INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

International reflections on lessons learned during the COVID19 pandemic about ensuring quality in online assessment: Oceania

ICDE Quality Network Webinar
https://www.icde.org/knowledge-hub/icde-quality-network

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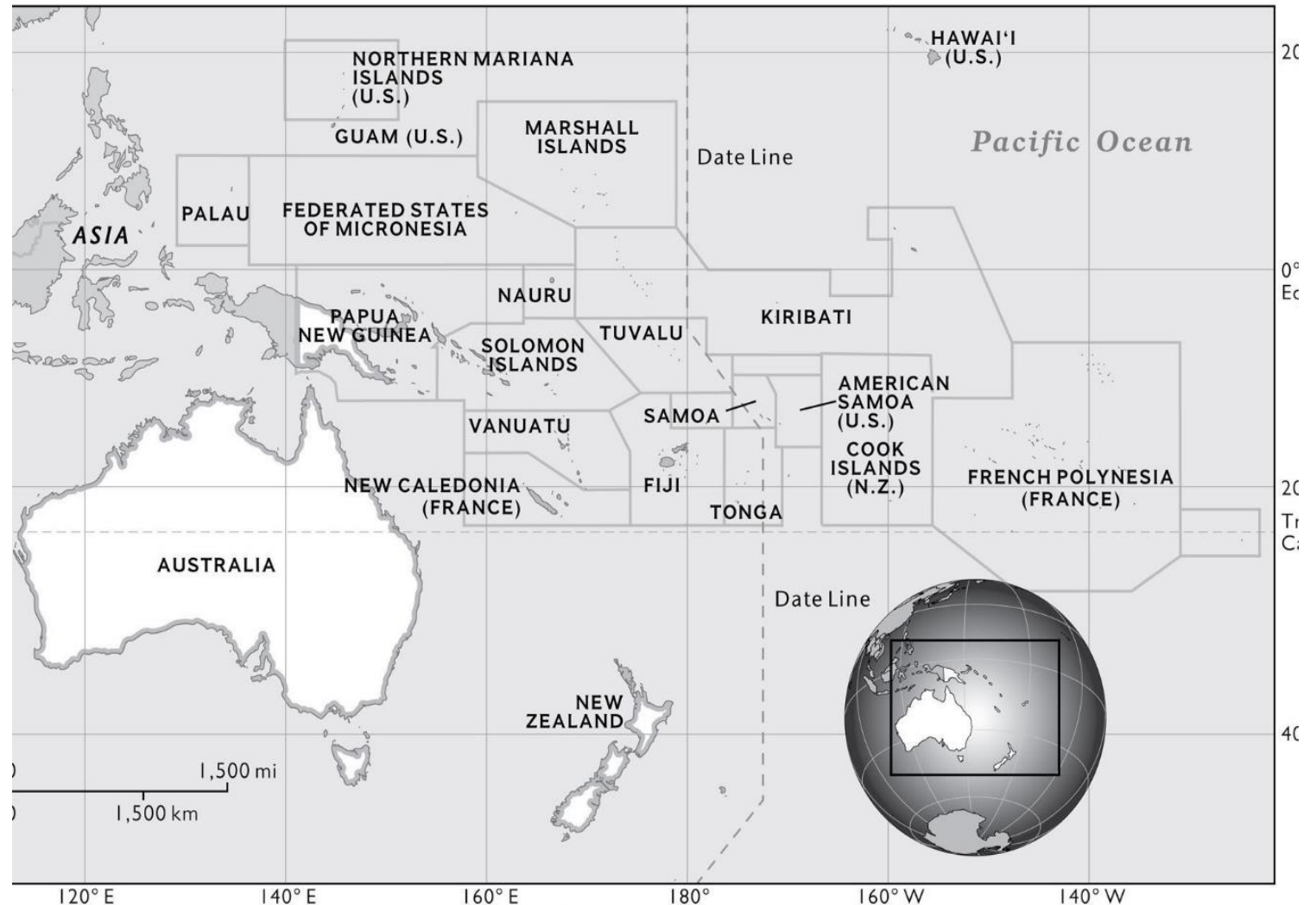
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Where on earth is Oceania?

14 countries:

Australia, Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

Info mostly from Oceania, but some references (see end) external to the region

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Applause

I applaud the initiatives of staff (teachers, central learning and teaching support units, IT units, student support units) and students who under great pressure moved into different modalities of assessment at commendable speed, attitude and success!

