Assessing the needs and preparedness of students through targeted assessment and support

Josua Pienaar, Nadine Adams and Hilary Winchester
22 Campuses and study centres across Australia
61% of students enrolled in distance education mode
Widening participation
Time poor academics
Shorter terms
2. Specific strategies support transition, including:

a. Accessing the needs and preparedness of individual students and cohorts

b. Undertaking early assessment or review that provides formative feedback on academic progress and is able to identify needs for additional support, and

c. Providing access to informed advice and timely referral to academic or other support.
Diagnostic testing

Multiple Choice Questions

Disadvantages

• Minimal feedback
• Often tests low level thinking
• Questionable validity and reliability
  – increases with increased number of items
• High instances of queuing
  – Positive in difficult items
  – Negative in easy items

Advantages

• Short turnaround for marking
• Large numbers marked
• Multiple attempts (formative)
Video enhanced online quizzes

• Allows students to self-assess
• Video feedback is provided immediately
Video enhanced online quizzes

• Preliminary results from Pilot
  – Only 5 students completed survey (24 in subject)
  – All felt the Video Enhanced Online Quizzes help them to understand the mathematical concepts
  – Student would like to see these incorporated into their other courses
  – Student Comments
  – Average mark 6/10 (11)
Student Feedback

- “I did not finish the test as I wasn't doing to well and commenced some study through the ALC but did not re-commence the test as I got caught up studying for other topic quizzes/assignments”
- “the first time I have encountered so much help. It is truly amazing”
Future directions

• New projects are currently being trialled
  – Medical and Applied Science
    • First year site in Moodle
    • Quizzes direct students through lessons
  – Engineering Mathematics
    • Quizzes in Open Online Course
  – Foundation Engineering Mathematics
    • Located within course Moodle site
In Conclusion

- Factors considered in identifying and supporting students entering university without the assumed prior knowledge
  - Academic time constraints
  - Platform
  - Encourage self-assessment and self-regulation
  - Directed learning
  - Timely intervention
Questions?

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