

# Assessing transformation: Curriculum Design Programme Meeting May09

Helen Beetham, Synthesis Consultant

- articulate starting points for assessing transformation, relative to the synthesis framework
- explore some tools/frameworks for assessing transformation
- identify opportunities for gathering evidence in your project plan

- 'Make sense' of the programme as a whole – it's lessons, themes, key achievements, significance
- Communicate this to key audiences & stakeholders
- Involve projects in developing the 'big picture'
- Help you keep it in view as you produce your:
  - Outcomes of activities
  - Evidence of quality, impact etc of those outcomes
  - Lessons learned



enabling

learning (personal transformation)

curriculum transformation

institutional transformation

informing

## What do we hope to transform (specifically)?

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- Can answer this question in relation to:
  - a. project goals (in what direction do we want things to change?)
  - b. stakeholder benefits (who wants/needs what to happen?)
  - c. the original challenge(s) (what needs to work better, and why?)
  - d. the counterfactual (what would happen if we did nothing?)
  
- NB: the context will change, and transformation is an emergent property of project interventions

## What do we hope to transform (specifically)?

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- Curricula, learning programmes, learning opportunities
- Institutional processes and practices around curriculum design, validation and approval
- Design tools, systems and practices
- Technical systems supporting all of the above
- ?Outcomes for learners? ?Institutional mission?  
?Others?

What transformations do you hope to bring about or accelerate or influence?

'Quality' of transformation:  
In what direction? Or  
To improve whose experience?

## Examples: project goals (efficiency/enhancement)

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### ■ More efficient:

- Design tools and practices
- Curriculum processes (time savings, data entry, workflows, documentation, interoperability...)

### ■ Enhanced:

- Curricula (better experience for learners)
- Outcomes (student employability, engagement, retention, progression)
- Curriculum processes (flexibility, creativity, responsiveness, innovation)
- Institutional capability in curriculum design

## Examples: project goals (transformation)

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- Transformed institutional systems (human and technical)
- Changes to institutional policies and strategies
- Learner (and other stakeholder) perspectives embedded into design process
- (sustained, embedded) innovations in practice
- Influence on educational research
- Technical solutions transferred to other contexts
- Changes to learner goals and progression routes
- Social justice e.g. access, participation

- Sustained (over time)
- Embedded (into context)
- Transferred (across contexts)
- Evident in policies, processes and systems
- Articulates values and influences agendas

## So in assessing transformation:

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- How have things changed? (qualitative/descriptive)
- Was change in the desired direction? (evaluative)
- How much have things changed? (quantitative – *not always possible*)
- How is it for stakeholders? (participative)
- The situation at two points in time (comparative)

How would you know transformation had happened?

Whose experience would be different, and how?

What might it look like if this failed to happen, or happened differently?

## Have you built into your evaluation plan...

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- A definition of key terms (responsive etc) in terms of evaluable measures?
- Processes for enabling stakeholders to define key terms from their perspective?

## Problems with assessing 'transformation'

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- *'an emergent property of project interventions...'*
- Likely to be uneven, 'lumpy'
- Multi-factoral: 'success is a child with many parents'
- Rhetorical: buzz-words change, agendas shift, new champions emerge, initiatives need successes
- Political: power relations are unavoidable
- Multi-disciplinary (messy): people, technologies, institutions...

What evidence could you gather to help assess transformation?

What frameworks, tools or methods might be helpful?

## Tools and approaches that can help

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- 'real-life' narrative: case study, story
- 'illustrative' narrative: day in the life, walk-through, scenario
- Process models (baseline + closing)
- Benchmarking-type tools (baseline + closing)
- Tools specific to conceptual commitments or transformational challenges of your project
- Involving stakeholders (e.g. using familiar ideas, tools, technologies)

## Curriculum: what does it look like?

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module handbook

reading list

assessments

new skills

guidance from  
tutor/mentor

pebblepad entry?

competence framework

e-portfolios

CPD requirements

skill sets of graduates

competence framework

course/module validation  
document

course materials

## Discussion: linking management and measurement of change

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Aligning agendas means listening to stakeholders – which allows evidence to be collected

Where in your project plan are there opportunities to influence others?

Where are there opportunities to collect evidence?

What are the key lessons you hope to bring forward?

How will you monitor unexpected changes – and take advantage?