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INDUSTRY WEEKLY DIGEST

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management

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'AUTHENTIC' ASSESSMENT

Higher education is witnessing a paradigm shift from traditional tests of knowledge to more complex assessment of both knowledge and its contextualised application: authentic assessment.

Whilst we note that more traditional approaches still have their place, in this digest, **Professor Anita Eves** explores the academic literature on this topic and provides existing examples of this type of assessment in the **School of Hospitality and Tourism Management**.

Have a great weekend!

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT – PARADIGM SHIFT, OR BUSINESS AS USUAL IN SHTM?

PROFESSOR ANITA EVES

Tests of knowledge encourage superficial approaches to learning (1), whereas authentic assessment seeks to develop higher-level intellectual and transferable skills. These are the graduate skills now expected by employers (2), who seek basic skills (such as problem-solving, critical thinking, communication skills and teamwork), as well as people who can cope with uncertainty or working under pressure, plan or think strategically, and communicate and interact effectively with others (1). Authentic assessment is well-established in some fields, for instance nursing, (3) but has proved more of a challenge in less vocational University subjects (1,3).

In **SHTM**, however, it is not new, it's business as usual! Authentic assessment comprises assessment tasks that mirror professional practice (2,4), exposing students to tasks/situations resembling their (future) professional practice. Learning is contextualised and focusses on the use of skills and demonstration of competencies, knowledge and attitudes that are applied in professional life when handling professional problem situations (1,3,4,5). Students perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful synthesis, integration and application of essential knowledge and skills, in a manner that transcends the classroom (4,5,6).



SOME EXAMPLES OF AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT IN SHTM ARE LISTED BELOW:

In these modules, learning becomes active rather than passive and students are prepared for living and working in a changing world (7).

Live Events modules at UG and PG – groups of students create, plan, market, deliver and evaluate a live event. They pitch a feasibility study to industry professionals, and report the outcomes of their event compared with the project aims. Read more about this in a previous Industry Digest [here](#).

Hospitality, Tourism and Events consultancy – students work on a live brief from an industry client, presenting the outcome of their research to the client.

Restaurant Operations/Management – Students experience working in both our Lakeside training restaurant and the Lakeside Coffee shop, gaining understanding of how to manage those working in these environments. They also plan, cost and run a service. Read more about this in a previous Industry Digest [here](#).

Business Plan – groups of students develop a Business Plan to support a new venture. This requires attention to all aspects of running a business and thus forms a great vehicle for integration of knowledge from across their programme.

Operations Analysis – Using a simulation, this module allows students to apply their understanding to respond to problems in a realistic and constantly changing scenario.

Strategic Marketing and Brand Management – student groups take a consultancy agency mindset and develop an advertising campaign for a hospitality, tourism or events brand.