

# Using annotated comments to provide targeted summative feedback online

*Embedding summative feedforward comments into the students' work providing more targeted assessment feedback*

## The aim

The tutor introduced online submission, marking and feedback within the Management of Quality in Organisations module at Level 6.

The aim was to enhance the feedforward comments provided to students, removing legibility issues whilst providing targeted feedback to students across the cohort in a timely manner.

## Benefits

- Students can read annotated comments removing any legibility issues
- The tutor is not having to carry scripts around as marking takes place online
- The tutor can mark at home if not able to get into work for any reason
- Students remark that comments annotated in the context of their work were targeted and helpful in understanding the feedback given
- Electronic feedback sheet automates the calculation of students' marks and provides students with a detailed breakdown of their mark against criteria

## The approach

The module leader took the decision to manage the coursework element of this module online in order to remove the need for students to have to submit a paper version through the faculty helpdesk. Previously students had submitted a paper version for marking, but due to the tutor's own hand writing not being very clear, he would end up repeating sections of their script in his feedback and then correcting what was wrong.

The course work was in a report format comprising of three questions. The module tutor required the students to complete their assignment in Microsoft Word format with a maximum word limit of 2,200 words. Students submitted their assignments online via Turnitin on the Blackboard site for the module. The tutor accessed the student submissions from the Blackboard Grade Centre. The tutor saved the student scripts using the students name for ease of reference to his F: drive so that he could access them from the university or from home.

The rationale for students to submit in Word format was in order for the tutor to provide more targeted feedback inline and in context of the student's own work using commenting functionality provided in Microsoft Word. Previously when the tutor used a standard feedback template he had to make reference to a specific page or line number in the student work to identify which each comment was referring to. Inline marking allowed the tutor to add feedback directly onto the script to provide targeted feedforward comments, particularly useful when including notations around referencing to direct the student in future assignments.

The tutor marked at home using a wide screen monitor enabling the student work and feedback sheet to be viewed alongside each other. Annotations were added to the student work, whilst at the same time, the tutor completed an electronic (Excel-based) feedback sheet. The coursework was submitted in a report format, answering three questions on three distinct areas. In addition, the student was expected to provide a conclusion and limitations section and was also assessed on their overall presentation, academic referencing etc. The electronic feedback sheet included the five different areas which were assessed and each received a weighted mark. By using the electronic feedback sheet, the students were able to see which questions they answered better than the others, and it saved the tutor time in having to calculate their overall mark manually. Further comments were also provided in a free text box on the feedback sheet.

The annotated scripts together with electronic feedback sheet were then uploaded to Blackboard Grade Centre along with their mark and made available to the students.

*“It was good to be able to see directly on my script comments about a particular paragraph”*

- Level 6 student

## Profile

**Tutor name:**

Jonathan Gorst

**Faculty:**

Sheffield Business School

**Size of cohort:**

Small (15+ students)

**Technologies used:**

Online submission via Blackboard, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word

If you would like your assessment practice captured and shared in a similar case study, please email ! Assessment Journey Programme

## The outcome

Using technology to support online management of assessment on this module has provided the following outcomes:

- The students have commented that the annotated feedback comments were more effective than feedback in a separate document as they were able to see exactly where they could improve on their writing and referencing skills – *“Really helpful to see on my script where I had referenced incorrectly”*
- Time efficiencies for the tutor, including: eliminating the need to type or copy/paste sections of the student work into the feedback sheet where they can be corrected – the correction is applied directly to the script through Track Changes or Comments in Microsoft Word; and, removing the need to move hard copies of scripts around for marking purposes – these were all available through Blackboard and the F:drive for remote access and also helped in the production of the External Examiner pack
- The electronic feedback sheet saved time calculating the final mark from each of the sections of the report, and provided the students with a detailed breakdown of their mark against criteria

## Future Development

- The tutor plans to develop his online practice further by generating student feedback on coursework using the feedback spreadsheet developed in the Faculty of Health & Wellbeing (<https://portal.shu.ac.uk/faculties/hw/cf/hta/tel/Pages/FeedbackSpreadsheet.aspx>). The spreadsheet contains macros which automate a number of functions. The feedback sheet is automatically generated for each student with student details included and automatic mark calculation. The feedback to a student is a combination of criteria based automatic comments (based on a comment grid) and free text feedback
- The tutor is revising instructions given to students so that in future the files that they submit for marking are named using their full name. This will save the tutor time as he will no longer have to rename the files himself when downloading for marking
- The tutor is looking to use an encrypted 8GB USB flash drive provided by the University to save students’ files providing extra storage space when downloading files to mark and saving annotated scripts

## Recommendations

The tutor suggests that anyone interested in developing this approach consider the following:

- When marking online it is useful to have two screens allowing multiple documents to be viewed simultaneously (i.e. the student script and the feedback sheet), providing a more effective marking experience
- A good internet connection is required when downloading and uploading files to Blackboard Grade Centre
- Keep in mind the volume and size of files that may need saving to a local drive or encrypted USB when downloading and uploading documents to Grade Centre