



Getting it right: Guidelines for Online Assessment



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
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This project was funded through the Ako Aotearoa Regional Hub Project Fund 2016.

Published by Ako Aotearoa National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, PO Box 756,
Wellington 6140

ISBN to be confirmed for print and online.
Published 31 October 2016



An Ako Aotearoa publication.
This project output has been funded by
Ako Aotearoa through the
Regional Hub Project Fund.



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Getting it right: guidelines for online assessment

The need for resources

Getting assessment right is critical in supporting students' learning and ensuring their retention and success¹. Online teaching and assessment in some form is now a mandatory component of the workload of many teachers in tertiary education, and one that is only likely to increase in size and significance². Tertiary teachers are increasingly expected to assess students using online tasks and tools and frequently adapt these from traditional methods. Effective online assessment can offer a range of benefits to both students and teachers including more interactive assessment and feedback, increased efficiency and reduced workload³, the ability to meet the needs of increasingly diverse learners, and the opportunity to use new technical and pedagogical skills. However, online tools are constantly being invented and updated and teachers frequently lack not only knowledge of online tools and how they can be best deployed, but also structured developmental opportunities to learn to use them in their teaching⁴. Many academics are still grappling with teaching online using learning management systems such as Moodle effectively, and are afraid that engaging with new technologies will detract from student learning⁵.

¹ Boud, D. (2010). *Student assessment for learning in and after courses: Final report for senior fellowship*. Strawberry Hills NSW Australia: Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

² Barber, M., Donnelly, K., & Rizvi, S. (2013). *An avalanche is coming: higher education and the revolution ahead*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

³ JISC (2010). *Effective assessment in a digital age: A guide to technology-enhanced assessment and feedback*. Retrieved from http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/programmes/elearning/digiassass_eada.pdf

⁴ Mansvelt, J. Suddaby, G., O'Hara, D. & Gilbert, A. (2009). Professional development: assuring quality in e-learning policy and practice. *Quality Assurance in Education: An International Perspective*, 17(3), 233-249.

⁵ Johnson, L., Adams Becker, S., Cummins, M., Estrada, V., Freeman, A., & Ludgate, H. (2013). *NMC Horizon Report: 2013 Higher Education Edition*. Austin, Texas: The New Media Consortium.

The time is therefore ripe for providing New Zealand tertiary teachers with resources to review and develop their online assessment practices, in the context of their regular activities planning and designing for assessment. Ako Aotearoa's Northern Hub funded a project team of Auckland-based tertiary teaching consultants and academic developers to produce two initial resources: a set of evidence-based contextualised guidelines for good practice in design and implementation of online assessment, and an interactive online tool for teachers to identify online assessment methods (or "tools") appropriate to their own contexts. The resulting resources are designed to be used separately or together: *Getting it right: guidelines for online assessment*, and the *Online Assessment Tool Selector* (OATS), available at <http://oats.net.nz/>,

Grounding the resources in practice

Guided by a review of the literature, the team identified key elements of effective online assessment practice, and of support for tertiary teachers to develop the requisite technological and pedagogical skills. These elements provided direction for the team to select a range of tertiary teachers known to them in the course of their work as exemplifying effective online assessment practice. Interviews with these teachers provided the team with a set of case studies of good practice, and the guidelines were drawn directly from these case studies. It should be noted that, while each case includes a section on what students say about the assessments, students were not interviewed for this project. This material was drawn from a range of unacknowledged sources including formal and informal written student evaluations as well as teachers' recollections and impressions of students' responses.

The project team took a pragmatic approach to developing the resources, limiting the cases analysed to those they had personal access to, and creating an online resource that could be reviewed and refreshed with some agility. To extend the reach of this practitioner-led approach, the guidelines and OATS were both extensively reviewed by tertiary teachers in New Zealand, and the team is grateful to the many who volunteered to trial them. Further guidance for online assessment practice is available to New Zealand tertiary teachers through national networks such as the Flexible Learning Association of NZ (FLANZ), and resources available through Ako Aotearoa at <https://akoaotearoa.ac.nz/>.

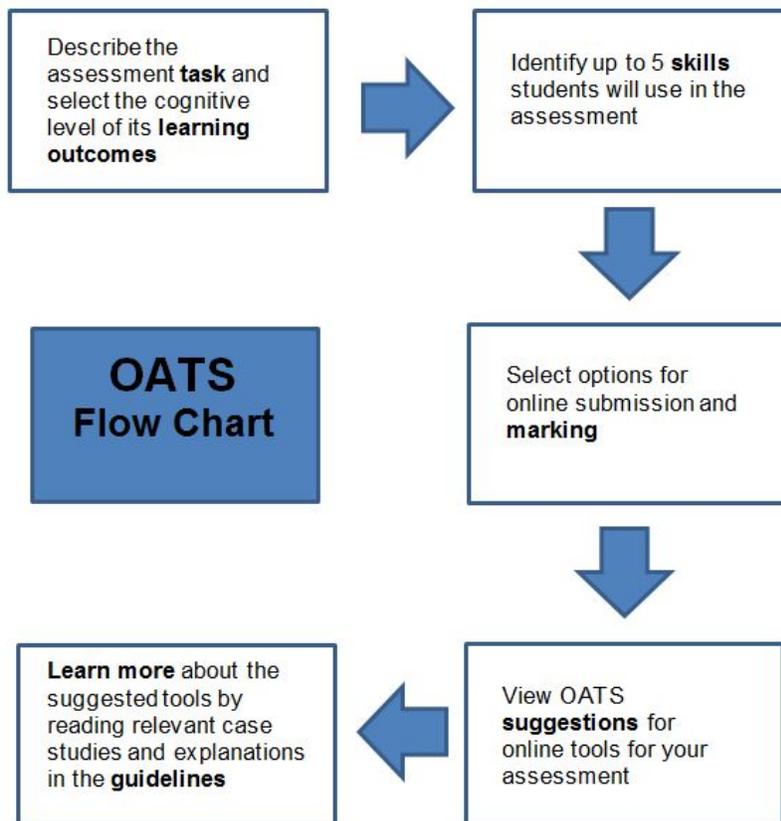
Using the resources

Getting it right: guidelines for online assessment, and the *Online Assessment Tool Selector* (OATS), available at <http://oats.net.nz/>, can be used on their own or together by tertiary teachers using, or planning to use, "online" assessment. In both resources online assessment is defined as the use of online tools in assessment **for** and **of** student learning. This includes the use of online tools for assessment tasks, feedback and marking or grading. In the case studies, online assessments are used in blended as well as fully online courses.

HOW CAN THE GUIDELINES AND OATS BE USED TOGETHER?

Tertiary teachers planning to introduce online assessment may dip into the guidelines, or use the OATS, at any point in their planning or design for assessment. While all four sections and Appendix of the guidelines are connected, each section can also stand alone. Similarly, teachers may usefully complete the OATS without reference to the guidelines. One way to use the guidelines and OATS together is to begin by completing the OATS in order to identify which online tools may be appropriate to a particular assessment context, and to then find out more about those tools by reading the relevant sections of the guidelines.

The following flowchart illustrates how teachers can use the OATS and guidelines together. Teachers are advised to start with an assessment task and specific learning outcomes in mind.



WHAT'S IN THE GUIDELINES?

The guidelines are in four sections and an Appendix, each of which can stand alone and may be read separately or together as required. Section 1, “Shifting to a sustainable model of assessment”, references key **literature** underpinning the development of the guidelines. Section 2 comprises a set of 6 evidence-based **principles** of good practice in online assessment, drawn directly from the case studies and referring to the literature. Section 3 is a set of 10 guiding **questions** designed to help you consider some of the elements of good assessment practice and how you might translate these to the online environment. In this section particular reference is made to the recently developed *eLearning guidelines*⁶, available at <http://elg.ac.nz/>. Section 4 is a set of 12 **case studies**, each focusing on how a different Auckland-based tertiary teacher uses an online tool for designing and implementing an assessment task. The Appendix contains definitions of each online tool, notes on how it is used for teaching and further useful weblinks.

Section 1: Shifting to a sustainable model of assessment

“Assessment is perhaps the best way of identifying the support needs of learners and can instil a desire to progress further if linked to appropriate resources, good quality, timely feedback, and to challenging but stimulating ways of demonstrating understanding and skills. Effective use of technology can make significant contributions here.”⁷

Assessment has always played a crucial part in the learning process. Traditionally, emphasis has been placed on summative assessment, or assessment **of** learning, in order to benchmark student achievement, measure student “success” and provide evidence for certification. However in recent times there has been an increasing emphasis on formative assessment, or assessment **for** learning and assessment **as** learning.⁸ Formative assessment informs teachers about the effectiveness of both their teaching and their students’ learning. Formative and summative assessment tasks that engage students in productive learning processes and use feedback from both teacher and peers to benefit learning are now recognised as key to improved levels of student learning and engagement. Planning for appropriate and timely feedback is essential to the assessment design process.

Boud (2010) suggests that assessment **for** and **as** learning is “sustainable”, or integral to learning that is lifelong and that provides students with the tools they need for a life of effective work⁹. Learning that is lifelong is participatory and contextualised, and differs from the acquisitional, de-

⁶ An Ako Aotearoa-funded project led by New Zealand Tertiary College and developed as a guide to designing, implementing and enhancing eLearning for the tertiary sector.

⁷ JISC (2007), op. cit., 7

⁸ Zepke, N. (2013). Threshold concepts and student engagement: Revisiting pedagogical content knowledge. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 14(2), 99.

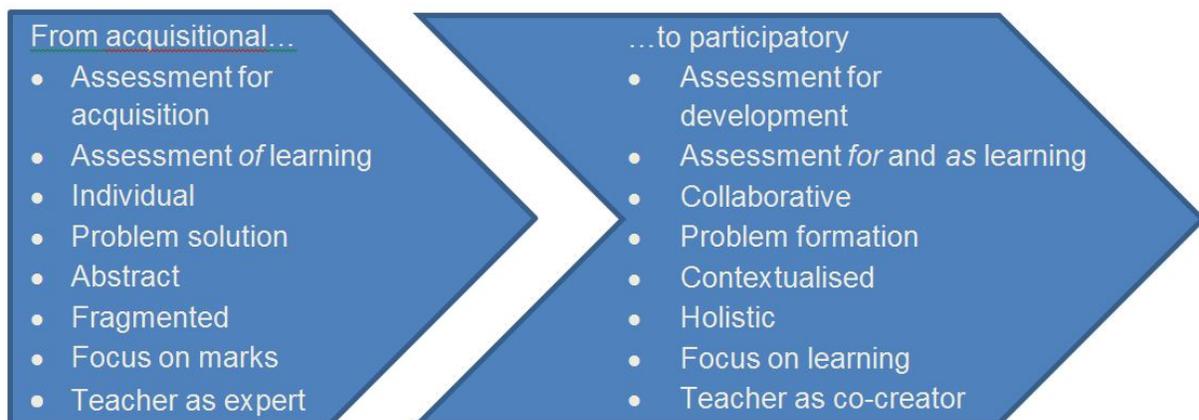
⁹ Boud (2010), op. cit.

contextualised learning which traditionally occurs in a tertiary setting. Assessment tasks that foster lifelong learning must enable students to be able to make complex judgements about their own work as well as that of their peers. To arm students with the skills necessary for successful lifelong learning, Boud recommends a shift to what he calls a “sustainable” model of assessment, an assessment process that involves active, real-world based tasks and requires students to critically reflect on their own and peers’ work.

The diagram (following) depicts characteristics of the transition from a traditional “acquisitional” assessment model, to a more sustainable “participatory” model. We have depicted this as a linear process. However we note that it is important to conceive of three of the polarities as “both/and” rather than “either/or”. These three are:

- assessment for acquisition / assessment for development
- assessment **of** learning / assessment **for** and **as** learning
- individual / collaborative

A sustainable model of assessment



The effective use of technology can make significant contributions to assessment that is “sustainable” in these ways. The principles, guiding questions and case studies presented in these guidelines all reference this concept.

Section 2: Six principles of good practice in online assessment

The following principles are drawn directly from the case studies and integrate assessment literature. References for further reading can be found at the end of this section.

1. BE CLEAR ABOUT WHY YOU ARE DOING ONLINE ASSESSMENT

Identify the value of online assessment for your learners and how it relates to their learning. How does using online environments support better learning for students? Do you have a clear rationale for putting the assessment online? If online is the best mode for your assessment then use it: if not, then don't use online tools for their own sake. Aspects identified in our case studies that relate to a more sustainable, participatory model of assessment include:

- learners can re-engage with their own content and develop the ability to make informed judgments about their work
- learner and teacher are able to track development
- feedback is improved
- learners are given the chance to learn from each other

If an assessment is **for** learning rather than **of** learning, students need to be involved in at least two, if not all three, aspects of the assessment event: the task, the criteria and evidence. "Sustainable" assessment is achieved when students not only produce what is being assessed, but also engage in establishing and using criteria to assess their own or peers' work.

