

Scenario A

This is a course on developing research skills. Its aims include students learning to use Harvard referencing and students developing the skills and understanding necessary to avoid plagiarism.

The assessment involves a mix of exams, oral presentations and two written assignments.

One written assignment requires students to conduct a literature search and write a critical review of the search they themselves did. The students can choose the topic they will research. The review evaluates the authority and relevance of the literature they found. Criteria are provided for guiding the student's critical review.

The second written assignment involves collecting and summarising three documents from the relevant research literature. Most students choose the same research area as the first task. Students are required to use literature published in the previous 2 years as the 'raw material' for their summaries. The task is to summarise the articles in 500 words.

The course has been running for three years in this format.

Scenario B

This is a preliminary course in Public Health issues. It is an undergraduate programme and usually enrolls 300 students. Students are allocated tutor groups of 30, managed by 10 tutors.

The assessment is 100% coursework, in two halves with the second task linked directly to the first.

The first task asks the student to select an activity that is relevant to being healthy. Students can choose any activity based on their personal preference/experience as long as the activity would improve the student's own health. The student must then plan and carry out the activity over four weeks, collect primary data and write a report of the activity.

The second written task requires the student to evaluate the activity and its impact. The evaluation must include reference to five external sources to support the statements and views expressed by the student.

The activity must be discussed with the allocated lecturer before submission of the first report (but not before starting the assessment tasks).

The students know that the course has run in this format for at least 10 years and that allocated tutors only mark the papers for their own tutor groups..