

Flexible working achieved through online assessment

Using online assessment tools to provide effective feedback for students whilst providing time savings for the tutor

The aim

The tutor introduced online management of assessment into a Level 5 and Level 6 module for design and technology students.

The aim was to enhance the student assessment experience through effective feedback whilst providing flexibility for the academic.

Benefits

- Online submission and inline marking allow the lecturer the flexibility to work wherever there was an internet connection
- Students receive an annotated script, rubric and feedback at the same time as their mark
- Online marking in Blackboard provides time-savings for the lecturer

The approach

As a part-time lecturer in the Design, Technology & Education Department, it was important for the module leader to be able to connect remotely to the University's systems in order to keep in contact with colleagues, and to access student work as and when required in order to mark efficiently. The module leader discussed her time-saving approach to marking and providing feedback online in two undergraduate modules below:

Level 5 module – Introduction to Learning, Teaching & Practice

In this module, students created and submitted their assignments online to Blackboard in Microsoft Word format, and the tutor marked the work online in Blackboard using Crocodoc (the inline grading tool). This allowed the tutor to access the work whether she was working, either at home using her own laptop or in the office on her desktop PC. The inline grading tool enabled the tutor to annotate the student work online providing targeted feedforward comments to the students. The feedback, along with the mark, was automatically saved to the Blackboard Grade Centre without the need to download or upload student work. This saved the tutor time as it avoided duplication of effort as opposed to annotating student work in the original Word document. Once marks and feedback were released, the students were able to see their annotated script with targeted feedforward comments together with their mark.

Level 6 Module – Learning Teaching & Curriculum

Physical artefacts were handed in, and receipted, as part of the assessment via the Faculty Helpdesk. The tutor created and shared with the students a Feedback Rubric in Blackboard (Figure 1). To do this, the agreed assessment criteria for the module was copied and pasted into the Feedback Rubric template.

Name		5282 Practice in the Context of Learning and Teaching (D&T) Assignment Feedback					
Description		Please see below for feedback on your assignment, there may also be comments on the assignment itself.					
Feedback Rubric Grid		Levels of Achievement					
Criteria	0	1-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-100	
Criteria	0 to 0 points No report submitted	1 to 39 points A minimal report that describes observations and factors with little/ no attempt to critically reflect on the information	40 to 49 points A basic report that describes and explains the essential principles of teaching and learning with a limited attempt at critical reflection.	50 to 59 points A sound report that describes and explains the essential principles of teaching and learning in detail. There is some evidence of appropriate critical reflection, with how this has informed the development of teaching practice supported with some references to the appropriate documentation/ academic literature.	60 to 69 points A good report that describes and explains the essential principles of teaching and learning. There is evidence of good critical reflection, with how this has informed the development of teaching practice supported with reference to the appropriate documentation/ academic literature.	70 to 100 points An excellent report that describes and explains the essential principles of teaching and learning. There is good evidence of critical reflection, with how this has informed the development of teaching practice supported with frequent reference to appropriate documentation/ academic literature.	

Figure 1: Blackboard Feedback Rubric Grid.

The approach (continued)

During marking a Feedback Rubric was completed for each student, additional comments were added in and the weighted elements of the assessment were automatically calculated, reducing the amount of time taken to do this manually. Once marks and feedback were released, the students were able to see a completed feedback rubric with feedforward comments together with their mark.

The Outcome

Using technology to facilitate generation of feedback has provided the following outcomes:

- Online submission and inline marking allowed the lecturer the flexibility to work wherever there was an internet connection
- There was no requirement to carry around scripts reducing the possibility of losing work and associated security issues
- The students could see their feedback and mark as soon as it was released – they did not have to be in university to receive feedback
- It was easy to produce a spreadsheet of the marks for award boards from Blackboard so there was no separate record keeping needed
- Being able to annotate student scripts was a more meaningful way of giving feedback

Profile

Tutor name:

Marie Judge

Faculty:

Arts, Computing,
Engineering & Sciences

Size of cohort:

Small (15+ students)

Technologies used:

Microsoft Word, Online submission via Blackboard, Inline grading via Crocodoc, Blackboard Rubric

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

Future Development

The tutor plans to develop her online practice further by:

- Continuing to look for other online assessment tools that will help to provide effective feedback for the student whilst allowing the tutor to work flexibly
- Looking into using PebblePad for students to collate a file of evidence and observations as part of their design and technology course
- Using the Socrative electronic voting system and Google Documents in lectures to encourage engagement and incorporate formative feedback into the sessions

Recommendations

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

- Ask for help from your faculty TEL team to get you started
- You need a reliable internet connection to maintain the connection with Blackboard when marking using Crocodoc and when completing Feedback Rubrics
- Ensure criteria is pre-written before creating Feedback Rubrics, and copy and paste this in – this will save time