

Introducing gradeless programmatic assessment in a research-oriented bachelor in psychology

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Future ready, technologically enhanced psychologists will work in a world where key human competences that can complement A(G)I (e.g., metacognition, meta-emotion, collaboration) will be in high demand. Attempts to develop these competences leads people to reimagine credit accumulation and assessment models. Traditional assessment in higher education often relies on high-stake exams and isolated tests which do not fully capture a student's learning journey or potential. Such tests can reduce student engagement and motivation, and thwart the development of essential competencies. Programmatic Assessment emphasises frequent low-stakes feedback, which means it offers students the chance to practice, make mistakes and receive feedback on their learning without individual mistakes significantly impacting decisions on student progress. By focusing on competency development over time, Programmatic Assessment provides a more accurate reflection of student abilities, enabling assessment for distinctiveness. While mostly used in competency-based medical and health science programmes, we have implemented programmatic assessment in a BSc Psychology programme resting on a backbone of five competences (psychological expert, researcher, psychological citizen, communicator and professional), aligned with APA guidelines and a student-centered pedagogy. In addition, the programme has abandoned grades, since studying without grades appears to reduce stress, anxiety and competition between students and can boost teamwork, interest in subject matter, academic risk taking, adjustment to academic life and it can help students to focus on holistic competences beyond acquiring content knowledge. We will share lessons learned after the first year of implementation of the revised bachelor, highlighting how students accommodated to gradeless, competency-based programmatic assessment; how a feedback culture is created; how staff adapted to changing roles; experiences calibrating feedback given discrepancies between tutors' perceptions of student learning and competency development; and how holistic high-stakes end-of-year decisions were made. Potential obstacles ahead are identified.

Is the first author also the speaker?

Yes

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Please indicate up to five keywords regarding the content of your contribution

assessment, innovation, competences, self-regulation, feedback

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