2. MAKE THE BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Use as many of the special functions and affordances of, or opportunities provided by, online environments and tools as will enhance your students' learning experience. Conversely, also recognise the constraints and limitations of the tools you have chosen, and identify how they can work for your students and yourself in your context. In our case studies, teachers identified a range of possible advantages of technology. They found students can:

- engage more easily
- track their own development, and reflect on process
- see each other's work
- give each other feedback

They found teachers can:

- communicate easily with students
- find marking easier
- give feedback that is better quality, because it is more personalised, timely, in-depth and contextualised

3. DESIGN FOR STUDENT LEARNING

In online environments, you need to ensure that students are sufficiently supported without depending on face-to-face input around assessments. Spend time on designing tasks that maximise students' learning. Ensure that support mechanisms are explicit, accessible and give 'just-in-time' information.

In our case studies, teachers were careful to:

- give feedback that is better quality, because it is more personalised, timely, in-depth and contextualised
- link tasks explicitly to learning outcomes
- deliberately exploit affordances of technology for individual tasks
- integrate/align assessment tasks across whole course
- structure tasks to be both challenging and achievable
- set clear expectations of what students have to do in relation to task submission, peer interaction and teacher feedback
- outline success criteria using rubrics and other means
- design for integration of online assessment and face-to-face classes (in blended learning)
- scaffold students' use of online tools:
 - identify digital literacies required and where students might need support
 - teach necessary technology skills to engage successfully
 - teach necessary academic and interpersonal skills to function effectively in online environments
 - align tool use at programme level

4. ENSURE YOU ARE PRESENT IN ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

Teacher presence is a crucial aspect not only of online learning but also of sustainable assessment.

In our case studies, teachers were present online by:

- initiating and modelling tasks in online environments
- providing support where needed, particularly with technology issues
- encouraging critical engagement with material
- extending depth of discussion with concepts
- gently keeping students on task
- giving regular and timely feedback
- giving examples of learners' good practice

5. MAKE USE OF SUPPORT FROM COLLEAGUES AND INSTITUTION

Developing work in online environments is time-consuming and requires specific skills that may be outside standard job descriptions. Don't expect to save time initially when setting up online assessments. Alleviate stress by knowing where to go for help. In our case studies, teachers relied on their colleagues as well as their institutions for support:

Collegial support

- identify expert teacher users in your team and their availability to give support
- discuss your experiences with working in online environments
- share the load of developing online assessments
- create troubleshooting guide for a tool used by others in department

Institutional resources

- provide support for extra workload in developing, monitoring and marking online assessments
- allocate appropriate technical support
- develop staff digital literacy skills
- identify needs for IT infrastructure such as additional wifi
- consider availability of institutional funding/support for development, eg. creating apps or games

6. FIND OUT ABOUT CURRENT PRACTICE

Knowing what other teachers do for online assessments will facilitate your own developing practice. Talk to colleagues about what they do. Read research papers. Our case studies are a useful starting point for identifying possibilities for, and aspects of, online assessment.

Many of these principles apply to good teaching, learning and assessment generally and are not specific to online assessment. However, they reflect the elements that teachers in our case studies identified as important to the success of their online assessments. It is significant to note that these teachers reported increased student motivation and engagement when online tools based on affordances of technology and good design and support were used for assessment.

FURTHER READING

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Section 3: Ten guiding questions for assessment design

The questions below are designed to help tertiary teachers consider some of the elements of good assessment practice and how these might translate to the online environment. They build on, and in some cases quote directly from, the resource *eLearning guidelines: prompts for good practice*¹⁰ available at <http://elg.ac.nz/>. These direct quotes are cited in italics and with their prefix.

The key question to ask is: will using online tools for assessment enhance learning and teaching?

Qn	<i>Is this good assessment practice?</i>	<i>Will this online assessment tool enable good practice?</i>
1	<p>Purpose Are you assessing for transition, development, achievement, certification, or something else?</p>	Does the tool allow you to do this?
2	<p>Programme alignment Is the programme assessment schedule integrated and holistic?</p> <p>Is it aligned horizontally (with other courses) and vertically (with other levels)</p>	<p>Is there specific teaching and support for digital literacies embedded in the programme?</p> <p>Is there sufficient consistency in the types of assessment for learners to master the literacies?</p>
3	<p>Course alignment Is the assessment aligned with learning outcomes AND learning and teaching activities?</p> <p>Do the learning outcomes distinguish between technical and other competencies?</p>	<p>Does the tool allow students to evidence and demonstrate their learning in alignment with the learning outcome?</p> <p>Does the task assess/ require digital literacies that are outside the learning outcomes? <i>Do the assessments reflect learners' content knowledge and practice separate from their digital skill level?</i> (TD 9)</p> <p>Are digital literacies taught? <i>Can learners practise using the required online assessment tools they need for submitting assessments?</i> (TI 7)</p>
4	<p>Authenticity Is the task authentic?</p>	<p>Is the technology itself authentic to the workplace?</p> <p>Is the technology appropriate to the task?</p> <p><i>Can learners be assessed in authentic situations such as workplaces by the use of virtual</i></p>

¹⁰ An Ako Aotearoa-funded project led by New Zealand Tertiary College and developed as a guide to designing, implementing and enhancing eLearning for the tertiary sector.

		<i>technologies? (LI 7)</i>
5	Individual and/or group Is the assessment task suitable for either individual or group assessment?	Does the tool allow you to track contribution and participation?
6	Task and marking descriptors Is the task description clearly written? Does the marking schedule give clearly written criteria? Is the weighting proportional to effort required from students)?	Is it possible to have task description/instructions/criteria present in the tool? Has the effort required to learn and use technology been considered in relation to marks allocated?
Qn	<i>Is this good assessment practice?</i>	<i>Will this online assessment tool enable good practice?</i>
7	Role of students Are students involved in making judgements about their own and others' work?	Is peer work accessible? Does the tool allow for anonymity? Are students able to make informed choices about technology most appropriate for task and their skills? <i>Can learners choose digital presentation methods for assessments? (LI 6)</i>
8	Academic integrity Is the focus on academic integrity developmental rather than punitive? Is the assessment designed to ensure that the work is genuinely the students' own?	How can the tool be used to support development? Does the tool chosen for this task reduce opportunities for plagiarism? <i>Are online assessment practices safe, secure, fair, reliable and valid? (TD 8)</i> <i>Are assessments designed to lessen the opportunity for plagiarism? (TI 8)</i> <i>Are learners required to digitally declare their work is their own? (TI 9)</i> <i>Has there been consideration of the use of digital tools to detect plagiarism? (TI 10)</i>
9	Product and process Are you assessing and providing feedback on the product alone?	Does the tool (or related task) allow for tracking group or teamwork process, eg. reflections,

	Is group or teamwork process part of your assessment?	contributions, milestone submissions, changes and development?
10	<p>Feedback</p> <p>Is time spent explaining criteria to students?</p> <p>Is feedback timely, and are assessment schedules structured to allow for response to the feedback in the next assessment?</p> <p>Are students taught digital information literacy skills so that they can respond to feedback?</p>	<p>Does the tool allow for generic and individual feedback?</p> <p>Are there issues of confidentiality and privacy to be considered?</p> <p><i>Is there timely, accurate and clear feedback to learners on the development of their digital information literacy skills? (LI 13)</i></p>

Section 4: Twelve case studies

The following case studies focus on how 12 Auckland-based tertiary teachers each use online tools for designing and implementing an assessment task. While not all cases include feedback and marking or grading processes, the case studies on using Apps and Turnitin detail how the teachers use these online tools to provide feedback, mark and grade more efficiently.

Three case studies focus on different uses of e-Portfolios for assessment, selected according to the project team's personal knowledge of good practice examples. E-Portfolios were being used very effectively in a range of ways transferable to other tertiary teaching contexts.

TERMINOLOGY

Throughout the case studies we have called all tertiary lecturers, tutors and teachers “teachers”, and students and learners, “students”. Interviewees have been given a pseudonym. Instead of “papers” we refer to “assignments” or “courses”, according to what the interviewee meant. We refer to levels of learning in terms of the 10 levels of the NZQA Qualifications Framework (NZQF), available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand/understand-nz-quals/>. As can be seen in the diagram below, there are 10 qualification types distributed across the 10 levels:

Qualification levels and types

Level descriptors and qualification types on the NZQF

LEVEL	QUALIFICATION TYPES
10	Doctoral Degree
9	Master's Degree
8	Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates, Bachelor Honours Degree
7	Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Diplomas and Certificates
6	Diplomas
5	
4	Certificates
3	
2	
1	

SUMMARY OF CASES PRESENTED

Each case focuses on the use of one online assessment tool for a particular purpose and in a particular context, as detailed below:

Online assessment tool	Assessment-related purpose	Subject area and NZQA level
1. Apps	Grade practical assessment	Cookery Level 3
2. Blogs	Reflection	Social Sciences Level 5
3. e-Portfolios in Google	Evidence ongoing learning	English Language Level 4
4. e-Portfolios in Moodle	Expose the hidden curriculum	Foundation Studies Level 3
5. e-Portfolios in WordPress	Assess work-based learning	Business Level 7
6. Forums	Encourage student participation	English Language Level 5
7. Gaming	Practise real-world skills	Automotive Technology Level 2
8. Glossaries	Peer critique and feedback	Communication Studies Level 6
9. Quizzes	Support effective learning	Physics Level 5
10. Turnitin	Marking, feedback and evaluation	Marketing Levels 5-7
11. Videos	Develop real-world skills for employability	Communications Level 6
12. Wikis	Assess teamwork skills	Health Science Level 5

Case 1: Apps

Using web apps to grade practical assessment

CHALLENGE

Providing appropriate and timely feedback on practical tasks is often problematic. Assessment feedback is often text-dense with little incorporation of non-written evidence, which can reduce the learning impact of feedback on practical tasks. The necessity of providing written feedback immediately on completion of the assessment risks students receiving poorly thought out and abbreviated or generic critique on their performance. Consequently the assessment feedback often lacks relevance to those being assessed on practical tasks and is of little value for their further learning.

BACKGROUND

Provision of relevant feedback on a practical baking assessment at Level 3 was proving a problem for Cookery teacher Merryn. Although marking sheets were completed during the assessment and shared with the individual student immediately afterwards, students were unable to keep a copy as these were needed to meet compliance and moderation requirements. While some students took photos of their marking sheets, there were also issues around the feedback quality: brief written comments were insufficient for Level 3 students and those who did not take photos had no record at all.

Two web-based applications (*Notability* and *Showbie*) are now used to overcome these issues. *Notability* enables Merryn to mark each student individually as the assessment is being performed, add photographic evidence of student performance to the marking sheet, and save to a class folder. The digital records of the assessment are then exported to *Showbie* where students are able to see a much richer version of their assessment record, including formative feedback and photographic evidence.

Both apps are low cost: *Notability* costs \$11.99 for teachers and *Showbie* is free for students. A basic teacher package is available for free, although our case study participant used the more advanced *Pro Edition* (\$179 per year) which was paid for by the institution.

THE ASSESSMENT

"[Students] are very happy to use Showbie. They understand that they are getting their own assessment back. They can go back at any time they like to review, print out and collect it all in a folder."

Learning outcomes assessed

- Demonstrate professional practice standards
- Batch bake cake products
- Prepare, mix, bake and finish speciality gateaux and torten
- Demonstrate knowledge of bakery management systems

What students do

Students must produce three specified gateaux in one 4-hour practical session to complete Part 2 of the “Speciality Gateaux” summative assessment. They must provide a work plan before commencing the practical assessment, and meet personal hygiene and timeliness standards during the assessment. To receive their assessment results, students must register as *Showbie* users in the “Class” set up by the teacher. Registration is done in class time, in a computer lab and with teacher guidance.

What teachers do

The assessment task requirements, marking schedule and examples of previous students’ work, are made available to the class via the LMS from the commencement of the course. Before the assessment day a marking rubric is created in Word and saved as a pdf. This is exported to the *Notability* class “folder” of all students. Marking is done as the assessment progresses using an iPad and the interactive pdf feature in *Notability*. Using the app, the teacher fills in each student’s rubric with marks, comments and photos as she moves around the kitchen observing her students. This is done repeatedly throughout the assessment, with the app allowing the teacher to add additional feedback and evidence until the assessment ends. When the assessment is finished the teacher reviews and edits the rubrics, adding further comments and clarifications. The completed rubrics, which are automatically saved in *Notability*, are then backed up to the teacher’s institutional drive for safety and moderation.

Each student’s completed *Notability* file, including formative feedback and photographic evidence, is then exported to their personal *Showbie* account where they pick it up. This saves emailing large files and can be done quickly and seamlessly by the teacher. Lastly, the students debrief one-on-one with the teacher using their *Showbie* file as a reference/discussion tool.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

“Now they are getting more personalised feedback.”

