



Informatics Teaching Festival 2021

Welcome Talk

Björn Franke, 07/06/2021

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Why this Teaching Festival?

- Experience of **unplanned change** in teaching
 - Online teaching delivery - new logistics and work flows
 - Online assessment - from clean room exams to take-home exams
 - “**Crisis** mode” → increased workload → increased **stress** levels
- **Reinvention** of our teaching in reaction to the Covid-19 crisis
 - Reduced curriculum delivery - more team teaching
 - Course and assessment changes motivated by online migration
- How does the recent experience **change the future** of our teaching?

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More changes experienced in the current year

- Decolonising the Curriculum
- Ethics Templates in UG/MSc Projects
- Export Control Licenses for Teaching
- Decentralised Teaching Duty Allocation
- New Teaching Support Policy
- Centralised Extensions and Special Circumstances Processing
- On-Going Mitigating Measures around Covid-19 Situation
- People and Money

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More changes to come

- Attainment Gap
 - Academic Student Support
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Online Degree Programmes
- University Curriculum Transformation Initiative
- Post-Covid Teaching in Informatics

Workload and Assessment

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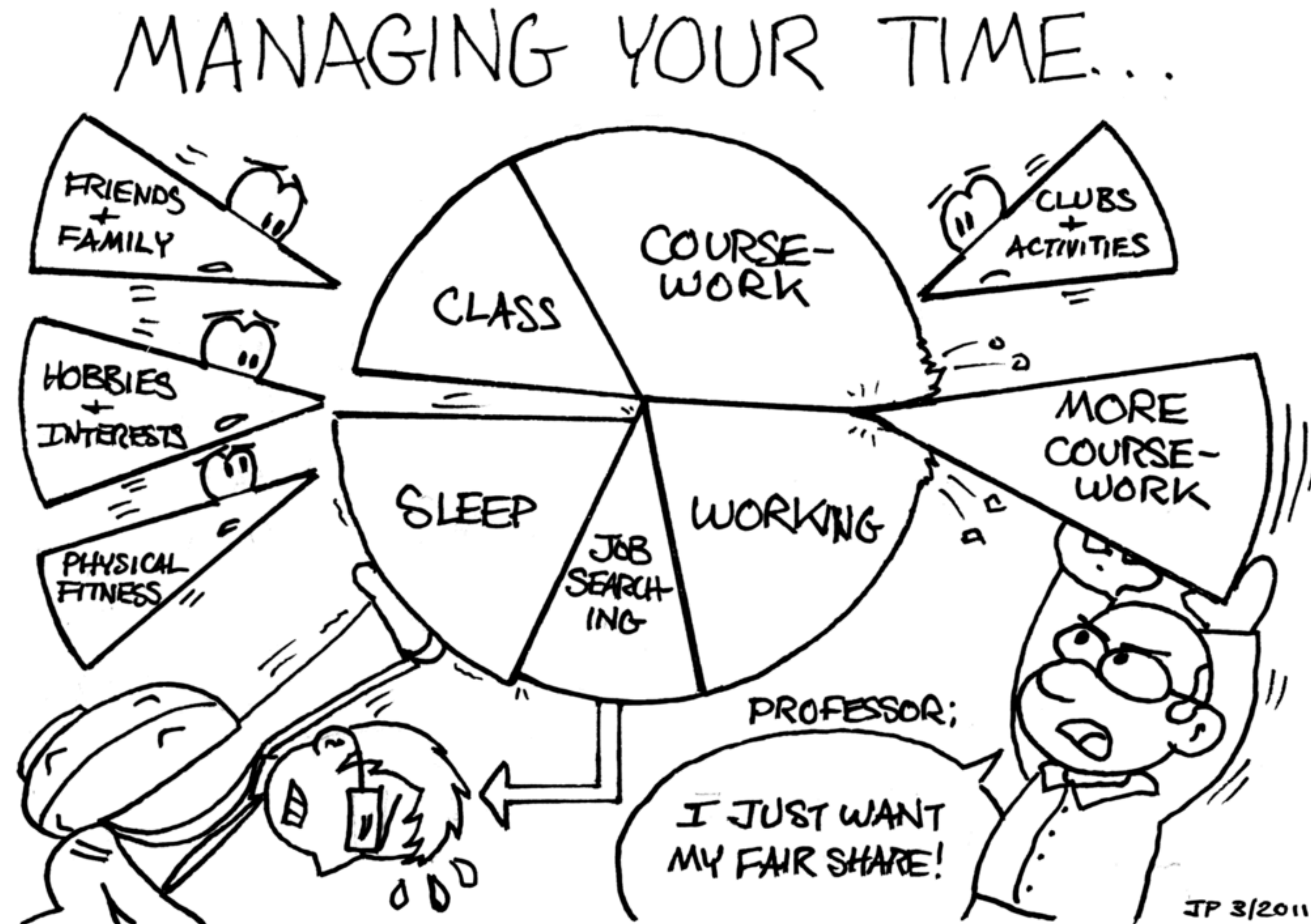
Workload and Assessment

Hypothesis:

Much of our students' workload, and also of our own, is a direct result of how we approach assessment and, in particular, the volume of assessment we hand out.

