

Abstract	Methodology	Participants
<p>This article reports on research on assessment of student learning in higher education in the Portuguese context. The current educational paradigm is based upon different roles for both student and Faculty within the context of the Bologna process. The student is seen as a key element in the teaching/learning process and the builder of active learning. This implies new methods for teaching and learning, which are based upon a flexible curriculum including new forms for assessing learning.</p> <p>The main goals of the study reported in this paper are: i) to get to know the perspectives of students about assessment in higher education (after the implementation of the Bologna process); ii) to identify methods of assessing learning in higher education; iii) to identify the potential and difficulties associated with different modes of assessment of learning in higher education from the perspective of the students.</p>	<p>Data were collected through a questionnaire to 3rd year undergraduate students in different programmes (Education, Engineering, Medicine, Basic Education and Psychology). In total, 300 students participated in the study. This paper focuses on preliminary results from students in Education and Basic Education at the University of Minho.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 39 Education and 50 Basic Education students participated in the survey.</li> <li>• <b>Degree in Basic Education:</b> All of the 50 respondents are female. Their age ranged between 20 and 36 years old. Most of them are 20 years old (36%) and 21 years old (26%).</li> <li>• <b>Degree in Education:</b> Out of the 39 students, 33 are female and 6 are male. Their age ranged between 20 and 40 years old. The vast majority of them are 20 years of age (51,4%) .</li> </ul>

## STATE OF ART

The assessment of learning has undergone changes over time, not only due to the implementation of the Bologna Process in European Universities, but also due the emergence of diverse methods of assessment: “if you want to change student learning then change the methods of assessment” (Brown, Bull & Pendlebury, 1997). At this level, assessment specialists (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 1987; Struyven et al., 2005) state that it is imperative that education systems become creative with regard to the assessment practices adopted. At the moment new modes of assessment, such as portfolios, self and peer assessment, simulations and other innovative methods can be found in the current contexts in higher education. There are several studies that indicate that the use of alternative assessment methods other than the traditional ones provides a more effective learning and higher motivation for students (Segers et al, 2008). Furthermore, the assessment of learning works as a thread that defines what the student considers to be important and the time he/she spends in the process of evaluation and learning. In the past, assessment was seen as something that determined a grade; today assessment is seen “as a tool for learning” (Dochy & MacDowell, 1997). Assessment has a significant influence on students’ learning and also on how they come to learning, i.e., the way in which a student thinks about learning and studying determines the way in which he/she tackles assignments and evaluation tasks. Conversely, the learner’s experience of assessment determines the ways in which the student approaches (future) learning (Struyven et al, 2005). Therefore, students’ perceptions about assessment and their approaches to learning are strongly interconnected. The perceived characteristics of assessment seem to have a considerable impact on students’ approaches, and vice versa.

## FINDINGS

<p>In regard to students’ representations about assessment, the results were similar in the two undergraduate courses. Basic Education and Education students associate assessment with learning (81,1%) as well as with verification of knowledge (77,2%), success (76,6%), testing (76,4%), reflection (76,3%) and participation (59,5%).</p>	<p><b>Aspects that students most associate with Assessment</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Aspect</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Learning</td> <td>81.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Verification of Knowledge</td> <td>77.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Success</td> <td>76.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tests</td> <td>76.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reflection</td> <td>76.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Participation</td> <td>59.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Aspect	Percentage	Learning	81.1%	Verification of Knowledge	77.2%	Success	76.6%	Tests	76.4%	Reflection	76.3%	Participation	59.5%	<p>In this study, we also asked students about the methods of assessment which were more used and they report the oral presentation in groups (94,2%); group reports (88%); individual written reflections (87,4%) and finally project work in teams (86,6%)</p>	<p><b>Assesment Methods more used (+)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Method</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Oral Presentations in groups</td> <td>94.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group Reports</td> <td>88%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Individual written reflections</td> <td>87.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project work in teams</td> <td>86.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Method	Percentage	Oral Presentations in groups	94.2%	Group Reports	88%	Individual written reflections	87.4%	Project work in teams	86.6%
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<p>Students of Basic Education and Education state that the issues which are less associated with assessment are conflict (78,2%); fear (69,2%); imposition (64,5%) and injustice (57%).</p>	<p><b>Aspects that Students less associate with Assessment</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Aspect</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Conflict</td> <td>78.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fear</td> <td>69.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Imposition</td> <td>64.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Injustice</td> <td>57%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Aspect	Percentage	Conflict	78.2%	Fear	69.2%	Imposition	64.5%	Injustice	57%	<p>We also intended to know which methods of assessment are less used. Students indicate individual essay (91,8%); individual oral presentation (81,1%); tests (69,1%) and individual project work (67,3%).</p>	<p><b>Assesment Methods used less (-)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Method</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Individual Project Work</td> <td>67.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mini-test</td> <td>69.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Individual Oral Presentation</td> <td>81.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Individual Essay</td> <td>91.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Method	Percentage	Individual Project Work	67.3%	Mini-test	69.1%	Individual Oral Presentation	81.1%	Individual Essay	91.8%				
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## CONCLUSION

Preliminary findings suggest that the key aspects that students associate with assessment are learning, verification of knowledge and success. Data also reveal that conflict, fear, imposition, and injustice are the aspects that students associate less with assessment. Therefore, we can say that students associate mostly positive aspects with assessment. On the other hand, the negative aspects are not associated with assessment such as conflict and fear. In regard to assessment methods, oral presentations in group, group reports , individual written reflections or project work in teams are more used by teachers. Teachers used less frequently methods such as individual essay, individual oral presentation, tests and individual project work. Methods most used by the teachers are performed in group, and the less used are done individually.

## REFERENCES

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