What students say

As well as having a permanent record of their assessment, students appreciate the detail and complexity of their assessment feedback. The photos enable them to see clearly what they have

done well and what they still need to work on. They are able to include parts of the feedback, particularly the photos, in their portfolios to use as evidence when applying for a job.

What teachers say

“It was the way we did things then. I never questioned it, but looking back now, it feels pretty uncomfortable that we denied the students their own work.”

Using apps, the marking and feedback is more thorough. Photos provide instant, authentic evidence of meeting achievement criteria for this standards-based assessment. While it takes two or three days to get the completed *Showbie* files to the students, they don't mind because of the quality of the feedback they receive. This has the added benefit of taking the pressure off the teacher, who was originally expected to have completed assessment sheets available for students to review immediately after the assessment was completed. She can now concentrate on the notes and photographic evidence during the assessment and spend more time and give more thought to the feedback after the assessment.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

“The biggest challenge is remaining organised.”

- No matter what assessment tools are used, clear thought and planning must be given to the design of the marking criteria and how these are to be met.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher to make sure that they and their students are competent users of relevant technology and tools before they are used, particularly for summative assessment.
- The teacher must plan how to use the features of the app while marking the assessment in real time, including how to gather photographic evidence and provide feedback.
- Institutional support is vital for the success of this grading approach.

FINAL WORD

“Showbie has the added bonus that students get to keep a record of their own learning, assessment and feedback.”

Providing high quality, evidence-based feedback to students is a priority for teachers assessing practical tasks. While using *Notability* and *Showbie* in combination for marking does not save the teacher time, it has major benefits in terms of the quality of student feedback which can be more personalised, more visual and more contextualised.

Case 2: Blogs

Using blogs for reflection

CHALLENGE

For a course based on developing interpersonal skills and cultural awareness, fostering students' ability to be reflective learners is critical. Learning to reflect requires students to have something useful and meaningful to reflect on, as well as an appropriate tool for, or means of, recording those reflections. For staff, those tools need to be accessible and assessable, providing a progressive record of development as evidence of learning. In this case, students have been using blogs to record reflections on their own and others' learning as they engage with the core skills necessary to demonstrate intercultural competence. Staff leading the course have designed a learning environment where blogs are an effective and transparent reflective tool.

BACKGROUND

Social Sciences teacher Ani has used blogs since 2009 in a Level 5 intercultural competence course with cohorts of between 25 and 50 students, in order to gather and give feedback in both formative and summative ways. Blogs create an online environment that allows students to reflect on their own learning alongside that of their peers. The aim is to develop students' critical cultural awareness through regular reflective writing, integrating their own experiential learning with evidence and theory gained in class.

THE ASSESSMENT

“Blogs facilitate the continuation of learning out of class as well as collaboration, and provide a way to monitor and give feedback.”

Learning outcomes assessed

- Understand the concepts of values, norms and beliefs, and how they relate to patterns of behaviour in socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theoretical models and frameworks.
- Discover differences in cultural perspectives and communication styles and behaviour in authentic material or situations, and apply new learning to interpret misunderstanding and interact effectively.
- Show interest and curiosity, appreciation and respect for difference and the unfamiliar, willingness to interact and collaborate with others, and readiness to suspend beliefs about own and other cultures.
- Identify own values and beliefs, critically reflect on own identity and worldview, and self-assess any changes in understanding of own identity and perspective

What students do

Students are taught how to use blogs in their first class and then post weekly entries over five weeks, responding to set tasks and questions. They record their observations of personal learning in class that includes their interactions with classmates and application of relevant theory. In this way blogs provide students with an evidence-based means of evaluating their learning. This also prepares them for the second phase of the assessment process where they move from the individualised focus of the blogs to working alongside others in online wiki groups.

What teachers do

Blogs offer a useful and appropriate means of assessment particularly suited to the holistic nature of the course's learning outcomes, which track development of attitudes and reflective skills over time. Ani uses blogs as evidence of students' changing cultural awareness integrated with developmental theory. A socio-constructivist approach to intercultural learning and teaching combines experiential, dialogic and collaborative learning opportunities: blogs offer students all three of these. Institutional staff developers assist with the technological setup and ongoing maintenance of blogs as needed. Ani posts guided questions in students' blogs each week, which have three aims: describe, interpret and evaluate. She gives weekly formative feedback on each student's blog, which can also be viewed by the class. Marks are allocated using a competency-based matrix aligned to the course's learning outcomes. At least one other teacher is needed to ensure consistency in such a subjective process of formative and summative feedback based on highly personalised data.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

"The interactive nature of this particular blog fulfils the three core facets of intercultural learning: experiential - themselves and others; dialogic - writing about themselves and viewing others' writing; and collaborative - seeing classmates' responses to the same class content and learning from, and with, each other."

What students say

Students enjoy the incremental nature of the blog as assessment, receiving guidance in small manageable amounts rather than one large block. The regularity of the feedback – the fact someone is reading and responding to their posts - is an added incentive to continued participation. As all blogs are open to all students, they can read and comment on each other's blog entries, as well as on any formative feedback posted by the teacher. Students perceive this as a positive learning opportunity. Students new to reflection appreciate the opportunity to view others' blogs as models or exemplars, showing them what is expected and increasing their confidence with the process. Viewing the teacher's feedback also makes for a benchmark that is transparent and achievable. They appreciate the relevance and alignment of the blogging process to the course content and learning outcomes.

What teachers say

A major advantage of an online blog space over alternatives such as course journals and worksheets is its function as a trackable timeline that records students' learning with a progressive and time-stamped record of progress, providing verifiable transparent "assessment **as** learning". Students need an appropriate framework of guided questions and tasks to reflect on each week. It is essential that students receive regular, constructive feedback on their responses: without it, they soon stop participating. Marking needs to be kept efficient and manageable by means such as setting deadlines for posting blog entries, so that if a student misses a deadline they do not receive feedback. The accessibility of the blogs makes it easy to invite additional staff in for moderation purposes. Ani includes peer assessment, given during the blogging process, as a means of clarifying the process for staff. This ensures students understand what is required and are able to fulfil those expectations appropriately.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

"Blogs are only as good as the guided process and questions."

- A scaffolding process following a prescribed timeline of regular, weekly instruction, guidance and theory is essential so both students and teacher can see progress and development over time.
- Open, transparent blogs allow students to learn from and with each other.

FINAL WORD

This case demonstrates a creative use of blogs for assessing the development of reflective skills in tertiary students. Similar online tools for such purposes would be portfolio systems that aim to compile a series of dated individual posts or journal entries. Ani uses blogs with her class in a way that integrates individual students' entries with those of their peers, as well as feedback from their teachers. Blogging creates a dynamic environment where students can track their own development and changing attitudes alongside those of their peers, learning both from and with each other. This process neatly and ideally addresses the challenge of scaffolding and assessing the particular set of holistic competencies and capabilities integral to this course's learning outcomes.

Case 3: e-Portfolios in Google

Using Google e-Portfolios to evidence ongoing learning

CHALLENGE

Language courses can offer numerous opportunities for assessment over a single semester across a variety of skills. In this case, keeping all such assessments in one place using an e-Portfolio was a department decision that accompanied the introduction of a new New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) qualification. This case reports on English teacher Cara's experience in the first semester of the use of an e-Portfolio for this purpose.

BACKGROUND

The e-Portfolio in this case assesses language students enrolled in a Level 4 NZCEL course, English for Academic Purposes, and was developed in response to institutional encouragement to consider different methods of assessment. The e-Portfolio creates an opportunity to measure ongoing receptive and productive skills as well as encouraging students to reflect on their development. The tasks were based on an existing course portfolio but were adapted to suit the online environment. With input from the academic advisory unit, the department investigated three possible platforms to use for online portfolios, and decided that the Google suite best met the needs of students and tasks.

THE ASSESSMENT

Learning outcomes assessed

- Write coherent texts appropriate to audience and type, using a range of text types.
- Demonstrate knowledge and use of vocabulary appropriate to the level.
- Demonstrate a range of learning strategies appropriate to the level to facilitate success on the course, including educational and technology tools.

What students do

Students are given four different tasks in each of the four language skills to demonstrate their developing competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening. The products of these tasks include writing and videos, and they are all stored in Google Sites as an e-Portfolio. There are also three reflective tasks. The first reflection is on time management, the second on reading development and the final task requires students to reflect on their experience of doing a research project. For the reflective tasks, students answer specific prompts and questions to reflect on their learning and the content relates to aspects being worked on during the course.

What teachers do

Teachers give formative feedback as each student completes a task, and a summative mark at the end of semester. Although students can continually return to edit their work online, making deadlines difficult to manage and lengthening time spent on feedback, Cara identifies this as a crucial affordance of the e-Portfolio. She tries to respond to students when they make changes to their text, and keeps careful records of their task achievement and correction. This record serves as an overview of the assessment for teachers who begin teaching on the programme mid-semester. Cara believes that the processes of introducing task details and online processes to students will become more streamlined in future iterations.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

“Students see the e-Portfolio as fast and efficient.”

What students say

Each student’s e-Portfolio is a collection of their work in a Google Site. Student development over time is charted and students can share their product with others, as well as create an artefact to take with them when they leave the programme. Cara feels that students value online work and seem to put in more effort than they do with paper and pen, which she attributes to the way word processing makes their work appear neater. She encourages them to take ownership of the e-Portfolio and extend its use by sharing material with family and friends, rather than seeing it just as an assessment. Students across all courses evaluated the use of the e-Portfolio midway through the first semester and results were very positive. Online access is not a problem for students as each class is timetabled into a computer lab for two hours a week.

What teachers say

Staff who have worked with paper portfolios in the past appreciate the value of having all materials online, and not having to deal with folders full of bits of paper. An online portfolio also allows students to include links to video and audio files they have produced.

Clear marking criteria in the form of a comprehensive rubric helps teachers to mark consistently and give useful feedback to students. While it is worth noting that some staff continue to find online marking challenging, and prefer to print and mark paper copies, Cara notes that once teachers get used to marking online, they recognise the benefits: students receive immediate feedback, and further communication can take place. Occasionally when Cara is marking, she notices that one of her students is also online, and takes the opportunity to interact in real time. She enjoys the use of different colours for commenting or highlighting text and she can search a Google Site portfolio for grammar structures that students have used and check these for accuracy. It is also easy to refer students to websites or link to course materials in the Learning Management System.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

“It’s a team effort.”

- Careful consideration is given to supporting students and staff to develop the necessary digital skills. In order to minimise the technical aspect of creating an e-Portfolio, students are given a template to copy, with pages set up under different headings. One reason this department chose Google Sites as an e-Portfolio, is that students are already familiar with Google for email or for searching. They do need to learn about some of the other Google apps, however, and their uses - such as how to make the most effective use of sharing. Cara’s approach is to show students the different features or how-to’s on a just-in-time basis. Often the most difficult part is learning to upload videos. Where students have encountered technical difficulties, they are frequently supported by other students who have knowledge of a particular type of phone for example, and this appears to strengthen relationships within the class.
- Adopting a new form of assessment as a whole team has allowed the workload to be shared. Teachers received basic training from experts in the team before semester started. Some staff took responsibility for creating tasks, while a different teacher developed a marking guide. Cara was given release time in the second week of semester to help all Level 4 teachers and their students establish their individual e-Portfolios. She visited every class responding to needs, explaining processes and giving an overview of how different environments fitted together. Currently, the teaching team is working on a collaborative document that will give guidelines for online marking.

FINAL WORD

Collating work in an e-Portfolio brings all students’ assessments into a single artefact, and promotes student ownership. Marking work online is efficient and allows for immediate and more varied feedback, including links to websites and audio recordings.

Case 4: e-Portfolios in Moodle

Using Moodle e-Portfolios to expose the hidden curriculum

CHALLENGE

Teachers in a Level 3 Foundation Studies programme found that their students were often not familiar with academic requirements in tertiary education. Students in this case now use e-Portfolios to learn through an orientation assessment about tertiary study requirements such as studying independently and being an active learner.

BACKGROUND

Foundation Studies teachers wanted to support their students through an orientation assessment to understand study requirements. Initially paper-based, the assessment was designed as a treasure hunt. It seemed successful in helping students familiarise themselves with necessary study skills although the paper version did not provide a great first impression for students. Quickly it became clear that students needed to orientate themselves to the skills required for online study. e-Portfolios provide more than just an online equivalent for a paper-based portfolio: they allow students to explore digital tasks and to collect, create and present evidence electronically.

THE ASSESSMENT

“The paper-based assessment seemed a bit tedious and boring. The e-Portfolio looks good and achieves higher engagement due to its visual nature and the online tasks. Photos and other digital elements can be integrated easily.”

