



Reflections on Oral Assessment

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Context & Objectives

STP80140 Time Series is an online postgraduate module taught over a four-week period. The module is assessed by a project (worth 90%) and weekly quizzes (worth 10%).

Project overview:

'This project aims to leverage the methodologies in STP80140 and apply them to real-world time scenarios. Choose one time series from the three options below and write the corresponding report. ... Follow the steps in forecasting. The report should describe your data, state and address the project aims, and include all of your analysis on how the best forecasting approach was chosen. ...'

Grade Breakdown (marked out of 100):

- Report and graph formatting (5%)
- Report: Introduction to the time series, aims and exploratory analysis (15%)
- Report: Forecasting approach (60%)
- Report: Conclusion (10%)
- Oral assessment (10%)

Oral Assessment Instructions:

'The oral assessment will consist of a 10 minute one-to-one discussion online between the lecturer and you. The objective of the oral assessment is for students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of their project. In the oral assessment, each student will be asked three questions about their project in order to guide a discussion. A follow up question may be asked to clarify a response point or to ask for elaboration on a response point'

*The oral assessment will take place on Monday the 23rd (8am-10pm) and Tuesday the 24th (8am-7pm) of March 2026 with time slots available outside of standard work hours. Click **here** to book a time slot for your oral assessment; you can check that the available times are the time slots for Irish/Dublin time by clicking on the world icon and setting it from the drop-down menu. The oral assessment will be audio recorded. A link for the online call will be circulated closer to the date. Please join the call at your requested time.'*

Design & Outcomes

Booking oral assessment slots:

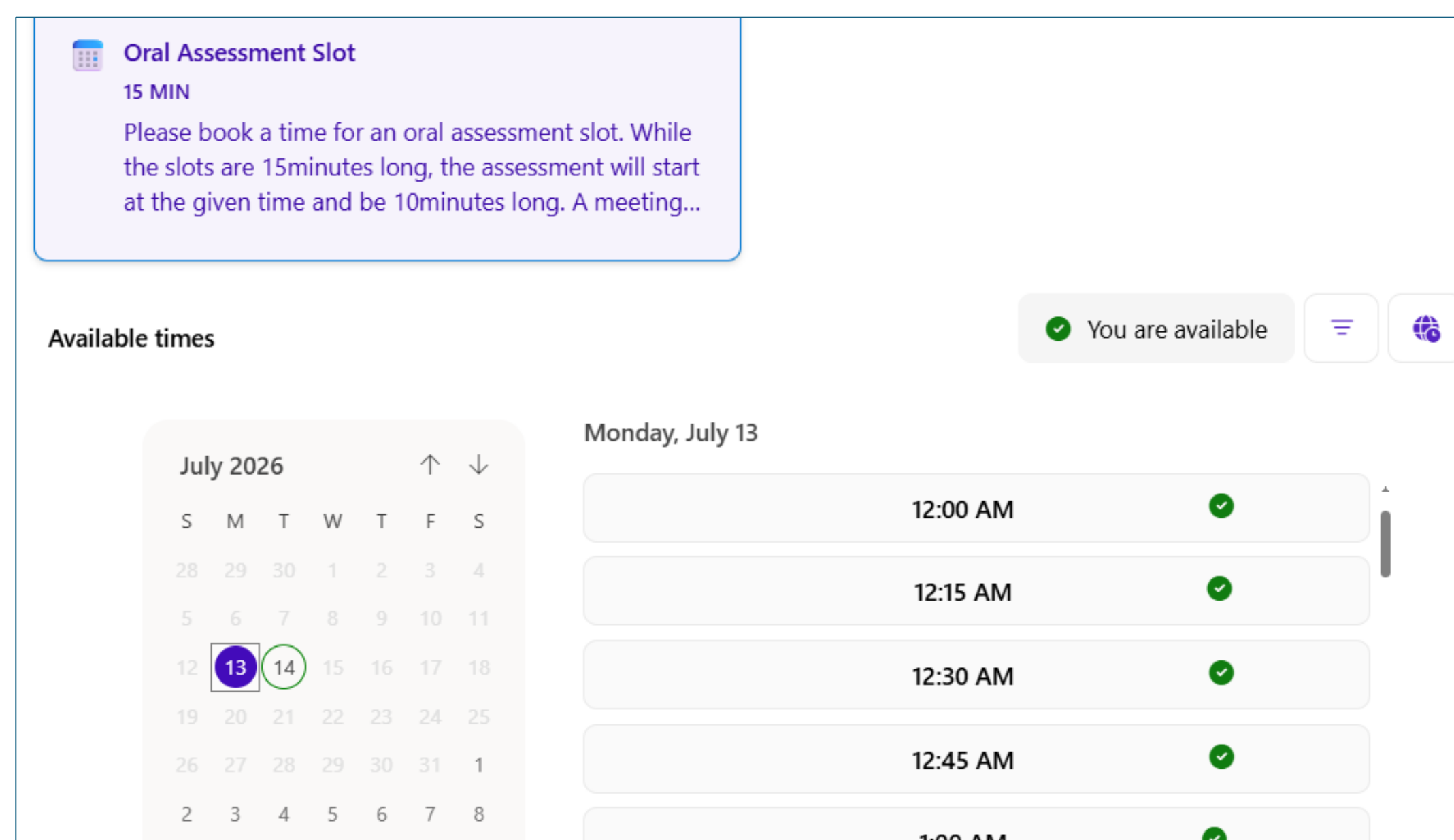
- Used 'Bookings with me' linked to staff account (see image). Students picked their own time slot.

Lecturer preparation:

- Based on their project, each student was asked three questions on 1) Introduction to the time series and exploratory analysis, 2) Forecasting approach, and 3) Conclusions.

Recording:

- Oral assessment was recorded on a dictator (voice only). Students were informed in advance of this and the recordings were uploaded to OneDrive. The recordings are stored only in the event there is a query about the mark for the oral assessment.



Reflections

Do I think it was worthwhile?

I strongly believe it is beneficial to orally assess students. However, the approach used here was a lot of work for a low percentage of the module mark. If the oral assessment is to be a significant part of the module mark, the students should have the opportunity to practice for the oral assessment, or have a similar formative assessment. This would be hard to implement in this module which is four weeks long. Therefore, I believe we should consider assessment at the programme level.

