EAT ERASMUS Case Study Template

Case Study title: Using EAT to prompt discussion in Educator Professional Development sessions

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Abstract (c.200 words)

What was your focus? What were your aims?

The aim of this intervention was to open up dialogue about assessment of/for/as learning with colleagues who deliver or support teaching in the University. The aim was to use the EAT Framework to encourage them to reflect upon their assessment practices, and to take an objective view of them for future planning. This activity was aimed to be a way of workshopping an activity they could then later use for their own persona development, and/or share with colleagues.

What was the context? (discipline/sample etc.) How did you investigate your focus?

The intervention was delivered in a workshop on Assessment that formed part of one of the streams of our 'Education Fellowships' framework. These programmes lead to AdvanceHE accreditation as Associate Fellows, Fellows and Senior Fellows (AFHEA, FHEA, SFHEA) of the (now merged) Higher Education professional body – the Higher Education Academy. Participants on the programmes come from a wide range of academic disciplines, as well as different contract types (including academic staff, postgraduate students, post-doctoral researchers, technicians, teaching associates, learning technologists, information specialists, education developers, and managers of educational programmes/services).

What were your findings about what you did and what you learnt?

Using the EAT Wheel as a means to reflect upon, and re-evaluate an assessment is an extremely powerful approach. It empowers participants to see the potential strengths and limitations of their assessment activities for themselves, and find solutions (ideally involving student partnership).

What implications are there for assessment and feedback practice and research in higher education?

Reflection on assessment and feedback practices is an essential ongoing process. Staff need to be supported in undertaking holistic and objective reviews of their practice. This methodology is a rapid and effect means of doing this.

Reporting on your case study

The aim of ERASMUS EAT is to look at how an integrated assessment framework (EAT) can support enhancements in assessment and feedback by trying to develop staff and student self-regulatory practices. Your case study will benefit from being very clearly focused from the outset and in considering how all the dimensions and sub-dimensions of the EAT Framework need to be attended to in order to address your core issue. Keeping it as simple as possible is a good thing. Engaging with student as much as possible and thinking clearly about the evidence that you would like to collect will help in the design and implementation of your idea.

Designing an Assessment Intervention: What is your assessment focus?		
Prompts	**Key questions**	**Please add some thoughts/experiences/reflections in this column**
Focus	**What is the key assessment issue you considered?**	The main problem space was trying to develop a different culture of assessment, through informing new members of staff, and encouraging reflection on assessment approaches used. This approach involved embedding information about, and a short, practical workshop using, the EAT Frame Work, in a new suite of professional development for learning and teaching courses. These courses (which lead to formal recognition by the UK higher education, professional body, AdvanceHE) are aimed at staff and postgraduate students, who are new to teaching, as well as more experienced colleagues who want to gain accreditation.
Why did you choose this focus?	**Why did you focus on this? On the basis of what evidence? Why did it need looking at?**	Data from the UK National Student Survey (NSS) student satisfaction with assessment is very poor across the sector, and there is a particular issue at our university. We needed to ensure that certain core principles of assessment were presented to participants on these fellowship programs, so that they could make informed, and evidence-based, decisions about their assessment practices.
What was the context? *Module / programme Discipline Country* *Who was involved – staff and students*	**What is the disciplinary/module/course context in which your assessment work is situated?**	The activity is undertaken during a workshop held in a series of courses that lead to HEA Fellowship for academic staff, information specialists, learning technologists, and education developers. As most of the 'students' are members of staff, and the course is not a 'taught' course, we refer to the 'students' as 'participants' and the teachers as 'facilitators'. Participants range from new members of academic staff, who have as few as 3-6 months of teaching experience, to staff who have several decades of experience.
Why is this important? *What is your contribution*	**Why is what you did important?**	It is important to ensure at all individuals relation to the delivery of assessment (either as assessment, designers, or as markers) understand the fundamental

– is it original? Is it confirmatory of previous work? Is it actively taking the field forward by adding new understandings?		parameters of good practice and assessment and feedback. The EAT Frame Work is designed to support reflections and understandings.
How does this work contribute to current understandings we have of assessment and feedback *To what extent are you aware of current national and international assessment and feedback higher education debates*	**How does what you focused on link to current understandings of and priorities in assessment and feedback within your institution and more widely in higher education?**	Adopting the EAT Frame Work to support assessment change is fundamentally embedded within the research literature, by the very nature of the framework. In addition, the intervention focused heavily on concepts of "students as partners", as well as sector-white development in "assessment for/as learning".

