

Changing the Shape of AoL for higher education: Initiative reveals disconnect between educators' and students' expectations of the performance level of assessments

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Higher Education is increasingly focussed on preparing graduates with 'visible learning skills' for life-long learning. Self-regulating Higher Education providers must ensure their courses deliver on stated student learning outcomes. For courses such as pharmacy life-long learning alongside other graduate outcomes are critical to patient safety and mandated by professional accrediting bodies such as Australian Pharmacy Council. The Traffic Light Report (TLR) project is an educational intervention designed for undergraduate pharmacy students. It aims to increase familiarity with the National Competency Standards for Pharmacists in Australia (NCS) and to develop the students' 'visible' learning skills (Hattie, 2008). In 2014, educators were invited to consider each summative assessment in their units for their relevance to the NCS alongside the levels of performance on Miller's pyramid of clinical competence. Simultaneously, students were invited to self-reflect using the same performance levels. A pragmatist methodological frame, educational design and action research philosophies informed the approach. Triangulation of data from student self-reflection, curriculum mapping data and feedback surveys made it possible to interpret the curriculum from the viewpoint of students and their educators. Heat maps and participant qualitative statements provided new insights of curricula. The outcomes of the TLR project were exploited to compare and contrast pharmacy students' and their educators' understanding of the performance level of their summative assessments and highlight disconnect between the students' and their educators' interpretations of the same assessed curriculum. Whilst there are many potential factors contributing to these findings, there are key lessons for curriculum design and educational practice. In addition to being a useful tool for highlighting the NCS and introducing the elements of life-long learning to pharmacy students the TLR contributes an additional approach to examining the intended, taught and learnt curriculum. The TLR contributes to quality enhancement by providing educators and their students with a logical meeting point for discussing scaffolding of assessment across a course for Assurance of Learning. This has portability to other professional disciplines and may change the shape of future methods for AoL in Higher Education.

Hattie, J. (2008). Visible Learning: A Synthesis of over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement Retrieved from <http://UTAS.eblib.com.au/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=367685>