A TRELLIS OF PRACTICES TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT REDESIGN

Prue Laidlaw

Presenting Author: Prue Laidlaw (plaidlaw@csu.edu.au)
Faculty of Science & Health, Charles Sturt University, Port Macquarie New South Wales 2444, Australia

KEYWORDS: assessment design, theory of practice architectures, GenAI, academic integrity

SUBTHEME: Empowering Educators

PROBLEM

The rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) necessitate a fundamental shift in how assessments are designed in higher education. This presentation reports on an initiative launched in April 2024, aimed at promoting innovative assessment strategies in a faculty of science and health that align with the university's broader goals. Supporting over 500 academic staff responsible for approximately 750 units of study, the challenge lies in redesigning assessments to maintain academic integrity while leveraging AI to enhance learning outcomes.

DESIGN

Drawing on the theory of practice architectures (Mahon et al., 2016), this project aimed to create a comprehensive support structure for academic staff during the assessment redesign process. The initiative established a 'trellis of practices' (Francisco, 2020) — a network of interrelated practices supporting innovative assessment redesign.

1. **Online Workshops:** Designed to build confidence in using AI for teaching, address ethical concerns, biases, and data privacy issues, and promote inclusive and equitable AI use.
2. **Dedicated Webpages:** A comprehensive online resource hub hosted on Microsoft SharePoint, including workshop recordings and worksheets to guide academics through the assessment redesign process.
3. **Streamlined Processes:** Detailed worksheets aligned with institutional principles and policies to guide academics efficiently in redesigning assessments.
4. **High-Quality Material:** Research and resources from experts in higher education to build combined capabilities in understanding and using AI tools in assessment redesign.

EVALUATION

Over 150 academic staff participated in the workshops, and more than 350 have accessed the dedicated SharePoint site since its launch. These resources have empowered academic staff to make informed decisions about integrating AI into their assessments. As a result, in Session 2, 2024, 35 units permitted almost 2000 students to use AI in assessment tasks. The units of study were broad reflecting a growing acceptance and implementation of AI-enhanced learning strategies. Evaluation is ongoing and will look at academic integrity and student and staff feedback on the challenges and opportunities when working *with* AI in assessment tasks.

Leveraging the theory of practice architectures, this initiative develops a robust trellis of interconnected support mechanisms, providing a framework for ongoing assessment redesign. This ensures our strategies remain relevant and effective amidst the evolving AI landscape in education.

REFERENCES

Francisco, S. (2020). Developing a trellis of practices that support learning in the workplace, Studies in Continuing Education, 42(1), 102-117. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2018.1562439

Mahon, K., Francisco, S., & Kemmis, S. & Lloyd, A. (2016). Introduction: practice theory and the theory of practice architecture. In Mahon, K., Francisco, S., & Kemmis, S. & Lloyd, A. (Eds.). Exploring education and professional practice: Through the lens of practice architectures. Springer Singapore.

Proceedings of the Australian Conference on Science and Mathematics Education, The University of Canberra, 18 – 19 September 2024, page 63, ISSN 2653-0481.