

Title: Beyond the Test: Humanising Assessment Through Authentic and Transformative Practices

Panel Members:

Mr Khetho Tshipala (panel chair)
Ms Thuliswa Dlokoa CA(SA)
Mr Mzwanele Mdweshu CA(SA)
Mr Mnqobi Mgoduka (Student Representative)
Additional Panel Member (TBC)

Affiliation:

Nelson Mandela University

Sub-theme:

Assessment for Learning and Assessment Transformation

Format:

Panel Discussion

Abstract

Assessment plays a central role in shaping how students learn, engage, and develop as future professionals. However, traditional assessment approaches often prioritise content recall and technical competence, limiting opportunities for students to demonstrate critical thinking, professional judgement, emotional intelligence, and meaningful engagement with real-world challenges. This panel discussion explores how humanising and authentic assessment practices can transform student learning by creating opportunities for deeper engagement, agency, and contextual relevance.

Drawing on examples from Accounting disciplines and beyond, panel members will showcase innovative assessment approaches that connect disciplinary knowledge with contemporary issues and professional practice. Examples include integrated taxation assignments that immerse students in realistic scenarios requiring critical and integrated thinking; a taxation moot court assessment that creates opportunities for students to demonstrate ethical reasoning, communication skills, professional judgement, and emotional intelligence; and auditing assessments that utilise familiar contexts such as social media platforms and public debates surrounding reality television voting systems to explore concepts of assurance, governance, and public trust. An interdisciplinary contribution will further demonstrate how authentic assessment practices can be adapted across different academic contexts.

A student panellist will provide reflections on how these assessment approaches influence learning, engagement, confidence, and professional development. Through both educator and student perspectives, the panel highlights assessment as a transformative pedagogical practice that promotes inclusion, relevance, and student success. The discussion contributes to ongoing conversations on assessment transformation by illustrating how authentic and humanising assessment can prepare graduates for the complexities of professional and societal life.