Lessons re online learning and teaching

(just mentioned – to be explored on another occasion!)

Mentioning lessons learned re online learning and teaching

1. There is no quality for all without equity and access – the digital divide was not expected

2. There is an imminent danger of below-par online learning that could lead to an unfortunate backlash against online learning following the pandemic

3. Use best practice in online learning without extensive theory promotion

4. Well-designed fully online courses require an amended role for teachers to ensure quality in online teaching

5. The quality of practical courses and work-based learning and placements can be enhanced through virtual simulation and significantly replaced by digital activities
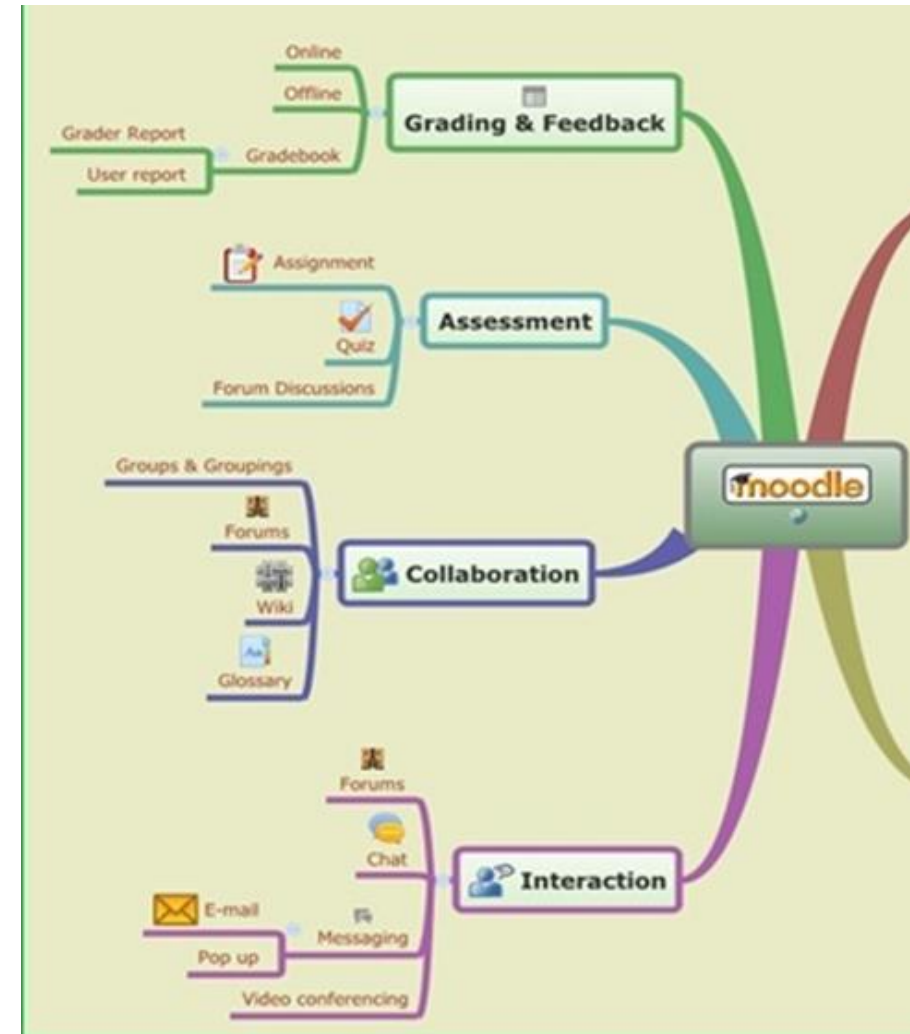
Lessons learned regarding assessment
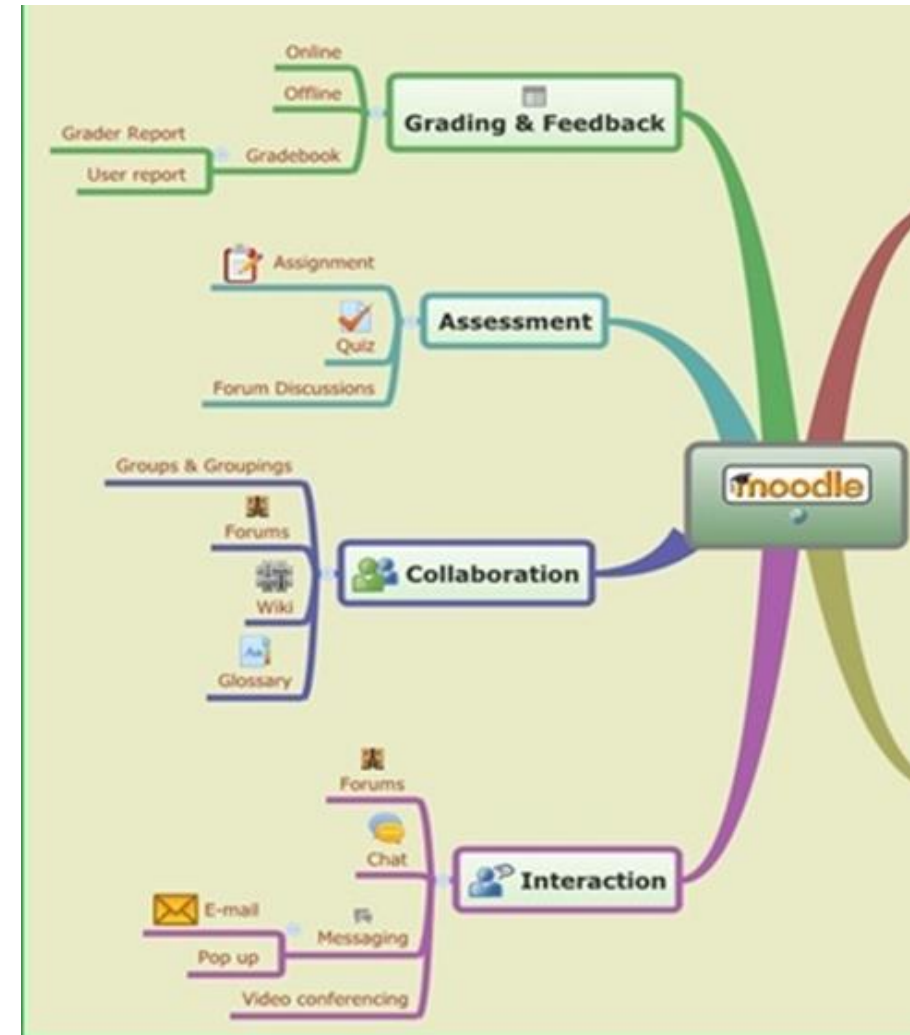
1. Traditional tests