Learning outcomes assessed

- Develop and apply core literacies required to succeed in further academic study
- Demonstrate knowledge of self and others and develop strategies to manage life, work and learning

What students do

The e-Portfolio tasks are used as an early low-stakes assessment (5%) for students to find out about tertiary study requirements. Students are taught how to work with an e-Portfolio and how to post entries to fulfil their assessment requirements. They record their answers to the tasks through e-Portfolio entries. As part of the treasure hunt, students are asked to take photos and videos, for example of themselves in the library. Students become oriented to online skills, as they have to create an appropriate email address, email their tutors and set up their online profiles.

What teachers do

The teachers use e-Portfolios to expose curriculum requirements that are often not explicit but essential for study success through a task-based, practical approach. The treasure hunt template with its visual elements showing what students could collect means there is now a stronger gamified element than with a paper version. Through the online format, teachers can give formative feedback much more easily than with a paper-based copy. The accessibility of the e-Portfolios means a teacher can check in and provide feedback more often for some students who might need extra support.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

“The treasure hunt tasks are meaningful for students and provide essential knowledge and skills for their study success. Through their visual nature and the digital options available, e-Portfolios engage our students better than paper-based versions.”

What students say

The visual nature of the e-Portfolio allows students to produce and present their learning in an appealing way. Students are required to use the e-Portfolio system and email, developing skills which they need for successful tertiary study. Students show higher engagement because of the online tasks and the digital possibilities of an e-Portfolio, such as the integration of different media.

What teachers say

The tasks of the treasure hunt help students to transition into tertiary study by making the often hidden curriculum visible through relevant tasks. Not only is the e-Portfolio easier to give feedback on and mark, it is more engaging and enhances their study experience. Students can keep track of their learning journey as they work through the tasks. If teachers only tell students how important it is to use the library, it might not result in any follow-up action from learners. Providing students with a task that allows them to experience the library and includes posting a photo as evidence, ensures more meaningful, practical learning.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

- Institutional support is helpful to set up an e-Portfolio template, especially when integrating e-Portfolios in a learning and teaching situation for the first time.
- Having colleagues to collaborate with is wonderful when exploring the possibilities and discussing the highs and lows that can happen when working with new technology.

FINAL WORD

EPortfolio assessments offer an online space for students at different levels of learning to record reflections and practices, to collect evidence and to create information. The treasure hunt orientation assessment for foundation students is successful in this context because it helps to unveil

organisational requirements and hidden curriculum tasks. The e-Portfolio makes this assessment visually more appealing, more engaging for students, and easier to manage and mark for teachers.

Case 5: e-Portfolios in WordPress

Using WordPress e-Portfolios to assess work-based learning

CHALLENGE

When student numbers in a Level 7 industry-based Business course increased rapidly three years ago, the move from a paper-based portfolio to an e-Portfolio assessment for the capstone project was instigated so that all material could be stored easily in one place, which was accessible online at any time. This 30 credit course requires a total of 220 hours in a workplace.

BACKGROUND

Business teacher Dee had to research which online assessment tool to use as there were no specific, supported tools at the institution. Once WordPress was chosen, a significant challenge was getting project supervisors on board with the new tool. At first there was misunderstanding as the supervisors thought they had to create the e-Portfolio themselves. In addition they were unfamiliar with tracking a specific site so a training programme was developed for staff on how to follow a WordPress e-Portfolio. This was often one-on-one training which resulted in workload issues for those providing the training, the institution's academic developers. As Dee noted, *"If the academic developers weren't available to [help me] change to an e-Portfolio, I probably wouldn't have done it."*

There were similar challenges for students shifting to an online environment. As the project was assessed in the final year of the degree, the teaching team decided to orient the whole programme toward the use of WordPress. Assessments in other courses were developed using WordPress for reflective journaling exercises, which scaffolded students into the capstone project both in using the technology and also in the genre of reflective writing. As a result the majority of students undertaking the capstone project are now familiar with WordPress.

Learning outcomes assessed

- Complete successfully an approved project and work objectives/tasks in the workplace
- Evaluate and critically reflect upon the project / work processes and outcomes within the context of the workplace environment
- Identify, implement, evaluate and critically reflect upon a personal and professional development plan.

THE ASSESSMENT

“I have pulled back on some assessment. I have simplified some things because at the end of the day they have to perform in the workplace and they can’t be caught up in all this academic assessment.”

As a reflective assessment for a capstone project, the e-Portfolio gives students an opportunity to collect and present authentic and complete evidence. In changing from paper-based to online, very little changed in terms of the actual assessment. The learning outcomes for the course stayed the same but the number of reflective entries was reduced from 10 to 6. The main reason for this was that supervising teachers needed to validate the portfolios and so had to be familiar with the requirements: any change would mean retraining industry staff to assess the portfolio.

What students do

A formative assessment leading to a summative report consists of a number of reflective journal entries on the student’s experience in a work-based learning placement. The decision was made against developing a template which all students could use, as this wouldn’t allow students to develop the skills to create a WordPress portfolio from scratch. Instead, an exemplar provides students with a step-by-step process of how this is done.

What teachers do

Dee has changed the way she taught the technical skills required for using WordPress. Thirty minutes of each face-to-face workshop now involves a student in front of the class learning how to use WordPress in real time. The teacher gives instruction, one-on-one, standing next to the student while the class follows the work as it is displayed. The advantage of this is that the teacher slows down her instruction, going at the pace of the student, and the rest of group are happier to ask questions with the student up the front.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

“I was wanting students to go out with an advanced knowledge of setting up a WordPress site.”

What students say

The feedback from students has been very positive, who report they see it as a worthwhile exercise. WordPress is a tool commonly used in business, so their ability to use it has added to their skill set. In addition, students can also use the portfolio as a basis for their CV.

What teachers say

Although the diversity of subjects students major in – from accounting to marketing to HR – means they are doing quite different work, the e-Portfolio has given all students *“the opportunity to be as creative as possible and to show [their work] through different forms of media.”*

Dee observes that the students have become more and more honest in their reflections: *“When they were typing up a learning journal to include in a paper portfolio they treated it as more of an academic exercise. They weren’t letting their creative juices flow at all. I have been in the role for 6 years and so have gone from 3 years of lever-arch files to e-Portfolios. Somehow [the e-Portfolio is] releasing them. They are relying on their own thoughts and feelings.”*

Providing feedback online is very easy and students get immediate notice of teacher input. Further, Dee can easily monitor the work of the 26 industry supervisors as she is able to see the quantity and quality of the feedback they are giving students: *“A huge advantage of this is that I can monitor the activity of the students as well as what the staff are doing in terms of feedback and supervision.”*

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

- Institutional technical support was essential to make the change from paper-based to online portfolio.
- It is imperative that students are scaffolded into digital literacies through other courses earlier in the programme and that training in the use of WordPress is part of the teaching in the course as well.
- Training applies to staff as well, with the understanding that refreshing people’s knowledge and skill will be necessary each semester.
- Students developed the capability to make informed judgments on their work by reflecting on what they were doing.

FINAL WORD

Students seem to treat writing online in a different way to more traditional writing modes. Dee observes that there is more authenticity and honesty in the reflective writing than when it was paper-based. Students appreciate the ongoing involvement of their industry supervisors and the formative nature of the feedback they receive.

Case 6: Forums

Using discussion forums to encourage student participation

CHALLENGE

Expectations in tertiary study around academic listening and reading often outstrip the ability of EAL (English as an Additional Language) students to analyse extended academic texts. While online discussion forums are often dismissed as teaching tools because of perceptions that students don't participate adequately, this case study demonstrates that, through careful design, forums can provide peer support for ongoing discourse analysis tasks in listening and reading assessments.

BACKGROUND

This case study showcases an integrated assessment in a new Level 5 New Zealand Certificate in English (NZCEL) Academic Listening and Reading course, which prepares students for further tertiary study. Key competencies students are required to develop include reflection and analysis. Worth 25% of students' final course mark, this assessment scaffolds learners into textual analysis, with formative feedback from peers and teachers underpinning the process. Over three semesters, the assessment has required little revision by teachers other than selecting more recent texts.

THE ASSESSMENT

The use of discussion forums in this assessment allows students to extend their use of written language with peers in an online environment, and to experience a tool that is prevalent in online tertiary study. Students are allocated roles which require them to complete different aspects of textual analysis each week for four weeks, and are expected to comment on each other's analyses.

Learning outcomes assessed

- Understand general meaning and specific detail in complex academic spoken and written texts
- Apply analytical skills to reflect critically on purpose and meaning of extended spoken and written texts
- Use listening strategies selectively and flexibly to understand spoken discourse in a variety of contexts
- Use extensive listening and reading of academic texts to support independent and on-going vocabulary acquisition
- Understand the enquiry/research process and its centrality in the academic culture of New Zealand

- Demonstrate a range of learning strategies appropriate to the level to facilitate success on the course, including educational and technology tools
- Demonstrate knowledge and use of academic vocabulary appropriate to the level

What students do

“The most helpful thing that I learned from this course is group-work especially, like forums, and the motivation and encouragement in between students replying information to each other in the group.”

Weeks 1-3 practice stage (individual): Students do independent analysis of different listening and reading texts (all available digitally on the Moodle LMS), with specific questions based around content, language and strategies for listening and reading. Students receive weekly feedback from their teacher on worksheets.

Weeks 4-7 forum interaction stage (collaborative): Students continue to do analysis of listening and reading texts but work in online forums in groups of four. They are given specific roles that rotate each week (*Content analyst, Language analyst, Strategies analyst and Host*). Each student’s initial post analyses the group text from the perspective of their role; they then discuss each other’s contributions. The role of the Host is to encourage and extend discussion and finally to summarise the week’s activity, signalling any questions that require teacher response.

Weeks 7-11 text curation stage (individual): Students choose their own text from their intended field of study and prepare a support PowerPoint for the text using the same analytic skills from the previous two stages. Two peers review their text and the support analysis, and give feedback on the value of the analysis so that changes can be made. Final submission of the analysis PowerPoint online in Week 12 is accompanied by a brief reflection on the learning process over the semester.

What teachers do

“I’m absolutely sure the task would NOT work without the practice stage.”

Students are scaffolded into discourse analysis tasks through the practice stage. English teacher Eric introduces each section gradually, and reassures students that they will be supported through each part. He finds that giving detailed formative feedback on the worksheets in the first three weeks contributes to students’ understanding of and confidence with the task when they come to groupwork in forums. The first three weeks of the course allow him time to get to know students and to construct forum groups based on mixed gender, nationality and ability.

The forum stage of the course is very structured and expectations are made clear. Students are allocated roles in their forum groups, and provided with a description of the role. Eric is available to step in on the rare occasions that groups encounter difficulties which they can’t resolve themselves. His experience is that groups self-manage absences and fill in the missing role contributions where

appropriate. Working on texts collaboratively gives students the confidence to analyse their own choice of text in the final stage, where once again peer feedback supports the task.

While the marking demands of the final text analysis are substantial, Eric feels that giving more formative feedback in the first stage and reading students' online contributions in the second stage provides him with a better grasp of students' understanding. Peer input helps students to improve their own work, as does the use of clear criteria for forum discussions.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

"They do wonderful things - they do all sorts of stuff that you wouldn't expect them to do."

Analysis of reading and listening texts is time-consuming, and having both texts and discussion opportunities available online means that work happens asynchronously. Students have time to reflect on each other's posts and create appropriate responses in a way that could not happen if the activity was done in class. In addition ideas are captured for future reference, both by students and teachers.

What students say

Students enjoy the challenge of having a different role each week and being supported in textual analysis by their peers. Evaluations conducted at the end of semester suggest that students find the discourse analysis tasks helpful, and particularly enjoy working collaboratively in the forums.

What teachers say

"The task encourages greater engagement than you would normally get."

Expectations of level and depth of contribution are given to students in a rubric. Eric suggests that EAL students participate more when they have the chance to prepare and rehearse, and comments that having a specific role in the forum gives status and responsibility to students, as well as developing their confidence. He has been surprised at the extent to which students will debate text interpretations in an online environment and notes that this happens as a sense of community develops within groups.

The digital literacy demands of posting and responding in tightly-constructed group forums in Moodle is well within the capabilities of most students in the course, and technical support is available where needed. Being shown a group forum discussion from the previous semester enables students to see what a successful task might look like.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

The thorough design of this assessment overall is integral to its success:

- The design exploits the affordances of face-to-face and online environments to scaffold student success and make the three stages of the assessment cohesive. Groups are given time to work together in class initially, and as a result students often plan to meet outside class before working as a group online.
- Online participation is discussed in the face-to-face classes. Once forums are underway, Eric highlights groups that are working well and demonstrates different ways that students have presented information. He also points towards aspects of discourse analysis that relate to the topic for the following week. His comments in class demonstrate to students that he is reading their online discussions and he rarely finds it necessary to comment on any of the forums.
- Clear expectations of individual roles/responsibilities in the forum contribute to the success of the task. Students know what to do and weaker students will contribute more than they do in face-to-face environments. The task enables them to bring in creativity and go deeper with ideas, and enables groups to extend their engagement. Students learn not only from each other but also from other groups.

