

**The University of Edinburgh**  
**The Moray House School of Education**  
**School Postgraduate Studies Committee**

**17<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

Revised Assessment for “Social Theory and Outdoor Education” Course

Brief description of the paper

This paper proposes changing the assessment from one 4000 word essay to one 3200 word essay (worth 80%) plus a three minute audio podcast (plus 20%).

Action requested

For approval

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? No

Risk assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

Equality and diversity

Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? Yes, the changes proposed would have positive benefits for equality and diversity.

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Any other relevant information

n/a

Originator of the paper

Simon Beames

## Minor alteration to summative assessment for Social Theory and Outdoor Education (EDUA11304)

### Rationale

Currently, there is only one form of assessment for this Level 11 course. Adding a second, 'low stakes' assessment task that contrasts in format with the existing assessment will mitigate against students doing poorly on one assessment. This second task will, we hope, further deepen students' achievement of the course's learning outcomes.

### Current assessment:

"This assignment is an informal case study based on an outdoor education programme that you have recently experienced as a staff member or participant. You will critically examine this experience through the lens of one theoretical framework presented during the course. You are advised to discuss your assignment content with the course tutor long before submission." (4000 words)

### Points surrounding proposed amendment:

1. Reduce current assignment to 3200 words and adjust weighted value to 80% of the final course mark.
2. Add sociology 'bite' podcast as the second assessment task (details below). This will be worth 20% of the final mark.
3. It is possible to fail one of the assignments and pass the course, as there will be compensation between the two marks.
4. Podcasts are due 14 days after the last class.
5. All podcasts are double-marked (at least for this first iteration).
6. All podcasts will be accessible by all students registered on the course.
7. Since this assessment was not in the original CCAM record, this year's students will be given a choice of the original 4000 word assessment or trying the new version with the podcast. The course next runs during five days in December, 2015.

### Sociology 'bite' podcast guidelines:

1. *Format*
  - i) One audio file of up to three minutes long
  - ii) Use a common audio file format (e.g. mp3, wav, wma)
  - iii) Maximum file size is 40MB
  - iv) Uploaded to a Dropbox on Learn
  - v) As with other assignments, the Dropbox will open after the *Declaration of own work* is acknowledged
2. *Structure*
  - a) Decide on a theorist (e.g. Karl Marx) or an area of study (e.g. Feminisms). Then choose one concept within this area (e.g. Alienation or Post-structural feminism). Normally, students will choose a concept that was covered during the course.

- b) Cover the following items in a recorded audio presentation:
1. Who / what is the chosen theorist / topic of study? Briefly state any other relevant background information (e.g. the era or geo-political context).
  2. What is the concept being interrogated? Explain how you understand this concept. What is its original source?
  3. How does your chosen 'bite' of theory permit a deeper examination of outdoor education practice? Give an example.
  4. What have critics written about this concept?
  5. Beyond the primary source that you cited above, what further reading would you recommend that others pursue? (three sources maximum)

3. *Grading*

As with your other assignments, this assessment task will be graded using the common marking scheme. This task will, however, have the added criterion of 'Style and presentation', which refers to the structure and coherence of your talk, along with the clarity of your speech.

**Support for this proposal comes from:**

1. The programme director and programme team
2. The students (indirectly, through SSLC feedback about single essay assessments)
3. The External Examiner
  - "I think this is a great idea. Actually I have something similar, although at a lesser level, with the first year undergraduate outdoor learning class I have. In the second semester they are expected to write an essay (70%) and produce a 3minute video (30%) of some aspect of outdoor learning related to Curriculum for Excellence."
  - "So what you are suggesting is very much aligned to my own views of a variety of approaches to assessment."
  - "Interestingly the students said something about lack of variety in assessment today, so they'll be pleased that you are listening to them."
  - "I fully support what you are proposing and I'll be interested in seeing how it turns out."