

EVALUATION COLLECTIVE

WICKED
Evaluation
PROBLEMS
~ the zine

VOLUME ONE | ISSUE THREE
POWER & VALUE
AUTUMN / WINTER 2023

Hello!

Welcome to the volume one, issue three of the Wicked Evaluation Problems zine which focuses on power and value.

Chris has a problem with **intangible evidence**.

Read on to hear from our Evaluation Collective members Ev and Col who will provide their thoughts on the problem. Editor Val, then shares some possible next steps.



This zine has additional content and extra resources. By downloading the Adobe Aero app and scanning the QR codes throughout the zine, you can view the content!

My students are fantastic – diverse and enthusiastic, participating well in class, but they don't always get high marks in the modules. I feel they've grown and learned lots over the year but their assessments don't reflect the full extent of their personal growth and achievements.

How do we evidence these intangible outcomes?

Chris, Module Tutor

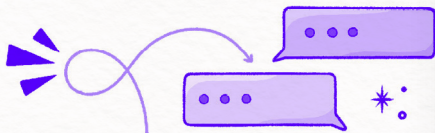


So, let's see what advice the Evaluation Collective have for Chris...



⇒ SCAN ME! ⇐

Yes, Chris, this is a tricky one, isn't it? I suggest you might consider revisiting how student expectations are developed and managed across the curriculum rather than by looking at it solely as an assessment issue. You could do what is known as a light touch **Contribution Analysis** (Mayne, 2008) in which you could invite your class participants to work retrospectively to generate assumptions about what should have happened to capture these 'gains' against what actually occurred.



Put simply, you might use a discussion with your in-class students to create a set of assumptions about what they feel they have gained overall (assessed and unassessed) and how they attribute these gains. This should lead to generating logical hypotheses, such as that a) assessment mechanisms on the programme don't capture the holistic learning that has occurred for participating students, b) more inclusive pedagogic approaches across the programme could capture the breadth of such learning more effectively.

The data collection would then focus on evidence to support, or refute, these hypotheses. So you could:

- i. compare actual grade performance with tutor and student assumptions about anticipated grades, identifying whether there was a mismatch of expectation and outcomes.
- ii. consider participants' evidence gleaned from revisiting the classroom sessions to identify what students feel they really gained in class during the year and why.
- iii. consider additional evidence at this point to refute these assumptions, i.e. by uncovering 'rival explanations' for the apparent underperformance across the year. (For example, this might concern examining staff turnover across the modules, or noting an absence of personal development opportunities across the curriculum, etc., etc.).



A **contribution story** is then produced, which also incorporates any identified challenges and risks to the explanation, and its plausibility is assessed and potential ideas for action considered. For more information see a more detailed explanation via the [TASO website](#).



Ev has given you some great stuff to play with here Chris and I have something else that could work just as well.

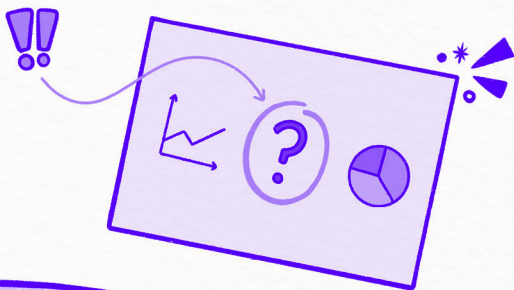
Given that you talk about uncovering intangible gains, take a look at **Beyond the Metrics** by Robertson, Cleaver and Smart, which is written to address the very problem you have identified above. I suggest that you get stuck into the Evidencing Value Framework, within the published work, which is an evidence-informed tool to map intangible assets at 3 levels; one of which is 'micro' and is pitched at module and programme level assets. The guidance includes running workshops on this stuff too: perfect for what you need to possibly turn your 'wicked issue' into a tame one. Good luck!



⇒ SCAN ME! ⇐



Some great ideas there from Ev and Col. It sounds like you have a bit of work to do to map and collate existing evidence and explore the gaps. Remember, your students are key stakeholders and could be co-producers of the conclusions you reach.



*Thank you for reading
this issue of the Wicked
Evaluation Problems zine!*

*For more information on
the contributors to this
volume, take a look at the
acknowledgements card.*

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