Assessment Patterns: a review of the possible consequences

Moving away from high stakes, end-of-process assessment

- Represents low stakes assessment
- Represents medium stakes assessment
- Represents high stakes assessment

What follows are a collection of ‘assessment patterns’. The patterns set out different assessment strategies along a 12 week semester (timeline). The patterns are not focussed on the type of assessment, only its timing and its ‘stakes’ (low, medium or high).

A typical example of assessment:

P1

Formative or low stakes | High stakes assessment (formal examination). End of semester

| week | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 |

Possible consequences

- Undistributed student work load
- Teachers not seeing student conceptions until too late
- Examination too high stakes

Some alternative (better) patterns:

P2

Formative or low stakes assessment ~ week 3 | Two separate low / medium stakes assessment ~ wk 7 & 12

| week | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 |

Possible consequences

- Engages students early with the curriculum
- Student workload reasonably well spread out
- Not reliant on high stakes assessment activity
- No opportunity to provide feedback at after third assessment
Possible consequences
- Engages students early with the curriculum
- Student workload reasonably well spread out
- Not reliant on high stakes assessment activity
- Feedback is possible to students on their third task

Possible consequences
- Engages students early with the curriculum
- Student workload is even distributed across entire semester
- All assessments are low stakes
- Could be demanding in staff / student time
- Assessment tasks could assess specific concepts / parts of the curriculum
- Staff gain early and regular feedback on student performance and on understanding of concept

Possible consequences
- As P4 and...
- Allows for an integrating task at the end of the regular activity

Questions:
How do your assessment patterns stimulate the type of learning and student behaviours you desire
How can technology help in such endeavours?