
Tip sheet – Using FLO to check students' understanding

As you move through the semester/teaching period, you will want to check that your students are **on track with their learning**. You may also want to set up activities for students to **self-evaluate their understanding and learning**. Many tools within the [FLO ecosystem](#) lend themselves to these types of activities.

Assignment

The [assignment activity](#) is generally used for the submission of text-based assessment items (eg essays, reports) but it can also be used for other types of assessment. There are many [benefits to using this tool](#) for both staff and students, one of the greatest being able to easily provide and receive feedback on tasks, assessed or not. If you're not familiar with all this tool has to offer, it's worth exploring the [Assignment self-paced online workshop](#).

For example, allow students to submit a [iterative assessment item](#), and provide them with formative [feedback](#). Students can action the feedback and 'feed it forward' into a graded summative assessment item. You will be able to gauge how students are going early on in the semester.

Blog

The [blog activity](#) can be used when students need to write regular entries. It can be private (student/teacher) or public (all students in the topic/teacher), so has a wide range of uses. You can use a blog to prompt discussion and/or reflection among students. Posts are in chronological order (showing the latest one first).

For example, set weekly tasks for students to record in a blog set to 'blog together or in groups' with comments allowed. Students could peer assess each other's posts each week as part of the task. You could view these blogs once or twice a semester to check on progress. This is an opportunity for students to learn from each other and practise constructive feedback/critical thinking skills.

Choice and/or Feedback

The [choice activity](#) can be used to pose a single question with a selection of possible responses. You can control whether students are able to change their response/provide multiple responses, and the number of students who can select each response. It's a great tool for a 'just in time' approach.

For example, ask a question related to a reading and use the spread of responses in a face-to-face/online discussion to clarify understandings or make sense of polarities for deeper learning. You could also use this activity to quickly test students' understanding in a lecture/workshop and respond to the results. Students can see a graph of class responses and gauge how they're tracking against their peers.

The [feedback activity](#) is an asynchronous way to measure how students are engaging with topic materials. It might be useful to do this early in the topic to check progress and identify any issues, which may allow you to make changes/adaptations that better meet student needs. The questions you ask will help students to identify their uncertainties.

For example, a feedback activity mid-topic could help you determine how to scaffold activities that lead to topic completion and achievement of the learning outcomes. The [Touchpoint survey](#) is useful for this purpose – you can tailor the questions to suit your topic.

Forum

A [forum using the question and answer \(Q and A\) type](#) differs from a standard forum in that students must submit their response to a question you post before they can view the responses of other students.

For example, after watching a chunked video lecture, students submit their stance on a point discussed in the video. As well as students seeing what their peers think, you could use these responses as the basis for a class debate. Another use for this type of forum is students 'self-marking' – provide a copy of the answers once they have posted their responses. Great for formative activities, it provides students with feedback on their learning within a short timeframe and teaches them the skill of 'self-regulation'. It also saves teaching staff time and effort.

Quiz

The [quiz activity](#) allows you to set out-of-class quizzes using a range of different question types, many of which mark themselves. There are extensive options for setup, giving you control to create tailored activities. You can make the quiz's purpose [formative](#), [self-assessment](#) or [practice](#) (non-graded, low stakes). Other options include setting up overall feedback based on grade boundaries (80%, 60% etc), and setting question behaviour to 'Interactive with multiple tries' where students receive hints at each attempt. These options enable you to track student understandings at the same time as students self-evaluate. If you're not familiar with this tool, it's worth exploring the [Quizzes in FLO self-paced online workshop](#).

For example, at the end of modules running over multiple weeks, give students short quizzes. Depending on their grade, the feedback tells them if they are on target to be successful in topic assessments, if they need to revisit some of the components covered in that module to improve their chances of being successful, or if they should take a deeper look at the module to help their understanding. Quiz could also be used to check understanding (both students and staff) using a 'mini' quiz (2-4 questions) after each chunked video lecture. For students, a quick quiz is more achievable and provides them with an immediate snapshot of how they are going.

Database and/or Glossary

The [database](#) and [glossary](#) are great activities for creating collections/information banks. Both students and teachers can contribute (as a teacher, you might contribute the first entry as an example). Looking at the quality of student contributions will help you determine their needs/skill gaps. Students can learn from the entries others contribute and self-evaluate against them. The database activity enables you to create [fields](#) and [templates](#) to structure the entries so they are specific to the task. The glossary activity has different [appearance options](#) (including FAQ) for the entry list, but the entry itself is freeform/unstructured.

For example, using the **database activity** students must find and evaluate journals for their discipline. They share them in the database, and comment on the submissions of other students. In this way, they not only discover new journals in their field, but can use the database throughout the rest of the topic (if set as an early activity) to do research for other assessment items. The **glossary activity** could be used for students to research a subject and populate it with the most relevant resources they find. If students research different subjects, these shared resources will expand their learning. If the topic has complex terminology, students could create a glossary of terms as a useful reference point. They need to make sure that the definition/s is authentic and referenced from a reliable source/s. Entries could be [auto-linked](#) where they appear in the topic.

Lesson

The [lesson activity](#) can incorporate questions (eg multiple choice, matching, short answer) mixed with content in linear or non-linear ways that enable students to practise/test themselves as they go, and progress (or not) depending on their responses. This activity is ideal for knowledge checks and self-assessment, as well as enabling you to [see their responses](#).

For example, whilst explaining a concept, include some key questions to check that the student understands. If the student's response is incorrect, branch to extra information to explain the concept

further or in a different way. If correct, branch to more complex information to extend the student's learning.

Self and peer assessment

The [self and peer assessment activity](#) can be used for students to assess themselves and each other against a set of predetermined criteria. Teaching staff can also provide feedback and override that given by the student's peers if deemed unfair. The assessment can relate to a piece of submitted work and/or to each individual's performance in a group task.

For example, students could submit a short written example of a press release before the class analyses the responses against a set of assessment criteria to provide marks and feedback. Examples that model constructive feedback will give students more freedom to critique others' work, which is an authentic workplace skill.

Mahara eportfolio

[Mahara](#) is an eportfolio integrated with FLO, so is ideal for students to document and self-evaluate their learning. Content from Mahara can be submitted directly to the [assignment activity](#) in FLO if required for assessment. If assessment is ongoing during the semester, you will be able to visit student contributions to their eportfolio periodically to see how they are going. View examples of [perpetual journal/reflection on learning](#) assessment activities (demo site).

For example, students could use their portfolios to document key skills they've practised whilst on placement. They could then submit one of these reflections (eg via the assignment activity) to demonstrate how they used their skills.