Reflection on Specific Features and Assessment in Investigations

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The worksheet questions for the Ipuprofen Titration experiment covered a wide range of standards, including KA1, KA2, KA4, IAE2, IAE3, and IAE4, and it could easily have also included some IAE1 I think too. With the exception of KA3, which could easily be added into this experiment too, this is all of the standards. Which is pretty amazing, actually. Maybe the sign of a truly interesting prac? Breaking it down though, I think KA1 and KA4, and even IAE3, are tested much in the same way they would be in a SAT. I think the value of this kind of assessment, from the perspective of giving evidence towards the performance standards, is in IAE2, IAE4, and in principle a design prac would also allow for IAE1 (which this one could easily do I think). It is also a great opportunity to give evidence for KA2.

I think having a supervised assessment component for investigations is valuable. Glen went into some detail about the value of this for distinguishing students ability from the ability of their tutor (who might help write their prac reports for them, as morally questionable as that may be) and how this helps make the assessment more fair to students without access to such tutors, and I think that argument has some validity especially if the tutors writing prac reports for students is a real problem in a particular context. However I think the value of having a supervised assessment component goes beyond that, as similar to a SAT it can also get evidence on the ability of students under relatively time-constrained conditions, and gets their initial reactions and impressions, which can potentially provide alot of insight into their through processes and can serve a powerful formative assessment purpose --- understanding what their initial reactions to ideas are can help inform how to present such ideas to them in the future in a way that will appeal and interest them, improving the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

As for assessing skills, again I think this holds some value, although it can be difficult to do in practice. I went around the class and tried going through the matrices of skills assessment items in my head for a few people and found it difficult to assess, particularly the more detailed matrix. The simplified matrix would definitely be more feasible. However one of the big values of skills assessment as I see it is for the student --- to let them know they have laboratory skills and thereby help them develop some confidence --- and for this purpose such matrices are not required, verbal reassurance should do the trick, also maybe the skills matrices would give the students a way to track their own progress and see their improvement over time. The value of skills assessment also goes towards some of the points I discussed in my safety management reflection, that speaking with each individual student and assessing their skills at setting up and using glassware for example is not only to do with providing evidence for SIS, but is a crucial safety step. I do find it abit confusing how SIS are still in the SACE Subject Outlines, but aren’t directly reflected in the performance standards (IAE2 maybe), so I’m not sure how collecting evidence on SIS directly helps the students in that sense (apart from providing evidence for IAE2 for example). It could also potentially contribute as a formative assessment to help students skills and understanding of procedures to help them provide evidence for IAE4 in other mediums, in principle.