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**Understanding student perceptions and engagement for formative assessment: A study of interactive online quizzes**

Jonathan Nyli̇k* and Andy Diament  
School of Physical Sciences, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom, MK7 6AA  
* jonathan.nylik@open.ac.uk

**Introduction**

Formative activities are integral for student learning and students engaging with them are more likely to achieve success in summative assessments [1, 2]. However, engagement with optional activities by students can be low. How should formative activities be incentivised?

We investigated student engagement with, and perceptions of, interactive online quizzes on a 60 credit Level 2 core physics module.

- Quizzes are indirectly incentivised by reflective motivations.
- Pearson’s correlation coefficient: $68\%$
- Gradient: Pearson’s correlation coefficient: $1$ summative TMA, 25% of module grade.

**Methodology**

- Quantitative learning analytics data for 4 academic years investigated (2019/20 – 2022/23, 1900 students).
- Qualitative survey of 2022/23 student cohort (30 responses, 14% response rate).

**When do students attempt quizzes?**

Quiz access peaks coincide with TMA deadlines. Students largely attempt quizzes only when prompted by TMA items.

Less than 20% of quiz access occurs after the TMA deadline. Largely, students do not make use of quizzes for formative peer feedback.

**Is quiz use an indicator of exam success?**

TMA completion rates, and quiz use and reuse were investigated as factors influencing exam success. Exam score shows a positive correlation with TMA completion, quiz use and reuse.

**Quiz repetition behaviour in more detail**

Looking at the intersection between the number of quizzes attempted and the number repeated reveals a more complex behaviour.

There is an anticorrelation between quiz reuse and exam score, for a given number of quizzes completed.

For students completing fewer than 5 quizzes, quiz reuse does not appear to be an effective learning strategy.

For students completing 5 or more quizzes, light reuse seems to be optimal.

**Why do students attempt quizzes?**

An anonymous student survey was conducted between deadlines for TMAs 5 and 6.

The survey asked about students quiz use behaviours. 90% of respondents had completed all relevant quizzes up to that point of the module (Maths quiz and quizzes 1–5). Our sample consists of strongly self-motivated and highly engaging students.

Regarding enjoyment, 63% of respondents enjoyed the quizzes ‘Quite a lot’ or ‘A great deal’, with only 13% ‘Not at all’.

Regarding difficulty of questions, 80% of respondents felt the difficulty was ‘About right’, 20% found the questions ‘Too hard’, and no respondents found the questions ‘Too easy’.

In free-text comments, respondents remarked that attempting the quizzes was useful for revision (over 50% of respondents planned to repeat quizzes as part of their exam revision) but time consuming. Opinion was divided on the reflective task, with 50% or respondents finding it useful and 50% finding it not useful.

**Conclusions**

Studies by Kibble and Agnew, Kerr and Watt both found module credit of 1% per quiz yielded nearly 10% engagement whereas engagement was approximately 50% without [3, 4]. 80% of students in this study engaged with quizzes, which suggests indirect incentivisation through reflective items in other assignments is an effective assessment strategy for engagement.

We found that quiz use and reuse are correlated with exam success. The effects are weaker than engagement with substantive tutor-marked assignments (TMAs), but can still have a significant effect. An intersectional analysis of quiz use and reuse shows a more complex behaviour than requires further investigation.

Our survey of student motivations revealed that the quiz difficulty is appropriate for the course, they are useful for revision despite the time commitment needed, and that students enjoy the quizzes. This indicates that the quizzes in this study are authentic assessment activities and valued by students, potentially contributing to the high levels of engagement [5].

**References**


