evaluation of the Nutrition Fair and the notion of 'live assessment'.

The specific objectives include:

- Explore how a collaborative initiative involving academic and technical teams can enhance the student experience of assessment.
- Determine how a 'live' assessment is perceived by students, staff and employers.
- Explore ways in which 'live' assessment can be supported within the University and encourage learner autonomy and enthusiasm for learning.
- Explore how WBL students can support 'live' assessment.

What is the background / rationale?

Providing real and relevant experiences for students in higher education is central to enhancing the employability of graduates. Where assessment embraces this in a transparent manner, students can take ownership of their learning and draw on multiple intelligences, building on previous experiences to help embed learning. Introducing 'live' assessment frees learners from the constraints of the classroom. They are exposed not only to real topics/ research, but to real people, experiences and emotions; anticipation, excitement, nervousness and enjoyment. The applicability of 'live' assessment is ubiquitous for all students and a wide range of features are transferable.

What are the benefits to student learning?

The Nutrition Fair encourages students to specialise in a self-selected topic thus promoting learner autonomy. The content of each nutrition stall is underpinned by sound academic rationale and the interactive nature of the event demands that a broader range of skills and creativity are also required to make the stalls a success.

Perhaps the most valuable learning experience is the dissemination of information to a live public audience. This unique opportunity allows students to gauge a genuine

response to public health promotion and reflect on and evaluate their achievements. The chance to liaise with public health professionals is also invaluable in terms of obtaining constructive feedback as well as providing networking opportunities. By citing this event within our academic community and inviting students and staff as well as the public to the event we disseminate good practice and promote learner autonomy across the institution and beyond.

How will this project be evaluated?

A wide range of evaluation methods will be used including student focus groups, staff focus groups (academic and technical), student evaluation forms, comments cards from visitors and staff and written feedback from employers.

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