FINAL WORD

“I can’t see this assessment working in the same way without the online component.”

Forums were an ideal choice of medium in this assessment to give students the opportunity to support each other in the process of group discourse analysis. However, it was the careful design throughout the assessment which contributed to forums working effectively.

Case 7: Gaming

Using a computer-based game to practise real-world skills

CHALLENGE

The need for practical, skills-based workers to understand health and safety issues, meet regulatory requirements and follow safe work practices is assumed in most industries within New Zealand. However, motivating students on practical work-based courses to engage with health and safety material, which is generally theoretical and written, can prove extremely difficult and ultimately become an impediment to the successful completion of their studies. Finding an alternative delivery method for students to access and engage with learning materials became a priority for Automotive Technology teacher Farhad, who was wrestling with this issue. Incorporating theoretical learning into a computer-based game was his solution.

BACKGROUND

Getting students to engage with material needed to complete the compulsory, theory-based written test was proving problematic in Farhad's Level 2 Automotive Technology course. Student engagement in the compulsory Health and Safety (H&S) module of this course was typically low, with unmotivated students performing poorly in the Unit Standards-based summative written test. The learning material was perceived by the students as peripheral to their core studies and students were unmotivated to spend time engaging with it. After reading educational literature on the gamification of learning, Farhad decided that there was a good chance that a contextualised H&S game could work with the module. He gained institutional support and financial backing, and the design and development of a computer-based game commenced using both in-house and out-sourced game developer expertise. Game development was both expensive and time consuming, with Farhad having to put in long hours to complete both the content design and maintain regular liaison with the developers over the year-long production process. The game environment was created as a replica of the workshop that the students studied in every day, with all real-world features present in the virtual environment. The designers thought this was important as it gave a context to the game that all students could relate to when playing. The game was also designed to be web-based, which allowed it to be played off campus as well as in class. Once the game was completed it was used as a formative assessment tool that enabled students to check their understanding of H&S material in a non-threatening and fun learning environment.

THE ASSESSMENT

"Many of our students play games socially anyway, so I figured why not bring that into an educational environment and see if we can't engage them more."

Learning outcomes assessed

- Demonstrate knowledge of personal behaviour that affects workshop safety.
- Demonstrate knowledge of good housekeeping practices to promote safety.
- Demonstrate knowledge of maintaining safe working practices in an automotive workplace.

What students do

After participating in workshop practice sessions, students play the game in a 2-hour session. They play either individually or in pairs, and are required to perform each of three typical workshop scenarios (e.g. jacking up a car and changing the oil). They have to identify and resolve a range of H&S issues as they go (typically 6 or 7 associated with each task) and each scenario must be completed before they are able to move on to the next. These scenarios cover most aspects of the unit standards they must complete. As the students make their H&S decisions, they are given feedback on any mistakes they make as the game progresses, which acts as formative assessment. Student motivation is not a problem with most. Completion scores become competitive in class and students will happily engage with the H&S content of the game and with each other for the length of the classroom session. The game can be replayed as often as wanted, both inside the class or at home.

What teachers do

“We use it at the end of the teaching package to reinforce what the students are supposed to have learnt. It seems to work very well.”

Initially Farhad delivers the redesigned H&S content not as theory but as part of workshop practice sessions. Once the workshops have been completed, he introduces students to the game in the computer lab adjacent to the workshop in which the game is set. It is important to make sure students have computer skills: those who don't are paired with those who do.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

“The students have the opportunity to go and make mistakes. If I let the students loose in a workshop environment that is unsafe, someone is potentially going to get hurt or equipment is going to get damaged. The game gives us the chance to set the students loose in a virtual environment where they can't get hurt but the same rules will apply.”

What students say

The students in this cohort are not willing readers or writers. They do however enjoy the interactive and competitive nature of gaming. They respond well to the game environment and see participation as fun rather than as formative assessment. However, to be successful while playing they must recall and use knowledge that they have gained in a more traditional way.

The game scenario which is modelled on their workshop is familiar to the students and means they know where things are located through everyday experience. Consequently, unlike a new game where the user must familiarise themselves with the environment, here the players are not wasting time searching for objects and can instantly engage with the tasks required.

There is an inbuilt literacy aspect to the game – students must choose actions for each H&S task from a dropdown menu. An in-game avatar that speaks the phrases and provides oral instructions and feedback is also used. Basic computer literacy is also emphasised through the use of the mouse for navigation purposes and through basic data entry that is required to complete tasks within the game.

What teachers say

The contemporary feel and interactive nature of the game motivates students to engage with the compulsory H&S learning material. Real-world decisions can be made in a safe environment without the risk of injury or equipment damage, and can be repeated as required. Instant feedback is provided throughout the game ensuring that students learn from their mistakes which cannot go unnoticed. Successful completion of the three scenarios means all compulsory H&S material has been revised and students are well prepared for the summative assessment.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

- Computer-based games enable students to practise skills and explore situations that may be inaccessible or unsafe to practise or explore in the real-world.
- Students will often be more motivated to engage with learning materials and practise skills within the gaming environment than in the traditional classroom setting.
- Teachers teach and game-developers make games. While it is important for teachers to be involved in the development and design of game content, the practicalities of game development should be left to the professionals.
- Institutional support – sponsorship, IT infrastructure and equipment, staff digital literacy skills development, preparation and development release time – is an integral part of successful educational game design and development.

FINAL WORD

“When we finally assess the students we seem to have a much higher pass rate first time round. We have less resits.”

While production costs for this particular game were high, it is becoming more and more possible to use extant games and simulations for similar purposes. Using computer-based games is an effective way to motivate reluctant learners to engage with theoretical material. Students find the contemporary

nature of the gaming environment attractive and are more willing to work through learning material in this format than in a traditional class setting. The increased level of student engagement the game has created through its use as a formative assessment tool is one explanation for the improved student pass rates being seen on this course.

Case 8: Glossaries

Using online glossaries for peer critique and feedback

CHALLENGE

It is often problematic to get students to discuss their own and others' work in any depth. Providing detailed, written peer review, particularly when students are tasked with evaluating original work and justifying comments that they have made, requires skills that need nurturing and practice. This case study focuses on Communication Studies teacher Gerhard's assessment for a Level 6 course that has been designed to foster these skills. Originally delivered solely face-to-face, recently the course needed to accommodate a distance cohort learning alongside the face-to-face class. In the classroom version of the assessment, students present their ideas to the class and then critique each other's work in detail; subsequent discussions often become free ranging and of considerable duration. An online equivalent of the face-to-face version was required that enabled distance students to develop the skills necessary for successful completion of the peer review assessment.

BACKGROUND

Students on this course are expected to develop skills in providing informed, constructive feedback as well as reflecting on and accommodating others' opinions in their own work. Key aims of this assessment are to encourage students to be reflective learners, and to critique and revise their own and others' work. Effective and unobtrusive facilitation of these practices needed to be integral to the format chosen and the selected tool had to be technically user-friendly to enable easy online discourse and information sharing between students.

In previous years this assessment was presented as a wiki task. This was problematic as many students had difficulty using the wiki tool and consequently did not complete the task as the teacher envisioned. While the use of the glossary tool in this way is not conventional, the switch was a way to simplify the technical aspects and to enable students to concentrate on academic rather than technical skills.

THE ASSESSMENT

"For me, fundamentally, the most important thing is reflection on one's own decision making and the capacity to articulate (it) formally. And I think that's quite an incredible skill."

Learning outcome assessed

- Critically evaluate how new technologies impact on communication practice and patterns of organisational communication.

What students do

In Part 1 of this two-part assessment, students are required to make lists of predictions from an evidence-based rationale about future trends and to share these findings with their classmates by posting comments in a purpose-built online glossary. Each student is then required to critique the initial findings of two peers, also using the comments function in the glossary. This peer critique is then used as a guide to help each student revise their lists. Part 1 is simply marked pass or fail, determined by submission.

For Part 2 of the assessment each student posts their own revised lists, along with a “short formal academic rationale” reflecting on the contributions of the peer feedback to the revision. Gerhard grades this second part of the assessment using a marking guide. While this activity could have been designed as an online discussion forum, the format of the glossary tool, where postings and comments are clearly differentiated, is a useful way to divide student work from peer feedback while still maintaining a singular entry.

What teachers do

“Using the glossary tool and the comments function was fundamentally a substitute and in some ways a more successful one than what people would be doing face-to-face.”

Gerhard introduces students to the assessment through a detailed assignment description including links to the course learning outcomes, step-by-step task instructions, a folder of resources, a discussion forum on the assignment, and marking guidelines. He prepares students for using the glossary through informal briefings, guidelines and clarification of expectations on the assignment discussion forum. Students are encouraged to discuss the assignment among themselves in the same forum as a way of further making sense of the requirements and working through issues. An appropriately labelled glossary is created for Part 1 student submissions and comments, and a drop box created for submission of Part 2.

Gerhard critiqued the first student submission to the glossary publicly, in order to model the level of critique that was expected of students. To overcome a common issue facing teachers - student non-participation when part of an activity is not assessed - the initial lists were made compulsory with a pass/fail grade attached to their submission. While not developing reflective practice skills, making submission and comments compulsory has ensured students participate in the initial phase of the assessment, and thus provide the lists needed for peer feedback.

To make sure students were timely in their initial submissions to the glossary, and to circumvent issues around student 'freeloading' on classmates' research, the "conditional release" function was used, allowing only those who had submitted their own work to have access to the posted lists and peer critiques.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

"I had a couple of vocal critics who actually in the end, which I have fairly comprehensive emails from saying 'hey look we weighed it all up, we moaned all the way through, we challenged you on this, this and this, but yeah at the end of the day, sweet.'"

What students say

"I really like your perspective; it's given me a 'eureka' moment of my own as I was also trying to take a broad perspective with my assignment; yours really succeeds there. Your list is definitely contributing to part two of my assignment as I'm rethinking how I've approached my list, so thank you!" Student posting

The more structured approach of written comments compared with spontaneous face-to-face critique, has enabled students to take more time and give more thought and focus to their feedback. The more concrete written comments have facilitated clearer understanding of what was being suggested by their peers, appearing to take less interpretation to garner meaning. The written format also created distance between the parties and was seen as less confrontational and/or threatening to participants.

What teachers say

"I think it polarised quite a lot of people... Either they hated it or they thought it was great and they thoroughly enjoyed it and the opportunity to do something that was relatively free and unbounded."

During the parallel in-class activity where participants give oral feedback in groups, the conversations and group dynamics often mean students struggle to make full sense of their peers' critique. The way online students have approached the task, using written comments in a more clear-cut and direct manner was better suited to the undergraduate student ability level, and to a large degree circumvented the miscommunication problem. It enabled students to quickly and clearly understand their peers' comments and where appropriate to accommodate them into their worldview.

The glossary tool proved technically easy for students to use and meant that, as hoped, the technology did not interfere with student learning.

Changes being considered include removing the boundary between face-to-face and distance cohorts by combining both classes and having all critique online. This would create a larger participant pool,

create tighter synergies between the cohorts and perhaps enable the addition of another layer of critical reflection to the assessment.

Assessment requirements also need re-evaluation. The expectation on students was too high, particularly with regard to putting their own reflections into formal academic writing. The priority should remain on critical reflection rather than formalised writing.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

“It’s grounded within the parameters of what (the online environment) supports to the degree that it was easy, and the ultimate advantage; it was easy to communicate to the students”

- Guidelines and expectations for students need to be clearly stated, with a well-structured task that is both challenging and achievable
- The teacher needs to be actively involved in the online elements of the assessment, giving direction and encouragement, guiding the discussion through effective modelling and the provision of resources and comments where needed, and gently keeping students on task
- Focus should be on the quality of, and engagement with, reflective practice rather than on the formalities of academic writing

FINAL WORD

“How do I know whether it was successful? I’ve thought about this quite a lot, but ultimately I’d say I don’t know. I can easily build in what would be an easy proxy for success that would satisfy any number of people, but fundamentally because it’s an evolving [course] and subject to experimentation it’s never going to have a control variable where I can determine these things. I don’t know how you measure success.”

The affordances of the online environment meant student feedback was clear and well-structured, and suited the level of students involved in terms of ease of comprehension and use. However, affordances of face-to-face critique were missed, such as the ability to explore more wide-ranging aspects of the topic, or have serendipitous contributions: this proved a trade-off with the shift to an online version of this assessment.

Case 9: Quizzes

Using short answer online quizzes to support effective learning

CHALLENGE

Getting students to engage with learning material on a regular basis can be problematic. When material includes formulae and equations, irregular engagement and low skill levels can mean vital steps in processes or sequences of learning are missed. Teachers are often searching for ways to encourage their students to engage with new material that ensure they do not fall behind. In this case, Physics teacher Helena's Level 5 course, summative assessment was seen as a way to 'force' students into this engagement and resulted in a set of self-marking short answer quizzes that covered material on a weekly cycle being designed, developed and deployed. Each low-stakes quiz provided opportunities for students to practise new skills and receive constructive feedback that compensated for their knowledge gaps, and when combined the quizzes made up a worthwhile portion of the total course marks.