Implementation: What did you do?

Prompts	Key questions	Please add some thoughts/experiences/reflections in this column
The starting situation *The project promotes an action research type approach – working with students and staff to implement ideas and then evaluating them.* *It encourages the use of a mixed methodology and methods – the use of quantitative methods (e.g. survey data) and qualitative approaches (e.g., discussions with colleagues) to investigate practice.*	**How did you investigate your focus? What was the rationale for choosing this aspect?** **Did you do any pre and post testing of ideas/abilities/ attitudes?** **When choosing an area of focus, what sources of information did you use to support your decision?** **Did you use EAT to measure student/staff engagement in assessment pre and post?**	*How did you investigate your focus? What was the rationale for choosing this aspect?* We investigate the impact through participant feedback mechanisms after the workshop. Also, through observing participant behaviours within the room, and verbal feedback from participants. *Did you do any pre and post testing of ideas/abilities/attitudes?* No, there was no viable pre- and post-activity measurement that we could have taken. *When choosing an area of focus, what sources of information did you use to support your decision?* The EAT framework document itself, as well as literature on assessment, design, and quality, as well as enquiry-based learning. **Did you use EAT to measure student/staff engagement in assessment pre and post?** No, EAT was not used on this way.

What did you do?	**What were the key things you did and with whom?**	The approach was to guide participants through the EAT framework, and then take them through a managed process of applying the EAT wheel to one of their assessments. Participants were then encouraged to discuss their findings with a peer, and to explain the rationale of why they had allocated a particular rating to one highly-rated and one poorly-rated sub-dimension.
Describe what your approach involved. What did you do to enhance a self-regulatory approach to assessment and feedback practice	**What student and staff groups did you engage with and how?**	
What roles did students and educators play?	**Who approved ethical consent? (Institution?)**	The discussion partner was restricted to only asking **questions** of the person sharing their experiences. This ensured that the person sharing thought of their own solutions, and considered their own responses to issues, rather than engaging in a 'sharing of problems' discussion with their peer.
See Moore et al (2015) Process diagram to help you describe the elements of what you did?	**Over what time scale did you conduct this project?**	
	Did it involve 1 or several iterations of change initiatives?	The participants were then encouraged to think of potential solutions or methods for enhancement of their named problem, and to reflect on how better to engage students either as partners, or as active agents, in the process.
	What information did you collect?	
	What tools/resources did you use?	**Activity 1:** [10 minutes] The facilitator introduces the EAT framework and concepts of assessment. They introduce and describe the EAT Wheel, the 12 sub-dimensions, and chair a discussion about the benefits and limitations of key assessment approaches. **Activity 2:** [2-3 minutes] For ONE assessment that you've designed/delivered/been involved with, use the EAT wheel to evaluate the extent to which you address each of the 12 sub-dimensions (1 = Very low; 5 = Very high) **Activity 3:** [15 minutes] To a partner explain: a) One aspect that you scored highly; what do you do that makes you give it a high score? b) One low-scoring aspect you think could improve, and why Other person (gently) ask questions – but only questions, no other comments allowed! **Activity 4: [**10-15 minutes] To a partner explain: One way that you could enhance this dimension, either: (a) Redesigning an element of assessment (or an entire assessment); (b) Engaging students more in understanding the parameters of the assessment; or (c) Addressing specific challenges.

		Ethics: No ethical consent was required, as this was an embedded teaching activity. **Iterations:** The first use of this approach was in the summer of 2021, with further iterations across a total of 12 workshops over the following 2 year period. **Information gathered:** Information was collected from end-of-session feedback forms and from informal comments and observations of the participants. **Tools/resources:** A printed version of the EAT wheel was all that was required.