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Managing our Students' Time



SCQF CREDIT POINTS

EXPLAINED:

Notional Learning Hours

The allocation of SCQF Credit Points does not refer to a perception of ability, nor is it based on age or experience but is worked out by those with an expert knowledge of the subject who make a professional judgement on how many hours it would take the typical learner, (not those who complete the learning outcomes quickly nor those that require additional time), to achieve the learning outcomes at a given level. This is described in the SCQF Handbook (2015) as:

“... the time required for a typical learner at a specified SCQF level to achieve the learning outcomes. The amount of time taken by actual learners in reality may differ, but this does not affect the number of SCQF Credit Points awarded.”

The estimation of the time required is referred to as notional learning hours. One SCQF Credit Point represents a notional 10 hours of learning.

For example, activities before delivery might include:

- preparation such as reading materials provided prior to delivery;
 - self reflection on prior knowledge and experience and how it links to the delivery;
 - personal programme planning;
 - using libraries or learning resource centres for reading and research.
- ← Freshers' Week, PT Meetings

Some of the more obvious activities for actual delivery are:

- attending and participating in formal teaching sessions;
 - practical work in laboratories and other locations;
 - relevant Information Communication Technology (ICT) activities;
 - self directed study using online or text-based open learning materials;
 - involvement in informal learning such as community groups, youth groups, outdoor activities.
- CompSoc, Hoppers, Programming Club, ...

For after delivery, notional hours might include:

- private study and revision; on what has been learned;
 - assessment of learning;
 - application of knowledge and understanding and skills within the workplace.
- includes e.g. attending seminar talks
- ← Part-time jobs...
- ← CW & Exams

It should be noted that this list of suggestions is not exhaustive nor are the activities mutually exclusive.

Essentially, covers everything we consider “student experience”!

- **Example:** Assessment Workload Equivalence Guide, Ulster University
- 20 credit point course
 - 200 notional hours
 - **20%** - 40 notional hours for assessment
 - Assessment equivalence table
- Informatics courses are typically way beyond!
- Do we need similar assessment guidance?

20 Credit Module		
200 notional learning hours (comprises contact time, directed study, independent study including assessment preparation)	Assessment learning hours/preparation constitutes approx. 20% of notional module learning hours	40 hours notional assessment work hours 4000 word count equivalence

Assessment equivalence examples:

Assessment Type	WCE	<u>Notional</u> Assessment Work Hours	Credits
Written essay	1000 words	10 h	5
Exam / test	1 hour	10 h	5
Reflective journal/log	1000 words	10 h	5
Lab/practical report	1000 words	10 h	5
Group assignment	750 words per member	10 h	5
Individual presentation	15 minutes	20 h	10
Viva/oral exam	20-30 minutes	20 h	10
Small Group presentation	10 minutes per member	20 h	10
Portfolio of evidence	6000 words	40 h	20
Research proposal, small project	4000 words	40 h	20
Research project/dissertation	8000 words	80 h	40

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Highlights 1

- Notional hours may not be what you think what they are
 - Hours for a typical learner at that target level of your course
 - If your TA/PhD student can do the coursework in 10 hours, the notional hours of the coursework are likely to exceed 30 hours for an MSc student
- Only 80% of notional hours are actually available for a course
 - 20% programme level and other activities
 - Not all of the notional hours fall within semester weeks
 - e.g. significant amount of exam revision after end of semester
 - This further reduces the time available for course delivery

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Highlights 2

- Max. 20% of notional hours for assessment
 - 2h exam corresponds to notional 20h
 - Entire assessment budget for a 10 credit point course
 - 2h exam & 2 1000-word reports use up entire assessment budget for a 20 credit point course
- We **systematically overassess** across all of our courses
 - High student workload!
 - High staff and teaching support workload!

