

## **Adding Practitioner Value: a Harmonized Scenario Approach to MBA Assessments**

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### **Abstract**

Assessments are a central element of academic program documentation and in response to a request to incorporate innovative assessments a series of processes were put in motion to achieve this outcome. The criticism of higher education and relevance to the workplace are reviewed, noting employability and the introduction of apprentice degrees as aspects to consider. What constitutes an innovation in relation to higher education assessments is outlined, together with potential barriers. In seeking to overcome these barriers, the paper emphasizes the purpose and objective of the research and draws on the use and outcome of a focus group as a method of collecting data, with a supporting justification. As the research is exploratory with no intention to prove an existing theory, the discourse produced in the focus group is broadly themed and the resulting analysis endorses the suggestion of harmonized scenario assessments based on wicked problems. Three examples of assessments topics selected by successive student cohorts, following validation and approval of the program, are detailed, with a focus on strategy, and the degree of originality, creativity and application debated in the discussion section. Finally, the conclusions support the ongoing use of scenario assessments, linked to contemporary wicked problems, together with comments on the positive impact and other implications. The paper draws to a close with recommendations to further improve the use and application of the technique based on prevailing issues of concern to employers.

**Keywords:** assessments, innovation, scenarios, wicked problems.