How was what you did aligned to the EAT concepts (FIDELITY) See check list below?	How did you incorporate EAT concepts into your design?	
• **Inclusive** – *do all students have equal access to learning and equal chances to do well?* • **Shared beliefs and values** – *have these been discussed and agreed between staff and students? Is there agreement on the key self-regulatory skills that need to be focused on?* • **Student-staff partnership** – *how genuine is this? To what extent are students encouraged to participate in all assessment decisions?* • **Sensitive to context – how have you adapted assessment to suit your context?** *nuances of your discipline and course, situated within your faculty and institution; and nature of student intake – what is specific about your course/subject demands and types of students you have?* • **Holistic –** *the whole experience of the student* • **Integrative** – *how all aspects of assessment are interrelated and impact one another* • **Agentic** – *allows students and lecturers to take control of their learning/teaching* • **Engagement in meaningful learning experiences – relevant** • **Sustainable** – *means manageable for all; also enabling students to manage their own learning themselves* – *so extent to which they are able to accurately assess the quality of their own work.*	**How did you incorporate EAT concepts into your design?** **If relevant, how did you support colleagues to understand how to apply these concepts?** **To what extent were staff able to engage students in co-design?** <mark>(see Appendix F)</mark>	**INCLUSIVE** The Education Fellowships programs involve a variety of participants, aside from the traditional academic staff and postgraduate students. The programs also include education, developers, learning, technologies, information, specialists, and technicians. The language used in the activity was specifically designed to focus, not just on assessments at a participant delivers (as not all participants will actually deliver assessments), but also to ones which they might support, have observed, or have experienced themselves as learners. This insures that there was inclusivity between the different roles of the participants. **SHARED BELIEFS AND VALUES** – The activity encouraged a discussion of shared beliefs and values associated with assessment. This provided a good vehicle to surface many of these concepts. **STUDENT-STAFF PARTNERSHIP** – Within these programs, there is a good two-way relationship between participants and facilitators. There is a good sense of co construction of assessed outwards between participants, facilitators, and the mentors of each individual participant. The reflective portfolio assessment enables the participants to focus on areas of interest to them and their professional role. **SENSITIVE TO CONTEXT** – how have you adapted assessment to suit your context? nuances of your discipline and course, situated within your faculty and institution; and nature of student intake – what is specific about your course/subject demands and types of students you have? **HOLISTIC** This approach made the participants think more holistically about all of their teaching practices. Some really substantial insights arose from the reflective portfolios of the participants (which were the assessed part of the course) about the way they had revised their thinking around assessment, as a result of reviewing only one assessment with this framework approach. **INTEGRATIVE** The participants reported that they could see how assessment and other

		learning activities.
		AGENTIC As the participants in this case were staff members (mostly), this approach gave them considerable agency to revise and plan enhancements for their learning activities. Using this approach provided a short and easy-to-use methodology for investigating their practice. **SUSTAINABLE**]The simple nature of this approach makes it highly sustainable and effective across a range of activities and disciplines. The workshop itself is very transferrable, and easy for any facilitator to run. So it can easily be embedded in the Education Fellowships programmes (and has been already) regardless of who delivers the activity.

<mark>See Assessment and Feedback Principles Appendix A and Student Engagement in Assessment</mark> templates	**To what extent were you able to implement the EAT <u>assessment and feedback principles?</u>** **What *barriers and facilitators* were there to implementation?**	The activity was not, in itself, an assessment. So these questions are answered relative to the Portfolio assessment that the students undertook, which included a reflection on the role and nature of assessment, and so was informed by this activity. *1. Clarify what the assessment is and how it is organised. Explain the principles underpinning the design of assessment so that students can understand the relevance and value of it.* Yes. This approach was made explicit in its use and application to the participants. *2. Provide explicit guidance to students on the requirements of each assessment (e.g. clarification of assessment criteria; learning outcomes; good academic practice).* The assessment associated with this activity was clearly explained, with exemplars, and the ability to discuss the parameters with a mentor. *3. Clarify with students the different forms, sources, and timings of feedback available including e-learning opportunities.* It was made clear to all participants that they could submit their work in a variety of formats. *4. Clarify the role of the student in the feedback process as an active participant (seeking, using, and giving feedback to self and peers; developing networks of support), and not just as a receiver of feedback.* The participants were active partners in the process, discussing feedback with each other, and with their mentor. *5. Provide opportunities for students to work with assessment criteria and to work with examples of work at different grade levels in order to understand 'what constitutes good.'* Participants were provided with exemplar portfolios, and encouraged to write and peer-review their reflections during the class. Guidance was on hand from facilitators *To facilitate improvements in learning we should:* *6. Ensure that the curriculum design enables sufficient time for students to apply the lessons learnt from formative feedback in their summative assessments.*