BACKGROUND

While students enrolled in this introductory course are expected to have passed NCEA Level 3 Physics, not all students meet this requirement. Historically the class has been required to complete weekly exercises from a commercial education website as part of course requirements. Feedback about the effectiveness of these quizzes is varied, with students complaining about the mismatch between the online exercises and final exam requirements. The development of a series of online quizzes that directly related to both the weekly learning material and the final exam was seen as a way to better cater to student needs and lift success rates.

THE ASSESSMENT

"It's a way of trying to engage students throughout the semester, because we want them to have something to do every week that will help them keep on top of the course work."

Learning outcomes assessed

- Give adequate descriptions of situations and solve problems relating to advanced mechanics and simple harmonic motion.
- Give adequate descriptions of situations and solve problems relating to thermodynamics.
- Give adequate descriptions of situations and solve problems relating to magnetic fields, electromagnetism and ac circuits.

What students do

Every week a quiz is opened on the course LMS site for students to complete. Each has 10 multi choice and/or one-word short answer questions with randomised variables where appropriate. Each quiz is available via the site for two weeks and the students are allowed two attempts, with the final mark being the average score. There are 10 quizzes in total, which together are worth 15% of each student's final mark. Students are encouraged to complete the quizzes twice, with the randomising of variables within the quiz settings meaning that students must repeat calculations as answers cannot simply be copied from one quiz to the next.

What teachers do

"It's quite challenging writing the quizzes. The amount of up-front work that needs to be done is quite huge - especially if you want randomised variables."

Designing and writing quizzes is time consuming and involved. There are a number of factors that the teacher takes into consideration when doing this:

- Writing relevant questions based on each week's key concepts and content, at an appropriate level to challenge the students and enable them to practise key skills.
- Identifying where there are possibilities to randomise variables (i.e. replace numbers with a range) and then incorporating these into the quiz questions.
- Writing appropriate single word/short answer questions that overcome drawbacks within the LMS particularly around spelling mistakes and capitalisation.
- Providing appropriate and constructive feedback for questions. The quiz designer must predict what will catch out students and build in feedback for each element. This can be involved: if there are multiple misconceptions or mistakes that could be made within one question, each must have appropriate feedback to aid student understanding. At other times however, this can be as simple as "Check your sign" or "Check the unit" or "See page 48 in your textbook."
- Quizzes are released on the LMS every week for 10 weeks, and each is available to students for two weeks. They are then closed.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

"I like to think that because they are constantly exposed to the topic and they are constantly asked to practise, that it's helping them."

What students say

Through the quizzes students are regularly exposed to learning material in an appropriate format and at an appropriate level. The requirement that they practise key calculations as they arise means they stay up-to-date and are able to effectively progress through the course content. Using randomised variables within the quiz questions means that while students are practising the same skills, each equation is unique. This ensures that, while they can help each other with the calculation process,

they cannot share answers and they must produce their own work. Similarly, the “second chance” option (re-sitting the test and taking an average score) motivates students to re-engage with the material they have scored poorly in.

The provision of meaningful and constructive feedback is perhaps the most important reason this assessment has a high impact on student learning. Careful consideration is given to feedback given after each question. Tripping points are identified and constructive explanations given to help students overcome these. Most contingencies are taken into consideration. This can mean different feedback is given depending on the answer the student provides. While this requires a huge effort by the quiz designer, the rewards in terms of student learning validate this effort. Finally, the availability of the quiz for two weeks means students can decide when they do it, giving them more sense of control and ownership over their learning.

What teachers say

“We email the students and we talk to them and say you aren’t doing your quizzes and at this point you might not have enough marks to pass the [course].”

Pass rates for this course appear to have improved since the new quizzes have been introduced. Regular practice of calculation drills and the tailored form of the questions means students understand what is required for the exam and are able to practise this throughout the semester.

The regular and compulsory nature of the quizzes enables Helena, who downloads the results every two weeks, to quickly see who is struggling with the content (low marks) or not engaging with the tests (missing results). She can then contact these at-risk students and offer remedial tutoring to those who are struggling, typically in compulsory tutorials. She emails those not attempting the tests and reminds them about the importance of doing the tests, both for their learning and for their final grades. Unsurprisingly there appears to be a correlation between those not doing the quizzes and those struggling with content. The use of LMS analytics has made the task of identifying at-risk students a simpler and more instantaneous task and facilitates the early intervention of remedial action. These analytics are also used to track student progress for regular reports to the first-year Dean as part of the university’s student risk policy.

Finally, Helena uses questions answered poorly by a large number of students as an indicator of a gap in student knowledge. She uses this information to trigger a learning re-cap and to revisit the topic during the next tutorial to rectify any issues. The data is also used as a reflective tool where she reconsiders how she has taught the topic and makes adjustments to deliver it more effectively during the following iteration of the course.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

“I think the quizzes are essential in the students’ learning. They might not know it, but by doing it they engage with the material. It means they are thinking about it and thinking about what they have learned and even with the limitations that [the LMS] has, it’s still an important part of the course.”

- Questions must be on topic and at a level appropriate to students’ learning requirements.
- Customising and randomising questions encourages engagement and prevents cheating.
- Feedback must promote student learning rather than provide correct answers.
- Poorly answered questions can indicate poorly understood concepts and gaps in teaching.
- Incentivising participation with second chance resits and summative marks encourages engagement.

FINAL WORD

“To have a quiz with useful feedback really does take a lot of work.”

While well-written quizzes can be reused over a number of years, the time-consuming nature of effective quiz creation cannot be overstated. Having an expert technical developer to build the quizzes would enable the teacher to concentrate on the pedagogical aspects of quiz creation and leave the technical issues to someone more skilled, saving large amounts of what is largely unproductive teacher time.

Case 10: Turnitin

Using Turnitin for marking, feedback and peer evaluation

CHALLENGE

Turnitin is often seen simply as a tool to ensure academic integrity by detecting plagiarism. It is used for this in one institution's Department of Marketing and Management, but other features provide the opportunity to address equally important challenges in assessment.

One such challenge is that of balancing increasing marking loads with the desire to provide rich feedback to students: feedback that is supportive, specific and detailed and can be used by students to improve and develop their understanding and skills. Another challenge is to get students to engage with their assessments as learning and development events rather than as simple measures of achievement. One Turnitin function, or affordance, can provide students with the opportunity to self-evaluate their academic integrity and edit their work accordingly. Another allows students to re-engage with material and critically engage with marking criteria and the work of other students.

BACKGROUND

Turnitin is an online assignment marking tool which has three components: *OriginalityCheck*, *Grademark* and *Peermark*. Assignments in most courses in the Department have to be submitted through *OriginalityCheck* in Turnitin to prevent plagiarism. Other Turnitin components are used less by staff, but allow students to develop an awareness of plagiarism through formative submissions, faster online grading of assignments, the delivery of rich feedback, the use of verbal feedback and increased student participation in the assessment process through peer evaluation.

THE ASSESSMENT

In this case, Marketing teacher Ina discovered the other affordances of Turnitin and recognised how they could improve her assessments as learning opportunities at all levels of the Bachelor in Business degree (Levels 5-7). She was already using *OriginalityCheck* but decided to explore the tool further and so adopted *Grademark* and *Peermark*.

What students do

Students can use *Peermark* to assess the work of their peers. They earn a low-stakes grade (10%) for evaluating fellow students' assignments. The assignments are distributed randomly by *Peermark* and marked by the students against the assessment criteria.

“In doing the evaluating, students gain beneficial insights into other points of view and other approaches [to the assessment]... [It] forces them to engage with the material again from a more critical perspective.”

Despite the minimal marks for doing the evaluation (the actual mark the students give is not counted toward the final grade), students spend a lot of time critiquing each other’s work and coming up with a justification for why they have given that mark.

What teachers do

Teachers use *Gradebook* for marking and feedback. Aside from the logistical advantages of submitting and storing assignments online, the focus for Ina is on the extent and quality of the feedback she is able to give students while not increasing her marking load. Standard, common or rubric-based comments are a simple matter of cutting and pasting, allowing more time for individualised feedback. The capability of the tool to enable teachers to provide oral comments adds to the quantity and quality of the feedback: *“The richer feedback is also another reason I use it, because of those Quickmarks. You can also give an overall verbal evaluation for, I think it’s three minutes... which for me, it’s quicker to say something than write it.”*

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

What students say

“It develops their critical analysis skills their critical thinking.”

Peermark requires students to engage with the criteria in a deeper way and develops the capability to make judgments on their own work. This is an important aspect of developing work-ready graduates who are able to critique their own work.

What teachers say

Turnitin helps the logistics of assessment collection and marking: as all assessments are in one place, there is a record of submission and any feedback given and the teacher is able to mark scripts anywhere. The *Grademark* facility speeds up marking, provides the opportunity for oral feedback and results in more extensive feedback. It makes it easy to edit or change your mind about a comment or mark. This means that there is *“no record of change, no mixed signals, you’re not causing any kind of misconception”*.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

- Institutional support is essential in building capability to maximise the use of this online tool
- It is essential to have an appreciation of assessment as not simply a measure of learning but as a learning event in itself. The two further functions of Turnitin allow for more extensive

feedback, including oral, and encourage the use of marking criteria which act as standard feedback comments. The *Peermark* function adds further texture to the assessment event in that students re-engage with the material, apply the criteria and in so doing understand them better and develop the capability to make judgements on their peers' and their own work.

FINAL WORD

Assessments submitted online provide convenience in marking, recording and storing. The use of a rubric is not only good practice generally, but the *Quickmark* facility allows for more extensive, specific and helpful feedback. Students find the peer marking engaging and, even if it is for minimal marks, will spend considerable time considering and justifying the mark they give.

Case 11: Videos

Using digital video to develop real-world skills for employability

CHALLENGE

“Employers say that students’ ability to use technology is one of the greatest advantages they leave university with: they need young people’s ability to use social media, as they don’t have it themselves.”

Designing authentic real-world assessment is a particular challenge in tertiary institutions, especially when courses are delivered fully online. In this case, Communications teacher Jasmine’s reading of the literature in the field of public relations (PR) showed her that organisations were avoiding using video because they lacked the skills to do so. She then designed a Level 6 individual assessment that requires her class of approximately 50 students to each make video for a particular organisation’s real-world websites or social media pages, as though they were in competition with each other for the organisation’s PR contract. This provides students with evidence of digital competence for their CVs and heightens their employability in the competitive field of PR. The course is delivered in blended and fully online modes.

BACKGROUND

“I want them to develop their confidence and creativity, and showcase their skillset in more than just writing.”

In this second of two related assignments, Jasmine wanted to foster deep learning by requiring students to experience the process of generating a PR campaign strategy, rather than just analysing a PR campaign case in traditional essay-style as they had for the two years previously. In the first assignment students use academic research skills to identify key “publics”, messages and objectives of a PR campaign for a specified client organisation; in the second they apply their research to build a strategy and detail rationales for four tools or “tactics” to support the campaign. They must produce “sample mock-ups” of the four tools, as well as evaluation criteria, a campaign timeline and a budget. The tools must include a video and a media release, and two others selected from a range of traditional options such as a speech, press kit, brochure(s), poster(s), television or radio script, or from social media options such as a blog, or series of tweets.

THE ASSESSMENT

Learning outcomes assessed

- Describe and apply key concepts and theoretical models that inform public relations practice.
- Analyse and evaluate terms, concepts and theories that inform public relations practice.

- Appraise and apply selected aspects of the professional code of ethics for public relations practitioners.
- Select and use concepts and appropriate PR theory to guide implementation and evaluation of a selected range of professional practice tasks.

What students do

“Students are judged not on technical quality but rather on their ability to make a confident, coherent presentation of their ideas in video format.”

The video that each student is required to produce must be two minutes long, and suitable for embedding into the specified client’s website and/or social media pages. The assessment criteria for the video are weighted in favour of the coherence of the video’s presentation of ideas rather than its technical quality: it must address a specified key public and contain key messages. As with the other tools, the video must be accompanied by a written rationale that links it both to the objectives of the campaign plan and to the relevant academic literature.

What teachers do

“When I first set the assignment I didn’t have a clue how they would make videos... and now I just expect that they have the skills”.

The teacher does very little to support students’ use of technology - *“I just show them how to do it on their phone.”* However, she provides written instructions for the assignment in the form of a detailed four-page brief and accompanying 11-page fillable “template” detailing the elements required (Strategy, Tactics, Rationale, Evaluation, Timeline, Budget), as well as structure and format expectations. She also provides a detailed marking schedule, and samples of student assignments from the previous year. These are not intended to be model answers: they have flaws, and students are encouraged to critique them. In addition Jasmine facilitates mini tutorials for each assignment using the online conferencing tool, Adobe Connect: *“When I used Connect to discuss that’s when the penny dropped – despite having all the written stuff available. Every year the students say the Connect sessions are the best learning tool.”* In these Skype-like sessions, which are recorded for repeated or later viewing, students are able to see and hear the teacher in real time and communicate with her through written messages.

