Assessment patterns: a review of the possible consequences

What follows are a collection of ‘assessment patterns’. The patterns set out different assessment strategies along a 12-week semester (timeline). The patterns are not focussed on the type of assessment, only its timing and its ‘stakes’ (low, medium or high). This document presents assessment patterns that move away from end of process assessment and help students make more of their feedback.

A typical example of assessment

Possible consequences
• Undistributed student work load
• Teachers not seeing student conceptions until too late
• Examination too high stakes

An example that provides better feedback opportunities

Possible consequences
• Engages students with the curriculum early
• Student workload is reasonably well spread out
• Not reliant on high stakes assessment activity
• Opportunities exist for the provision of feedback after each assessment
• The three assessment tasks are seen as being too discrete. i.e. there is no obvious link between the assessments
• Little explicit need for students to collect, read, seek to understand or act on any feedback
Some (alternative) better assessment patterns

Possible consequences
- Engages students early with the curriculum
- Student workload is reasonably well spread out
- Not reliant on high stakes assessment activity
- Opportunities exist for the provision of feedback after each assessment
- To benefit the learning, the two last tasks are connected by the feedback

Possible consequences
- Engages students early with the curriculum
- Student workload is reasonably well spread out
- Not reliant on high stakes assessment activity
- Opportunities exist for the provision of feedback after each assessment
- Task two ‘suggests’ feedback from one is important – weak feedback link
- Task three is directly related to the feedback students receive in task two – strong feedback link
- Because of the linking of feedback (both weak and strong) students are more likely to pick up, read, seek to understand and subsequently use their feedback

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