[Setanta College]

2024

2024 Annual Quality Report Setanta College
CASE STUDIES RELATED to
Academic Year September 2022 –
August 2023

CASE STUDY 1

Title: Inclusive Practice in relation to Assessment Strategy

Theme: Development and Use of Learner Assessment

Keywords (2-3 words): Assessment Inclusive Practice

Short Abstract (optional):

Insert Case Study 3 below

Given the flexible nature of studying with Setanta College, the student population come from diverse backgrounds in terms of formal education, practical experience, culture and geographical location. With this diversity, there is a great opportunity for the students in terms of networking potential and peer to peer learning. However, it can also bring challenges to tailor the content, delivery style and assessment to be inclusive to all students. Today, we will explore Setanta Colleges inclusive practice in relation to assessments.

Assessment Design:

There has recently been a huge diversification to the assessment portfolio in Setanta College. This was focused initially at reducing the risk of malpractice using AI in response to a QQI conference on the topic. However, in doing this, there was a greater opportunity to diversify the expression of learning across various means to increase inclusivity. These concepts around diversifying expression methods for students to demonstrate learning were considered as part of a greater framework of universal design for learning (UDL) within the college. The students were already offered multiple ways of representation and engagement in their learning, so this focused mainly on the expression aspect of the greater framework. Previously, across the 18 modules of the BSc pathway the assessment portfolio focused solely on written assignments. Now the same learning outcomes are demonstrated using MCQs, presentations, practical assessments, logbooks as well as written assignments. This has added to the area of inclusivity within the colleges offering as students will have more of an opportunity to express their learnings through various skillsets. In contrast, students will also have more of an opportunity to work on skills they would not have been exposed to previously such as presentation skills, so it has also improved learning opportunities.

Communication:

Proactive communication is essential for inclusivity in a flexible learning population. Students are understood to have varying workloads through external commitments, so our goal is to alleviate the burden and stress by providing effective communication in a timely manner. This allows the student plan effectively to submit their assessment both on time and to a standard truly representative of their learning.

Flexible Timing:

Again, with the flexible learning format in Setanta College external commitments and workload are paid their due respect in planning a student's journey. In terms of assessments, there is often undue stress placed on strict deadlines which offer minimal leniency to the diversity of learners and their individual circumstances. Setanta College offers learners an open channel to members of the education team to communicate and seek flexibility on these submission dates if necessary. If time constraints are the main concern, leniency of two weeks can be added to the original submission date. In addition to this, Setanta staff are accommodating from live assessments to the learner's schedule. If the learner cannot attend an allocated timeslot for assessment, this is not punished through negative grading but instead accommodated with a more suitable time.

Feedback:

Setanta College's philosophy around marking and providing feedback centres around inclusivity and development for the diverse learner population. Shute (2008) describes feedback as the verification of submitted work being correct. Elaboration on the other hand, is the information provided on how the learner can improve or get to the correct answer. Markers at Setanta College are all active coaches or educators within the specific field of study for each module. This ensures the level of elaboration provided to students in their assessment feedback is to an exceptional standard to continually promote student learning and progression.

Collaboration with Learners and Representatives:

Finally, the last key area for inclusivity in relation to assessment structure and design in Setanta College is focused on collaboration with the learners themselves. Learners have an opportunity to contribute to the continual improvement of the assessment methods and

broader portfolio through several means within the College. At the end of each module, learners have an opportunity to fill out a feedback form relating to their course of study including the assessment method for that module. In addition to this specific focus on module assessments, input is sought after from student representatives in the academic council around broader proposals regarding change in assessments. This collaborative approach ensures the college gives the opportunity the student population to contribute to the overall assessment design, thus, furthering the inclusivity on this area of their journey.

Reference List:

Shute, V.J., 2008. Focus on formative feedback. Review of educational research, 78(1), pp.153-189.