5ydd Gynhadledd Dysgu ac Addysgu

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# Crynoldebau / abstracts

How successful is within-lecture (self-)assessment of student engagement, knowledge and learning?: experiences from some Part 2 Geography modules

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In recent years, increasing emphasis has been given to enhancing feedback to students in order to improve their engagement, knowledge and learning. Most commonly, this feedback is provided on formally submitted work, perhaps days or weeks after the work has been completed, and the effectiveness of this feedback may remain unclear. In an attempt to assess student engagement, knowledge and learning within lectures, in the 2016-17 academic year I introduced short exercises at the start and end of lectures in some Part 2 Geography modules (GG23410 Sedimentary Environments and GG30420 River Systems and Global Environmental Change). The exercises were based around the labelling of images or maps that related to lecture concepts and themes. With minimal guidance, students were asked to label the images or maps (e.g. using five key words, or by adding place names) near the start of the lectures (‘before’ exercises). The lectures were then delivered, in some instances with explicit reference to the exercises. The students were then given the opportunity to repeat the exercises at the end of the lecture in the light of the material that they had been exposed to (‘after’ exercises). Overall, the exercises were designed to: i) enhance student engagement with lecture material; ii) enable me to assess student knowledge prior to lecture delivery and thus in real time modify the content accordingly; and iii) enable students’ own assessment of their learning gains.

Using personal observations of lecture theatre engagement and informal and formal feedback from students, this presentation evaluates the successes, partial successes, and failures of these exercises. Successes include a high level of student engagement with the exercises, while partial successes include some evidence of improved quality of student labelling in the ‘before’ and ‘after’ exercises. Failures include a lack of student recognition of the benefits of these opportunities for learning self-assessment, at least in the MEQ context. In the light of this evaluation, recommendations for wider use of similar exercises in Geography and other modules can be made.

Preferred format: oral presentation.

[nb. the presentation will best address the theme of ‘Providing feedback for learning’ but also touch on other themes, especially ‘Enriching learning through media’].