AN EXAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT THAT INVOLVES...

• Authenticity
• Assessment as learning
• Group work assessment

AIMS

Crime always occurs in context. This is the starting point for the assessment in this practically focused module, which attracts 70-80 students. The lecturer wished to devise an assessment which would reflect the contextual nature of community safety. The aim was for the assessment to be an integral part of the module, rather than feeling like a “bolt on”. In keeping with this approach to assessment as learning, students would have chance to work both in groups and individually to undertake real world tasks.

ACTIONS

The lecturer created an imaginary neighbourhood, named Starley Cross, in which students could explore issues of community safety. A full profile of the neighbourhood was compiled, including information about demographics and key streets and buildings.

A virtual reality simulation was built, enabling students to able to walk around and explore the neighbourhood, looking for evidence of criminal activity and clues (see screen shot below). The neighbourhood was initially designed by the lecturer on paper (see map on right), and a virtual rendering subsequently created by a learning technologist.

As part of the assessment for the module, students were asked to work in groups of 4 to a) deliver a presentation and b) produce a website, both on the theme of community safety in Starley Cross. The presentation was contextualised as a role play meeting between a community safety team (the students) and a local authority manager (the lecturer).

For the second task, the lecturer provided some pointers on how to create an effective website, and this was factored into the grading as well as students’ understanding of the topic. Both these formats were chosen as they have greater value for students’ employability than a traditional essay.

For both tasks, each student in the group would choose one of four specified specialisms. For the presentation, a group mark was assigned. For the website, 30% of the marks were based on the group effort, and the remaining 70% was allocated to individuals for their personal contribution.

IMPACT

The assignments are very much embedded within the module and its simulated environment. Coupled with the use of “real world” formats, this makes for an assessment which is both innovative and authentic. Indeed, other course teams are considering the potential for virtual tools and games to be used (e.g. to replicate crime scenes or facilitate role plays), particularly in the context of remote delivery.

SCALABILITY

There is scope to use simulations across a range of disciplines and levels to facilitate this type of problem based learning. Colleagues teaching in various contexts could also fruitfully consider how to balance group- and individually-marked elements of the assessment.

FEEDBACK

Student comments from Module Evaluation Questionnaires:

• “It is very relevant to a career in criminology, specifically policing. It is stimulating and uses creative assignments”
• “The Starley Cross simulation was a very interesting and engaging way to learn”
• “I am able to apply my module to the real world. The assessments are diverse as its just not a usual essay.”

MESSAGE TO PEERS

Some students may take some convincing about the value of an assessment type that they aren’t familiar with. However, having undertaken the assignment, they often find it to be a rewarding experience, as the MEQ comments show.

EXTRACT FROM ASSESSMENT BRIEF: see next page.
Assessment 1: Starley Cross Neighbourhood Analysis Presentations

In weeks 6 and 7 (dates) you will be assessed in your Community Safety Teams for the first assessment on this module.

The assessment will take the form of a 30-minute meeting in Microsoft Teams in which your group will present its analysis of the issues and problems in Starley Cross. Twenty minutes will be allowed for the presentation and ten minutes for feedback, so you need to be on time, well organised and concise.

The assessment is intended to role play a professional meeting between you as a community safety team and your local authority manager. While a mark will be awarded for this work, and you must pass it to pass the module, it should be seen also as formative – that means the feedback given for this assessment should help you improve your work in the final assessment.

(Further guidance is provided on what is required and the purpose of the exercise)

Assessment 2 - The website

As a team in a community safety partnership for the neighbourhood of Starley Cross, your brief is to prepare material for and build a website to display information about the work of the partnership in identifying issues, outlining interventions and evaluating those interventions in relation to an appropriate theoretical context. Interventions will be based on four main crime prevention approaches, which we will cover in the module: community crime prevention; developmental crime prevention; situational crime prevention; designing out crime. Each team member will need to choose ONE of these approaches so that in a group of four they are all covered. In a group of three you can choose which approach to leave out.

In imagining that you are replicating what would happen in real practice, you should aim to provide a professional and yet user-friendly website and part of your research into finding out what works best should involve looking critically at some local authority community safety websites for inspiration.

The website shall comprise a series of pages, some produced collaboratively by all members of the group, and others produced independently by each individual in the group as follows (see also further details on web pages below):

- Home page (produced collaboratively)
- About us page (produced collaboratively)
- Neighbourhood analysis page (produced collaboratively)
- Community crime prevention interventions page (produced individually)
- Developmental crime prevention page (produced individually)
- Situational crime prevention page (produced individually)
- Designing out crime page (produced individually)
- References page (produced collaboratively containing ONE list of references used in the website).

The website – word count

Each student shall contribute a total of 2500 words to the website (plus or minus ten per cent). Of those 2500 words, each student will contribute 500 words to the collaborative pages (excluding the references page) and their remaining 2000 words shall be produced in the individual page(s). [...]
### Assessment marking strategy

**For Assessment 1** you will be presenting as a group and all members of the group are expected to contribute to the background work and the presentation for which all group members will get the same mark.

**For Assessment 2**, because group assignments raise issues of equity of achievement related to individual input and effort, the assessment mark for this module is divided into two components, one relating to the collaborative elements of the website which each student in their group will receive, and the other relating to the individual element of the website for which each student receives their own mark. The overall mark is the combination of group and individual marks. This will work out as follows:

- **Collaborative mark:** 30% of the overall mark for the group elements of the website (Home page; About Us page; Neighbourhood Plan page; References page).

- **Individual mark:** 70% of the overall mark for work presented on a suitably evaluated intervention strategy from your chosen specialism (community crime prevention, developmental crime prevention, situational crime prevention or designing out crime).

### Marking Rubric for Assessment 2: Group Website

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<tr>
<th>GROUP No</th>
<th>Fail (-40)</th>
<th>Satisfactory 40s</th>
<th>Good 50s</th>
<th>Very good 60s</th>
<th>Excellent 70s</th>
<th>Outstanding 80+</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group effort</strong></td>
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<td>Completeness 15% Response and adherence to brief and professionalism in presentation</td>
<td>0 – 4</td>
<td>5 – 7</td>
<td>7 – 9</td>
<td>9 – 10</td>
<td>10 – 11</td>
<td>12 – 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coherence 15% Clarity and structure of website, ease of navigation and evidence of group collaboration</td>
<td>0 – 4</td>
<td>5 – 7</td>
<td>7 – 9</td>
<td>9 – 10</td>
<td>10 – 11</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Individual effort</strong></td>
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