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# Empowerment Through Research: Bridging Academia and Society

## Knowledge – Application – Employability: An Authentic Assessment Framework for Hospitality Management Education

Missenden Abbey International Hotel and Hospitality School  
Alexandra Constantinescu & Lisa Wyld

### Context and Rationale

Authentic assessment has gained increased scholarly attention, with scholarly research being centred around various dimensions and applications in academic practice, as well as benefits related to enhancing employability, industry-readiness, and graduate outcomes. The advancement of generative Artificial Intelligence tools is disrupting teaching, learning and assessment environments, challenging educators to re-evaluate and adapt their practices, ensuring that they are not only authentic and industry relevant, but also robust and compliant with academic integrity standards.

Few studies are specifically focused on authentic assessment in hospitality as a distinct subject area. Smith et al., (2015) re-iterates that authentic learning in hospitality education requires the application of theory to real-world circumstances. Nyanjom et al. (2020) investigate the integration of authentic assessment tasks in work-integrated learning in hospitality internship, recommending that authentic assessment tasks should become an integral part of hospitality internships. Steriopoulos et al. (2022) emphasise the vital importance of co-creation among students, educators, and industry. The authors acknowledge the significant role of involving students in authentic assessment design, showcasing how this enhances employability and has the potential to increase overall satisfaction and engagement with studies. What these studies have in common is an overarching theme of industry relevance, underlined by a three-fold co-creation process that is at the core of authentic assessment design for hospitality education.

### Theoretical Underpinning

- Constructive Alignment theory (Biggs & Tang, 2011)
- Equity-Agency-Transparency principles (Evans, 2016, 2022)

### Methodology

Case study - inductive approach – non-linear iteration of Design Thinking (Brown, 2008):

- Empathising
- Defining
- Ideating
- Prototyping
- Testing

### Key Takeaways

Embracing authenticity in assessment elevates the quality of hospitality education and contributes to nurturing future professionals that thrive in the diverse and dynamic landscape of the hospitality industry. Creating assessments that align with industry expectations and best practices, empower students to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for success, whilst fostering a deeper appreciation for the real-world impact of their knowledge and expertise.

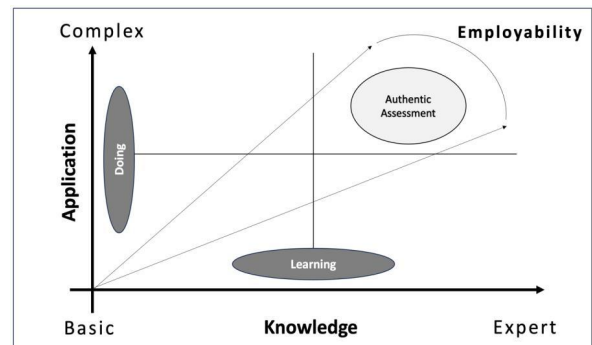
### Application Axis

Supports the development of authentic, practical assessment tasks, that can similarly be scaffolded from basic applications and interpretations of concepts, up to complex integration of theory into everyday industry practice – where higher complexity levels build up towards increased employability outcomes.

- case studies.
- performance-based assessments (live events, simulations, podcasts, gamification, role play tasks).
- essays, presentations, reports: re-designed to reflect different types of writing for wider ranges of audiences.

### The Knowledge – Application – Employability Framework

source: developed by the authors



### Knowledge Axis

Serves as a guide for scaffolding knowledge from basic understanding of constructs to complex, critical appraisal of theoretical frameworks that enable students to develop increasingly higher-order capabilities such as analysis, critical evaluation, problem-solving, and innovation, or original idea generation.

Biggs, J.B. and Tang, C.S. (2011) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University: What the Student Does*. (4th edn). Maidenhead, England: McGraw-Hill.  
Brown, T. (2008) *Design thinking*. Harvard Business Review. See: <https://hbr.org/2008/06/design-thinking> (accessed November 2023).  
Evans, C. (2016, 2022). *Enhancing assessment feedback practice in higher education: The EAT Framework*. Southampton: University of Southampton.

Nyanjom, J., Goh, E. and Yang, E. C. L. (2020) *Integrating authentic assessment tasks in work-integrated learning: hospitality internships*. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 1-22.  
Smith, W., Buehler, E. and Loren, S. W. (2015) *Incorporating an instructional scaffolding approach into the classroom: Teaching for Authentic Learning in Hospitality and Tourism Education*. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 15(3), pp. 244-277.  
Steriopoulos, E., Goh, E. and Hartson, T. (2022) *Practical teaching tips on designing authentic assessments in Tourism, Hospitality and Events (THE) higher education*. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 21(4), 425-433.

# 2024