While there are technical difficulties, such as problems submitting videos online because of file size, in Jasmine’s view these are all part of the learning: *“There’s nothing that’s not going to happen in real life”.* She is flexible about these difficulties because she is learning too: *“The biggest help for me is that I’m a technophobe”.* In one instance a very competent student only submitted a “talking head” video because she couldn’t submit the more sophisticated video she’d made, so the teacher accepted the student telling her what she’d done. Although Jasmine is happy to accept lesser quality videos because she is *“marking the concept not the production”*, she realises that in some cases she may not have taken into account how technical quality may affect her response to the video.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

“I was almost at the point where I thought, “Should I be making students do this?” when I got an email from the student who said she’d learnt so much from it, even though at first she was ropable that she had to do it.”

What students say

Making the video is much more challenging for older distance students working fully online. They are often resistant about having to do it initially, but end up by appreciating its relevance and saying it was the most valuable aspect of the course: *“The sense of accomplishment from doing something you didn’t know you could do is amazing.”* For younger internal students, writing the rationale and justification is more challenging. Both groups of students often complain about the amount of work involved: *“That was the last [course] I ever did in my degree but it was the hardest.”*

What teachers say

“I learn as much from my students as they learn from the process of the [course].”

Although Jasmine suspects that in comparison to other courses at the same level this assignment demands too much of students, particularly in its requirements for rationale and justification from the literature, she is pleased with the high success rate . While older students may at first seem disadvantaged because they are less familiar with the technical skills of making video, she notes that while younger internal students may be faster at making videos, the quality of their work is not necessarily better than that of older students. A particularly successful aspect of the assignment is that plagiarism is not possible. Students have to make their own video, and a different client organisation is used every year.

The assignment is submitted and marked online, which is easy for students and much quicker for the teacher to mark. Jasmine is committed to managing the workload imposed by this form of assessment, and didn’t note it as more demanding than that imposed by the traditional assessment. She is planning a major re-write of the assessment, strengthening the contribution of video and using a new textbook.

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

- Assessment criteria for video production should distinguish between technical and conceptual competence
- Students producing video for assessment need clear assignment instructions and guidelines more than they need technical support
- Assessment involving video production is an excellent tool to lessen opportunities for plagiarism

FINAL WORD

“We need more people on site to spend time with us because there’s so much that could be done and there must be really interesting ways of presenting material that we don’t even know about.”

Video is a valuable assessment tool for developing authentic real-world skills that heighten students’ employability. Teachers need support to introduce such tools – Jasmine noted that, although she received intensive individual support from the institution’s teaching consultant, there was a general lack of support systems for teaching staff to develop the ability to innovate using technology. Time for programme development and ongoing professional and technical development needs to be budgeted for.

Case 12: Wikis

Using wikis to assess teamwork skills

CHALLENGE

Assessing teamwork skills fairly is a familiar challenge for tertiary teachers. In disciplines as diverse as engineering and social work, teachers grapple with the difficulties of validly, reliably and transparently assessing individual and collaborative contributions to the processes and products of teamwork. Both teachers and students worry about such issues as how to deal with free-loading and conflict, and how to measure the interpersonal skills required for effective teamwork. In the context of large classes, the challenges of managing, monitoring and marking team processes and products are significantly intensified. This case study illustrates how one institution utilises wikis, or collaborative websites, to streamline fair assessment of teamwork for very large multi-disciplinary classes.

BACKGROUND

From its inception in 2009 this Level 5 Health Science course has never had fewer than 200 students per semester, growing rapidly from 200 to 700 students in just two years, and expanding to include science as well as health students. Most recently the course had over 1000 students in the first semester and around 300 in the second, from more than 14 health and science disciplines. Graduate profiles and external professional registration boards in these disciplines require students to demonstrate teamwork skills.

To cater for the large numbers and inter-disciplinary focus of students on this course, it was decided the course should be offered through blended delivery, with wikis used to assess teamwork. This case study discusses an assessment that is worth 50% of the final course mark, and uses wikis to demonstrate analysis of health and environmental issues and the practice of effective teamwork as a basis for inter-professional learning. The assessment has undergone continuous development since 2009 and now provides students with feedback that is formative, summative, and from their peers as well as from teachers.

THE ASSESSMENT

“We developed assessment guidelines and a task outline. It wasn’t enough for students to just be put in a group with a vague process-related outcome.”

Learning outcomes assessed

- Analyse health and environmental issues within the socio-political context of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Practice effective teamwork as a basis for inter-professional learning.

What students do

Students work in teams of six to create a concept-only original solution to “make New Zealand a healthier place”. They then carry out research and, using wikis, write a collaborative report that justifies the need for such a solution. Each team has its own wiki which is inaccessible to other teams and where they are required to peer review – read, comment on and edit each other’s work. All team members’ work is then collated into one formally written report. Embedded in the assessment requirements are ways for teams to use their wikis to demonstrate that they have participated in teamwork processes including:

- Development of a team contract specifying how they will behave
- Records of weekly team meetings, attendance, decisions, individual contributions and meeting of deadlines
- Individual comments on the team process including how they are managing the wiki

The final written reports are presented on the wiki.

What teachers do

“Eventually we realised the ideal is for teams to have meetings face-to-face in scheduled class time, with the teacher available, and produce work online between meetings.”

Organising large numbers of Level 5 students into teams that enable fair assessment and are logistically possible is very challenging. From a deliberately unstructured approach initially, “without much instruction so that students could develop their own way of working”, the teaching team quickly shifted to a guided approach. They noticed that without this students had no idea how to get started. It also became obvious that students with poor written language skills found it challenging to write online, and so teachers began to provide direct instruction in online writing and editing, with an emphasis on readability and meaning rather than flawless spelling and grammar. In addition, tutorial assistants (TAs) responsible for marking are specifically trained in giving constructive feedback.

Teachers now guide students by:

- allocating students to geographically workable teams of six, with the help of technical support staff
- allowing class time for team meetings and instruction in team dynamics
- providing direct instruction in skills of online writing and editing, giving constructive feedback and working in teams
- clarifying the assessment task and marking criteria in relation to specified learning outcomes
- weighting grading in favour of teamwork over product

“I had to work out how to ensure they did learn together and as individuals.”

When the assessment was first introduced there was no learning outcome specifying teamwork. The wiki process was used as a way of learning together and synthesising teams’ knowledge, the team presented the resulting report together, and teams were marked separately from individuals. This approach didn’t work:

“For the first few years we discovered that one or two people were doing everything and even when they did their own parts they did it without reference to each other. They each produced their own piece of work. There was no requirement to read each other’s work, check or reference it in any way. We had no way of checking how they worked together online. We could see how many times they posted online but had no quality measure of content…

Quantitative numbers of online posts are not a valuable way of measuring [contributions].”

Team participation is now assessed using criteria such as “consistent, effective and collaborative”, and students are marked as a team on reading and commenting constructively on others’ work, and responding appropriately to feedback.

“The biggest change has been having specific requirements to show collaborative process as something they would be marked against.”

The teaching team experimented with different ways of grading the assessment. At first each team received a “product” and a “process” grade, and each team member received an individual “process” grade. Now teams receive two grades: one for “team project work” and one for “team process” plus “individual process”. The teamwork grade outweighs the product grade so that the process of participating – as specified in the learning outcome - is the important one. Teachers take time to explain the grading system in class on the first day and as required later.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT WORKS

“We are always making changes.”

The assessment is subject to a range of ongoing evaluation practices. The teaching team seeks regular informal and formal advice and feedback from students, teaching staff, institutional staff development and technical support teams, and other colleagues developing their use of wikis. Through the assessment itself feedback is provided from students about the process of working in teams and on wikis. In weekly meetings with the course teacher, TAs provide feedback about what’s working and not working, and on the monitoring and marking process. As part of the annual institutional course review, TAs also read and report on student feedback from the online survey (typically over 50% response). Every semester the teaching team meets with the institution’s technical support team to be updated on developments that might improve wiki or groupwork functionality, such as the option to have a group mark that populates all team members automatically rather than through manual individual loading.

What students say

“Students like the private group work space.”

Student evaluations indicate they like many aspects of the assessment:

- the social aspect – as first-year students who don't know anyone the team provides comfort, a sense of belonging, encouragement and support
- the weighting of the assignment – that it's not just one mark for the team
- the task itself – that it is creative, and that it could improve people's health and wellbeing
- the private wiki space for collaborative writing

While students initially approach the collaborative writing with some trepidation, in the end they like it: *“They can see that other people are helping them improve their work.”* When it is given skilfully, students appreciate getting constructive feedback.

What teachers say

“We can document the collaborative process – this is hugely advantageous because how else would you do it with such large numbers?”

The outstanding contribution of the wiki tool is that it enables teachers to track student participation – and that it is not possible for students to doctor this. As the only course that assesses teamwork, this assessment is essential scaffolding for student development of these skills for subsequent courses.

“We can observe teams that are not functioning well and help them out.”

Managing teams is perhaps the most challenging aspect of the assessment, in particular managing free-loading, failure to meet deadlines, and conflict: *“Sometimes they sit there with arms folded not making decisions or talking to each other.”* With such large numbers, the TAs play a key role in management of student teams: as well as being regularly available online, they circulate and trouble-shoot during the in-class team meetings.

The logistics of monitoring and marking the work of 300 to 1000 students is also daunting. However, while teachers deliver the weekly two-hour lecture, they are not necessarily responsible for the one-hour tutorial, online monitoring or marking. From 2009 the course has been provided with a team of teaching assistants (TAs), each paid for two hours per week to monitor 6 to 10 teams online and mark their work. In addition, TAs are paid one hour per week to meet with the course teacher. Some TAs run tutorials as well as monitoring and marking.

Since 2008, essential technical support has also been provided for setting up wikis for the large numbers of students, and providing the private work space. The technical aspects of working on the wiki now appear easy for students, even a little frustrating because *“it's too basic in terms of functions and not nearly as fun as social media.”*

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

- Wikis are used in the service of specified learning outcomes.
- Learners are supported with direct teaching of specific technical, academic and interpersonal skills required to operate wikis effectively.
- Learners receive frequent regular and targeted feedback both face-to-face and online, from peers as well as teachers.
- The institution provides teachers with technical, monitoring and marking support.
- The course is, and has always been, evaluated regularly and extensively

FINAL WORD

It has taken time, experimentation and regular evaluation to develop this wiki-based assessment to the point where it is valid, reliable and transparent, and ideally suited to assessing teamwork skills. Using wikis, students are able to document authentic team processes without ambiguity, providing teachers with trustworthy evidence for weighting in favour of process. The result is a robust assessment of teamwork that has proved effective even with very large classes.

Appendix

APPS

WHAT IS AN APP?

An app, or computing 'application', is a type of computer software designed to run on mobile devices using a specific operating system (typically iOS or Android). Generally apps are low cost or free, have limited functionality and are less complex than standard personal computer software. They are sourced and purchased from online app stores.

HOW ARE APPS USED FOR TEACHING?

There are a huge number of apps that can be used within an educational setting. Apps can be generalised into three categories: games, multimedia or productivity, with each performing different roles within the learning environment. Apps enable learning to take place outside of the classroom, are portable and available 24/7. They encourage learner interactivity and collaboration and can be used to both facilitate learning and check understanding. Within the tertiary setting, increasing numbers of institutions are turning to the suite of Google Apps for Education, a cloud-based service that offers a range of software products that enable students to communicate and collaborate online at no cost.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

The Best Ways to Use Google in the Classroom

<http://www.edudemic.com/best-ways-to-use-google/>

25 Best Educational Apps

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/best-educational-apps/>

iPad Apps for Science

<http://www.bestcollegesonline.com/blog/40-most-awesome-ipad-apps-for-science-students/>

Kahoot

Create play and share learning games. An excellent interactive formative assessment tool

<https://getkahoot.com/>

BLOG

WHAT IS A BLOG?

A blog (a term that combines 'web log') is an interactive website usually maintained by an individual who posts regular entries. These entries may be in text or image forms and include uploaded material, eg. videos. Blogs focus mostly on particular subjects and are primarily textual. They may be public or private and may be used educationally in both formative and summative assessment.

HOW ARE BLOGS USED FOR TEACHING?

Assessed blogging can help to engage students in more challenging academic topics. Blogs may be used as either individual or group learning tools, and with varying levels of public or private access, and for either formative or summative purposes.