Traditional tests were quite easily transferred online through quizzes (e.g. Moodle has more than 10 different types of quizzes).

Questions should be randomised and tightly timed.

2. Traditional assignments

Assignments can be quite easily submitted online and marked online or offline via the LMS or other bespoke systems.

3. Recording and managing grades

Most LMSs have extensive gradebooks / grade centres that can manage marks, calculate grades and keep track of badges.

4. The key challenge has been traditional exams

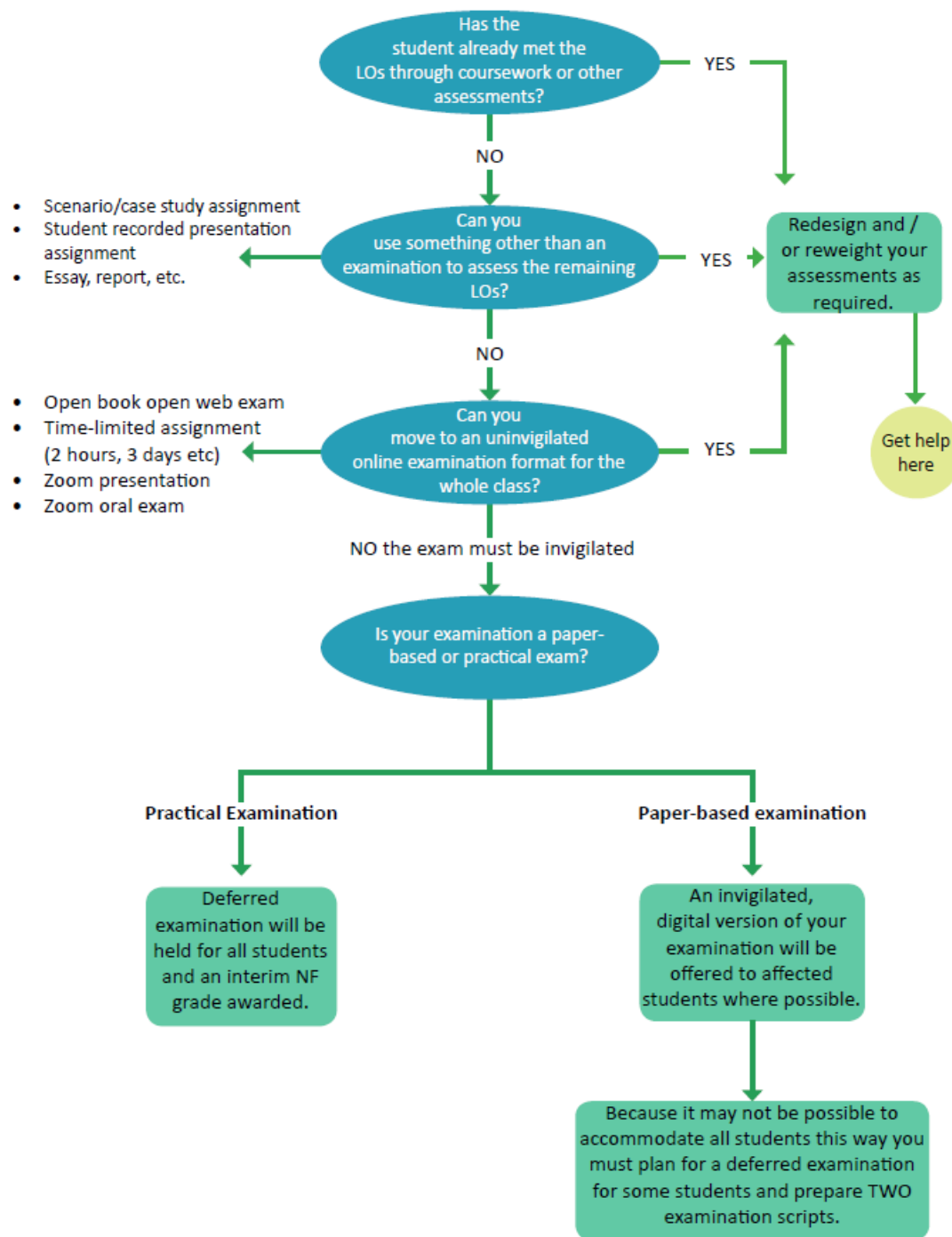# Strategies and tips regarding traditional exams

1. Work with the appropriate accrediting bodies and what they really require: some do not require exams

2. Postpone exams all together (as in Indonesia)

3. Diversify e.g. an online test instead of an exam, or more assignments (e.g. at Griffith University: timed, open book question bank assessments)/oral exams for small courses

4. Interactive Oral Assessments done online via video-conferencing

5. Many like Griffith University/University of New England/Charles Sturt University: online proctored exams from home (or for special cases on-campus) for a small percentage of courses. Some use *ProctorU* or *Respondus* or *Examity*.

6. If proctored: "Practice tests/exams" or "Try-It-Out" exams critical to familiarise students in advance

Strategies and tips regarding traditional exams (continue)

7. For small groups: use video conferencing systems like *BigBlueButton/Zoom* for online practical exams or online quizzes to be completed in real-time

8. Break exams up into smaller quizzes e.g. a 60% exam could become 3 assessments of 20% with each running over successive weeks

9. Open book exams could be considered with randomised questions and providing multiple scenarios (being submitted as an assignment)

10. In addition to exam anxiety there is also technology anxiety. University of New England indicated that moving to online exams is primarily a communication and change management exercise.

11. The timing of the exam needs to include time to set up and check technology, and there needs to be clear and concise channels of support

Some unis have developed flowcharts to help decision-making by teachers.

UNE's flowchart:

Has the student already met the LOs through coursework or other assessments?

YES → Redesign and / or reweight your assessments as required.

NO

- Scenario/case study assignment
- Student recorded presentation assignment
- Essay, report, etc.

Can you use something other than an examination to assess the remaining LOs?

YES → Redesign and / or reweight your assessments as required.

NO

- Open book open web exam
- Time-limited assignment (2 hours, 3 days etc)
- Zoom presentation
- Zoom oral exam

Can you move to an uninvigilated online examination format for the whole class?

