



Prof. Tansy Jessop
EAPRIL 2024 keynote speaker

Prof. Tansy Jessop is PVC Education and Students at the University of Bristol, where she has led a programme of curriculum enhancement to re-imagine the design of programmes and assessment. Across the sector, she has been the driving force behind ‘Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment’ (TESTA), a research and change project, for 15 years. Her recent book uses evidence from TESTA to show the value of taking a programme approach, and provides fresh perspectives on students’ experience using theories of alienation, agency, and engagement.

Before joining Bristol, Tansy was Head of Learning and Teaching at the University of Winchester and Professor of Research Informed Teaching at Solent University. She has previously worked as a research consultant in India, the Middle East, and South Africa on social justice and leadership development in education. She began her career as a schoolteacher in South Africa. Her PhD analysed the narratives of rural primary teachers in KwaZulu-Natal in the early post-apartheid period.

On weekends, Tansy enjoys walking the dog, reading detective novels, and messing about in the kitchen cooking.

“AGENCY AND ENGAGEMENT IN ASSESSMENT IN A TIME OF AI”

For good reason, generative AI has focused minds among educators on academic integrity. The pace of developments and widespread access to large language models (LLMs) has led many to retreat into old ways of assessing students in exam halls, in the interests of security. This talk argues that generative AI is a huge opportunity for fresh thinking about the purpose and practice of assessment and feedback. Drawing on evidence from TESTA, it critiques the dominant grammar of assessment and feedback, in which students often feel assessment is done to them. In rushing to complete assessments, they often fail to see their wider purpose and relevance, or to find space and time to shape, own, or take pride in their work. Students describe struggling to see connections between assessment tasks across a programme of study, and they often do not trust feedback enough to act on it. Drawing on theories of alienation and engagement, this interactive session will explore how we might design assessment and feedback across programmes to enable students to exercise their agency, play to their strengths, become more curious, deepen their understanding, and surprisingly, have more fun.