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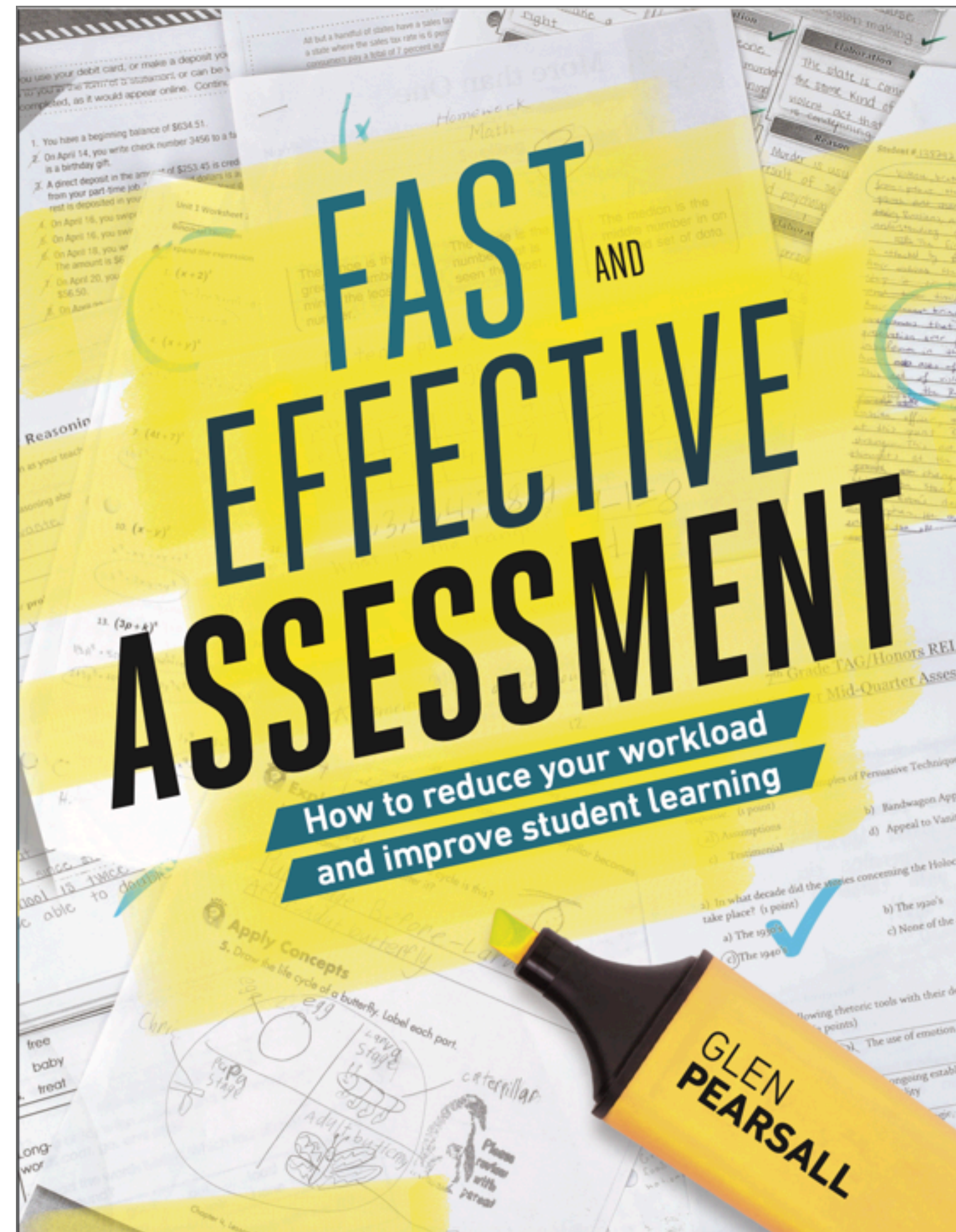
Some suggested strategies

- Review the amount of assessment for your course - do less - align with learning outcomes!
- Avoid student expectation of becoming a 24/7 lecturer
 - Avoid email overload - establish communication ground rules, e.g. 24h turnaround during weekdays - no emails on weekends; all communication via VLE channel/Forum - no individual email; 3bf4 Forum policy - facilitator role rather than answering each questions
- Workload management strategy – „little and often“ being recommended as better than less frequent, longer time allocations
- “Managing workload by good course design”
 - Avoid „just in time“ course alterations
 - Don’t leave students confused, anxious and unclear about what they are meant to be doing

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Further Reading...

- Stephen Bright: eLearning lecturer workload: working smarter or working harder?
- Ulster University: Assessment Workload Equivalence Guide
- SCQF Credit Points Explained: Notional Learning Hours



Fast and Effective Assessment: How to Reduce Your Workload and Improve Student Learning
Glen Pearsall

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Events Schedule

- 20 interactive events spread throughout this week
 - Talks, Panels, Case Studies, Social Events
- <https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/ilts/2021/06/02/informatics-teaching-festival-2021-sharing-experience-and-planning-for-online-and-hybrid-teaching/>
- Many thanks to the organisers!
 - Informatics University Teachers
 - Informatics Learning Technology Service Team

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Informatics Awards

- Reminder!
- **Informatics Awards Ceremony**
 - Friday, 12noon-1pm
- **Final Reflection**