YES

Get help here

NO the exam must be invigilated

Is your examination a paper-based or practical exam?

Practical Examination

Deferred examination will be held for all students and an interim NF grade awarded.

Paper-based examination

An invigilated, digital version of your examination will be offered to affected students where possible.

Because it may not be possible to accommodate all students this way you must plan for a deferred examination for some students and prepare TWO examination scripts.

General reflections

a. Digital assignments accentuates the need for academic integrity

Students require training in honesty and accountability.

Also use software e.g. *Copyleaks Moodle plagiarism plugin, VeriCite, Unicheck, DupliChecker, Quetext, Plagiarism Checker, Blackboard SafeAssign, Grammarly, Turnitin* etc.

b. Digital assignments heightens the potential for contract cheating

The risk of contract cheating increases in digitally submitted files or online quizzes. It is a serious and difficult issue to resolve.

Three strategies may help:

1. Set questions that require students to reference course materials.

2. Require students to submit workings, calculations, proofs or justifications for their answers.

3. Use oral assessment.

https://www.mprnews.org/story/2019/04/10/contract-cheating-colleges-crack-down-on-ghostwritten-essays

c. Online formative assessment and learning analytics rose in prominence

Online formative assessment played a more important role in providing online feedback to students on their progress (given they are not in class), while learning analytics has in some cases gained prominence to help analyse how students engage in their course sites and use of technologies in order to better support students
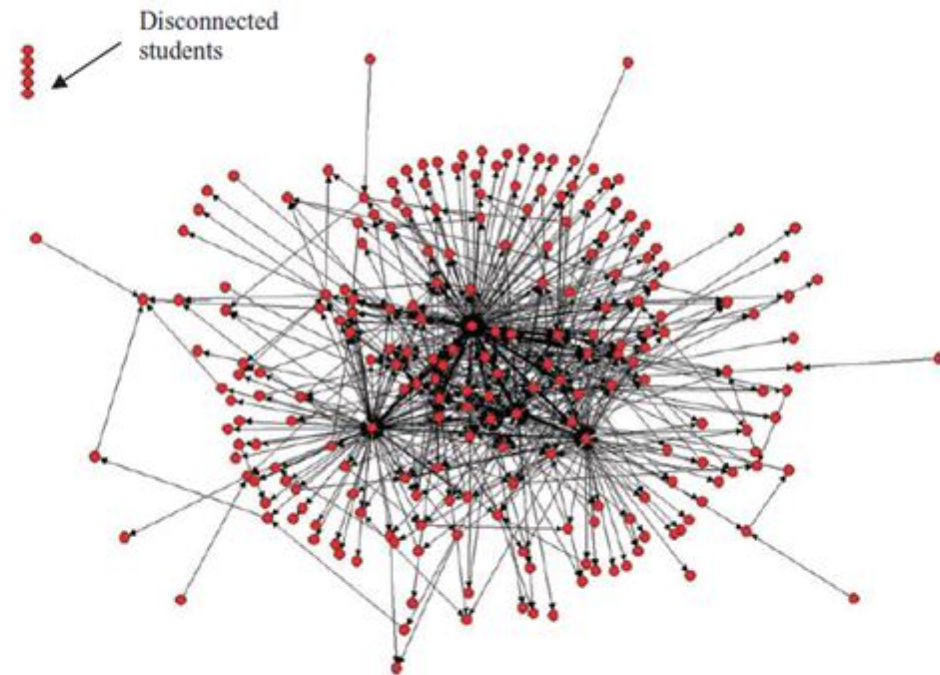

Figure 3: Sociogram demonstrating a higher level of network complexity. The sociogram also identifies students disconnected from the dominant network

Social Network Analysis (SNA)

Shane Dawson - 'Seeing' the learning community: An exploration of the development of a resource for monitoring online student networking

d. Key advantages of digital assessment – as experienced

One of the great advantages for students is that they are able to type rather than write!

There is flexibility of when, where, at what pace, and how for all involved.

The possibility of automated marking of student assignments is within reach using artificial intelligence and machine intelligence systems (like *eMarking Assistant, Rubric-O-Matic, Gradeassist, MarkUS, Oto, eRater* etc.)

e. Hoping for continuation of positive learnings

I hope that institutions will not simply return to how they did things before the pandemic, but **take the positive lessons learned above during this pandemic and improve and enrich the quality of assessment** of our students across the world.

Thank you

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