

Defining and operationalising synoptic assessment

Conference abstract

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Abstract

Synoptic assessment refers to the assessment of students' understanding of the connections between the different elements of a subject. Despite constituting a useful pedagogical tool (e.g. it can encourage a holistic and coherent delivery of the curriculum), synoptic assessment remains an under-researched topic in the field of educational assessment. In fact, an electronic search for the term synoptic assessment in major academic databases yielded only four related resources. To address this gap in research, this study examined synoptic assessment both at a theoretical and at a practical level. First, it attempted to illuminate the concept of synoptic assessment by situating it in the broader educational literature. Subsequently, it sought to operationalise it by developing a framework that captures the different routes via which synoptic assessment can be incorporated into the design of various types of courses. This paper will unpack the concept of synoptic assessment and will describe how synoptic assessment can be introduced into academic and vocational courses.

Full paper:

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