

THE EFFECT OF THE *DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING OF ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING* PROGRAM ON MARKER RELIABILITY AND MARKING EFFICIENCY OF SCIENTIFIC REPORT WRITING TASKS

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ABSTRACT

The *Developing Understanding of Assessment for Learning* (DUAL) program was developed to improve the quality and consistency of the feedback students receive and the ability of students to use that feedback to improve their scientific report writing. DUAL draws on examples of best practice from the higher education literature and integrates them into a comprehensive package of activities which support both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer between staff in the teaching team, between students and between staff and students. A study quantified the efficacy of DUAL to achieve its aims of improving reliability and efficiency of marking of first year biology reports by a large team of practical demonstrators. We found that marker reliability increased after demonstrators participated in DUAL but time taken to mark reports did not reduce significantly. We also found that demonstrators highly valued being included in the development of the program and enthusiastically provided feedback when asked. Joint development and revision of the DUAL resources within the community of practice resulted in an efficient and effective program which met the needs of the DUAL facilitators, demonstrator teaching team and ultimately the students.

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