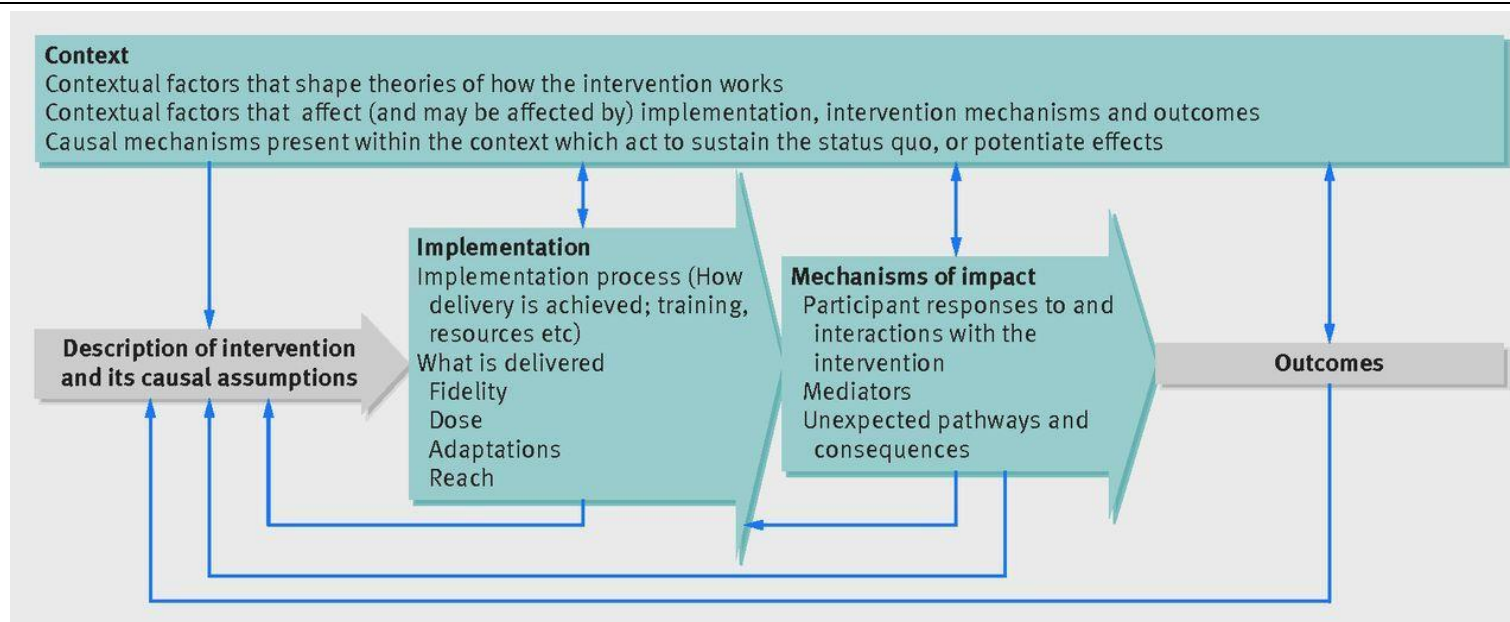|		
		The feedback on early submissions in the portfolio were designed to enable early feedback and feed-forward. *7. Give clear and focused feedback on how students can improve their work including signposting the most important areas to address (what was good; what could be improved; and most importantly, how to improve).* Participants were given early feedback on their submissions, to enable early revision and changing of writing approaches. *8. Ensure that formative feedback precedes summative assessment; that the links between formative feedback and the requirements of summative assessment are clear.* Participants were provided with feedback at early points in the submission process, in order for them to revise their reflective writing approach. Participants were encouraged to write draft reflections in class, for peer feedback and facilitator guidance. *To promote holistic assessment design we should:* *11. Ensure that opportunities for formative assessment are integral to curriculum design at module and programme levels.* *12. Ensure that all core* resources are available to students electronically through the virtual learning environment (e.g. Blackboard) and other relevant sources from the start of the semester to enable students to take responsibility for organising their own learning.* All resources were available from the VLE, as well as provided in face-to-face sessions. *13. Provide an appropriate range and choice of assessment opportunities throughout a programme of study.* Participants were able t submit using a written or audio/video approach. A dialogic approach was not able to be validated, but is being considered for the future. *14. Ensure that there are opportunities for students to feedback on learning and teaching.* Regular participant panels and feedback forms (of various kinds) were used to gain participant feedback and perceptions, as well as finding answers to any problems raised.

