

Student as Examiner: Summative Near-Peer Assessment in a Doctoral Taught Course

Michael O'Neill

Departmental Lecturer in Inorganic Chemistry

Associate Director (Assessment & Feedback), OxICFM CDT

E: michael.oneill@chem.ox.ac.uk

T: [@CheMichael7](https://twitter.com/CheMichael7)

Context & Intention

Context

- Centre for Doctoral Training
- Taught Course (terms 1 & 2)
- Final assessment: research project proposal

Intended Outcomes

- Substantive discussion about the proposed course of research (content)
- Building familiarity with the assessment conventions (skills)
- **Could a student examiner learn about vivas by conducting one?**

Design & Execution

Design

- Pass/Fail
- Student from senior cohort as a co-examiner with staff
 - Guidance for examined students on the form of their proposal
 - Guidance for student examiners on how to ask fair questions
- Short post-viva debrief for student examiner

Execution

- Scheduling
- Some students don't want to (or can't) examine
- Students who have extended deadlines (personal circumstances)
- ??weak submissions??

Reflection: Did it Work?

Staff examiners say...

- Student examiners often ask harder questions than staff!
- Valuable perspective on practical issues (e.g. arranging swipe-card access to rooms)
- Co-examining sustains staff-student links with senior cohorts

Student examiners say...

- Interesting science!
- Clearer idea of what the examiner's agenda/experience is (e.g. clarifying rather than criticising)
- See what elements make for a stronger/weaker viva discussion (e.g. talking through issues rather than the "right answer")

Which assessment expectations are articulated? Which ones are hidden?

W: michaeloneill.org

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E: michael.oneill@chem.ox.ac.uk

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