- The most common use of blogs for educational purposes is as a type of online reflective journal or portfolio where collected items are submitted or posted by the author, eg. individual writings or uploaded documents, artefacts or images. These can be accessed by the marker for feedback and assessment.
- Blogs have also become a useful means of keeping contact with distance students or those out on placements (eg. for clinical or teaching courses), where the student has an immediate forum for maintaining contact with their teacher.
- In each case, a blog creates a useful log of activity that can be used for feedback and assessment of developing skills over time.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

JISC 2009, Effective practice in a digital age, pp. 22-23

<http://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20140614122306/http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearningpedagogy/practice.aspx>

University of New South Wales guide to assessing with blogs

<https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-blogs>

University of Edinburgh guide for using blogs in higher education

<http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/guide/using-blogs-in-higher-education/>

Higher Education Academy (UK) - case studies on using blogs

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/evidencenet/Case_studies/wales_using_blogs_and_wikis

Why blogging is great for students, and 5 tips for making blogging a breeze
<http://www.edudemic.com/how-and-why-teachers-should-blog/>

Examples of reflective blogs for learning
<http://steve-wheeler.blogspot.co.nz/2015/06/the-next-steps.html>

E-PORTFOLIO

WHAT IS AN E-PORTFOLIO?

An e-Portfolio is a digitized collection of artefacts including demonstrations, resources, and accomplishments that represent an individual, group, or institution. This collection can be comprised of text-based, graphic, or multimedia elements archived on a Web site or on other electronic media such as a CD-ROM or DVD. An e-Portfolio is more than a simple collection - it can also serve as an administrative tool to manage and organize work created with different applications and to control who can see the work. E-portfolios encourage personal reflection and often involve the exchange of ideas and feedback ([Lorenzo and Ittelson, 2005](#)).

HOW ARE E-PORTFOLIOS USED FOR TEACHING?

e-Portfolios may be used to give formative feedback to students on their production, or as a way to allow students to collect artefacts using different media (as in Case Studies 3,4 and 5). They are also used:

- to assess ongoing reflective writing
- to enable peer review and feedback in online environments
- to submit a long-term group product with multi-media
- to demonstrate competencies and skills gained across several courses, eg. as an integrated capstone project

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Ako Aotearoa, e-Portfolios in New Zealand (group forum for people interested in e-Portfolios and associated topics such as reflective learning, lifelong learning) -
<https://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/communities/eportfolios-new-zealand>

Commonly used platform for creating an e-Portfolio, with useful definitions and ideas for use in teaching - <http://myportfolio.ac.nz/eportfolios.php>

Emerging uses of e-Portfolios in Australian tertiary education -

<https://eportfoliosaustralia.wordpress.com/2012/03/29/eportfolios-in-the-australian-tertiary-sector/>

Guidance and examples of organisational experience on choosing, implementing and using e-Portfolios, supplemented by a range of case studies and multimedia resources -

<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/e-portfolios>

Guidelines for teachers starting to implement e-Portfolios -

<https://akoaootearoa.ac.nz/download/ng/file/group-2612/digital-portfolios--guidelines-for-beginners.pdf>

(school level but useful to consider for the New Zealand context)

[http://europortfolio.org/sites/default/files/Teachers%27%20e-](http://europortfolio.org/sites/default/files/Teachers%27%20e-portfolio%20implementation%20Guidelines.pdf)

[portfolio%20implementation%20Guidelines.pdf](http://europortfolio.org/sites/default/files/Teachers%27%20e-portfolio%20implementation%20Guidelines.pdf) (across all levels of education)

International Journal of e-Portfolio, an open-access journal available online, is intended to encourage the study of practices and pedagogies associated with e-Portfolios in educational settings. It contains many examples of how tertiary teachers have used e-Portfolios - <http://www.theijep.com/about.html>

FORUM

WHAT IS AN ONLINE FORUM?

Online discussion forums in educational contexts are usually situated in a Learning Management System such as Moodle, Canvas or Blackboard. Users send, read and reply to messages on a particular subject. Messages are displayed in chronological order or as threaded discussions.

HOW ARE ONLINE FORUMS USED FOR TEACHING?

Online forums can be used to-:

- demonstrate the depth of understanding of key concepts through discussion with peers
- apply theory to students' own contexts eg. work-place
- apply theoretical understandings to a given scenario
- demonstrate ability to work collaboratively with peers eg. extending discussion, engaging other students
- reflect on the development of their understanding over time, based on students' own contributions to discussion forums

USEFUL WEB LINKS

University of New South Wales assessing discussion boards

<https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessing-discussion-board>

Macquarie University's introduction to online discussions
https://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/resources/online_discussions.htm

LaTrobe University's Benefits and Challenges of online discussion
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/lit/resource-library/sources-bk/asynchronous-online-discussion>

GAMING

WHAT IS AN ONLINE EDUCATIONAL GAME?

Online educational games are web-based games explicitly designed for the educational purposes of helping students to learn new concepts, solve problems and/or reinforce development of skills as they play. The success of game-based learning strategies can be attributed to active participation and interaction being at the centre of the experience. Games satisfy our fundamental need to learn by providing enjoyment, passionate involvement, structure, motivation, ego gratification, adrenaline, creativity, social interaction and emotion often located within an interactive goal-based storyline. As educators, governments, and parents realise the psychological need and benefits that gaming has on learning, this educational tool has become mainstream – see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_game.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Results of a survey of 121 adults found that online gamers and non-gamers do not differ significantly on critical thinking dispositions. However, gamers who play strategy games scored higher on actively open-minded thinking than did other types of gamers
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2010.01106.x/abstract>

The finding of this survey suggested that game-based learning engagement is an integrated and continuing process that advances from affective engagement driven by optimal challenge, cognitive engagement situated in playfulness, to potentially game-action-based content engagement
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/bjet.12314/full>

GLOSSARY

WHAT IS AN ONLINE GLOSSARY?

This explanation is taken directly from the Moodle website

https://docs.moodle.org/30/en/Glossary_activity

The glossary activity in Moodle allows participants to create and maintain a list of definitions, like a dictionary. Glossary can be used in many ways:

- The entries can be searched or browsed in different formats
- A glossary can be a collaborative activity or be restricted to entries made by the teacher
- Entries can be put in categories. The auto-linking feature will highlight any word in the course which is located in the glossary.

HOW ARE ONLINE GLOSSARIES USED FOR TEACHING?

While a basic glossary is important, creatively applying the glossary can really make an impact on your class:

- Instead of creating a glossary on your own, why not have the students create them as they encounter unfamiliar terms?
- A collaborative glossary can serve as a focal point for collaboration in a course. Each member of the class could be assigned to contribute a term, a definition, or comments on submitted definitions.
- Multiple definitions can be rated by you and by the students, with the highest-rated definitions accepted for the final class glossary.
- Students can add pieces of work with descriptions to a glossary and allow their classmates to comment on each other's entries to create a basic framework for peer assessment. While this can also be done in a Moodle [Forum](#) or more thoroughly in a [Workshop](#), a Glossary is a fast and effective solution.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

from the Moodle website

[Credit for word use](#)

[Getting to know you"](#)

[Thought for the Day](#)

[Simple peer assessment](#)

SHORT ANSWER QUIZ

The following explanations are taken directly from the Moodle website

https://docs.moodle.org/30/en/Quiz_activity

WHAT IS AN ONLINE SHORT ANSWER QUIZ?

The **Quiz** activity in Moodle allows the teacher to design and build quizzes consisting of a large variety of question types, including multiple choice, true-false, short answer, and drag and drop images and text. These questions are kept in the **Question bank** and can be re-used in different quizzes.

HOW ARE ONLINE SHORT ANSWER QUIZZES USED FOR TEACHING?

- Tie each question to a course goal. After all, you want to know whether your students are achieving the goals of the course, so why not ask them directly?
- Try to ask multiple questions about each important idea in the class. This gives you more data points about student understanding.
- When writing a multiple-choice question, be sure each wrong answer represents a common mis-conception. This will help you diagnose student thinking and eliminate easy guessing.
- Write questions requiring your students to think at different levels. Include some recall questions, some comprehension questions and some application and analysis questions. You can determine where students are having problems in their thinking. Can they recall the material, but not apply it?
- Test your questions. After you've established an initial question bank, use the system reports to determine which questions are useful, and which aren't. As you write new questions, give them a lower point value and throw in a few to establish their reliability.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Bad Multiple Choice Question writers tend to simply pluck out key words from the text and test the recognition or the meaning of those terms. What do good writers do? Here's a few rules to follow:

<http://donaldclarkplanb.blogspot.co.nz/2015/08/top-10-stupid-mistakes-in-design-of.html>

Twenty ways to cheat on MCQ tests

<http://donaldclarkplanb.blogspot.co.uk/search?q=All+of+the+Above>

TURNITIN

WHAT IS TURNITIN?

Turnitin is an online tool that offers three learning and teaching resources:

1. OriginalityCheck

Submission of an assignment to Turnitin allows a student or teacher to check on plagiarism. It generates an Originality Report which provides a summary of sources with matching or highly similar text to the submitted assignment.

2. GradeMark

Allows teachers to mark and grade assignments online. The creation of custom sets of comments and rubrics increases marking efficiency while providing richer feedback to students.

3. PeerMark

A peer grading tool that allows students to read, review and evaluate one or more assignments submitted by their peers.

HOW IS TURNITIN USED FOR TEACHING?

OriginalityCheck tool

- Raises student awareness of plagiarism and allows them several opportunities to self-evaluate their academic integrity (plagiarism) based on the *OriginalityCheck* scores, they can reword, re-paraphrase and resubmit on an ongoing basis, prior to final hand in.
- Assists teachers to detect evidence of behaviours not in keeping with good academic integrity.
- Assists students with APA referencing

PeerMark tool

- Allows students to read, review, and evaluate one or many assignments submitted by their classmates.
- Raises student awareness of assignment requirements.
- Scaffolds student's understanding of academic peer review process.
- Gives them practice in making informed judgments about work

GradeMark tool

- Enables teachers to edit and grade student written and/or non-written work i.e. images, videos, music files, online. Teachers can use existing marking rubrics, or create and share their own.
- Work not submitted as a Turnitin assignment (i.e. speeches, presentations, performances, or works of art) can also be graded with *GradeMark*.
- Teachers can add comments within the body of the assignment, point out grammar and punctuation mistakes, evaluate the assignment against qualitative or quantitative rubrics,

assess the student's performance within the class and enter a grade for the assignment that is automatically saved into *GradeBook* (optional).

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Turnitin has great training resources including the Quickstart Guides for teachers and students, including:

<https://guides.turnitin.com/>

https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Instructor/Instructor_QuickStart_Guide

https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Student/Student_QuickStart_Guide

VIDEO

WHAT IS DIGITAL VIDEO?

Video produced by portable digital devices and online editing software.

HOW ARE DIGITAL VIDEOS USED FOR TEACHING?

Digital video can be used to meet a wide range of educational needs, from illustrating what cannot be experienced first-hand to developing specialist skills. Video can provide evidence that significantly enhances simulations, and can also enable students to learn from their mistakes in safety. Digital video resources are ideal for cross-disciplinary learning and teaching.

Also see JISC (2009). *Effective practice in a digital age*, pp. 34-35

<http://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20140614122306/http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearningpedagogy/practice.aspx>

USEFUL WEB LINK

A study that examines the implementation of a video blog (vlog) project in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course that aimed to increase students' opportunities to use the target language

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2010.01086.x/abstract>

WIKI

WHAT IS A WIKI?

This explanation is adapted from the Moodle website https://docs.moodle.org/24/en/Wiki_module.

A wiki is a series of web pages which everyone in your class can add to or edit via any internet browser. Wikis used for collaborative activities can be password protected. Starting with one front page, each author can add other pages to the wiki by simply creating a link to a new page. Wikis get their name from the Hawaiian term "wiki wiki," which means "very fast." A wiki is a fast method for creating documents as a group. There is usually no central editor of a wiki, no single person who has final editorial control. Instead, the community edits and develops its own content. Consensus views emerge from the work of many people on a document.

Also see JISC (2009). *Effective practice in a digital age*, p. 53. Retrieved from <http://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20140614122306/http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearningpedagogy/practice.aspx>

HOW ARE WIKIS USED FOR TEACHING?

Wikis are a simple, flexible tool for collaboration. They can be used for everything from simple lists of web links to building entire encyclopaedias. As an example, Wikipedia is the largest wiki in the world. In your own class it's important to have a plan for your wiki so students know how it fits in with their learning. If it's an individual wiki, will they be graded? Is it simply a staging area for group work that will be submitted as assignments later? Will you let the students be completely responsible for the work? How will you deal with offensive content? The great advantage of a wiki is that all edits are clearly visible and reversible.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Further ideas for using wikis, including Group lecture notes, Group Project management, Brainstorming, Contributing to other wikis, Collaborative story-telling
https://docs.moodle.org/30/en/Using_Wiki#Ideas_for_using_wikis

Examples of how e-assessment tasks can effectively use the features of Mediawiki
<http://transformingassessment.com/mediawiki.php>

Wikispaces Classroom is a free social writing platform for education that includes rich assessment tools that give you the power to measure student contribution and engagement in real-time
<http://www.wikispaces.com/content/classroom/about>