Context
Contextual factors that shape theories of how the intervention works
Contextual factors that affect (and may be affected by) implementation, intervention mechanisms and outcomes
Causal mechanisms present within the context which act to sustain the status quo, or potentiate effects

Description of intervention and its causal assumptions

Implementation
Implementation process (How delivery is achieved; training, resources etc)
What is delivered
  Fidelity
  Dose
  Adaptations
  Reach

Mechanisms of impact
Participant responses to and interactions with the intervention
Mediators
Unexpected pathways and consequences

Outcomes

Figure 1: Moore, G. M., Audrey, S., Barker, M., Bond, L., Bonell, C., Hardeman, W., Moore, L., O'Cathain, A., Tinati, T., Wight, D., & Baird, J. (2015). Process evaluation of complex interventions: Medical Research Council Guidance. *BMJ 2015;* 3350:h1258

Assessing the Impact of your Intervention: Key findings

Prompts	Key questions	Please add some thoughts/experiences/reflections in this column
How successful was the approach? *Did it engage the students and staff you wanted it to?*	To what extent did your intervention reach your intended audience of staff and students? Was it manageable? Are there plans to test it more widely?	This activity is extremely effective. It is very simple and straightforward to administer, but provokes a wide range of discussion points and revelations. One comment from a colleague who used their Final Year Examinations as the subject of focus in the activity was "I've realised our final at exams are not fit for purpose!". The approach of encouraging the use of only questions in the discussion of the high- and low-scoring sub-dimensions is a powerful tool in encouraging reflection. The consideration of how best to engage students in the process is also a powerful activity for considering active student engagement - either as partners, or as active agents in their own learning.
What was the impact on students? *Note any reported impacts on students: Did those who did engage do better than those who did not? Did it narrow gaps in attainment between more and less advantaged students? Student beliefs about their role in assessment Student confidence Student learning outcomes Student engagement in assessment Student satisfaction Assessment Literacy Ability to use, seek and give feedback Contribution to assessment resources and valuable outputs*	What were the impacts on students? Did all students benefit equally? What specific changes resulted if any? Any unexpected outcomes?	The impact on the participants was transformational in many ways. One of the first benefits is encouraging them to think of less-obvious aspects of assessment that they might not previously have thought about or realised were issues. The opportunity to take a step back and review their assessment approaches is another important benefit.
What was the impact on staff? *Impact on staff engagement in training Did it impact staff conceptions of assessment and the role of students in the process? Did it make assessment more efficient? Staff competency Staff confidence*	What were the impacts on staff? Do staff have a better understanding of assessment? Was assessment design improved as a consequence of what you did?	In this instance, the staff were, effectively, the students. However, the facilitators of the session also gained a more holistic view of assessment and feedback practices. Feedback from participants who have since acted as assessors in their own context suggested that the impact of the exercise was to make them re-phrase their assessments, and in some cases revise them, to enhance assessment

		literacy, as well as providing timely feedback and making their assessments more inclusive and authentic/meaningful.
How sustainable do you think these changes can be? *Are changes embedded within curriculum? Any longer term gains? Development of effective assessment networks* *Changes in attitudes?* *Upskilling of staff* *More efficient use of resource* *Impacts on policy?*	Sustainability: any longer term gains from the project? Has what you implemented become part of business as usual – will it be maintained?	The activity is fully embedded in the Education Fellowships programmes for FHEA accreditation. The approach is also being rolled out as part of the Learning & Teaching CPD offer for the university, and as a stand-alone workshop for individual Schools.
What did YOU gain from this experience? *What personal learning do you take away from the project?* *(Use reflective templates to support evaluative activities)*	What was the impact on those colleagues and students leading the case studies? What were the key learning points for you? What would you have done differently in retrospect? How could you improve your design?	The biggest insight for me was the revelation of what people can achieve by reflection and discussion of the elements related to assessment. By actively surfacing these issues, the participants gained a much deeper self-authored understanding.
Any general thoughts or advice about using the EAT framework? *What are the key messages that would be useful for others trying to do this?*	Transferability Were there any subject specific findings that have relevance to the sector? How can learning be adapted and utilized elsewhere? What are the key messages/learning from this work?	The participants needed to have the 12 sub-dimensions explained to them in detail before they could attempt the task. It is therefore vitally important that the sub-dimensions are placed in a context and explained, otherwise the exercise does not flow as well as it could do. This is absolutely an exercise that can be adopted with academic or education-support staff anywhere, as well as with students (using the student EAT wheel).

At the top of the first cell:

Staff collaboration
Staff assessment literacy
Better assessment design?
Did it lead to better curriculum design