Case Study – Marketing and Communications
Using NILE (Blackboard) Rubrics to mark Turnitin assignments.

CONTACT

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CONTEXT

A Level 4 Marketing module with around 350 students. Students develop and use knowledge and skills in enterprise, innovation and entrepreneurship throughout this module. It has a significant chunk of student centred learning allowing development of skills through classroom activities, projects and assessments. The assessment discussed in this case study is weighted at 20% of the overall module grade and is a 1000 word essay. This case study describes the use of the rubrics to mark Turnitin assignments from a tutor perspective.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- To facilitate electronic marking of a large number of assignments distributed to a marking team of 6 tutors spread over 2 locations
- Consistent and focused feedback

THE PROCESS

The module uses Turnitin for submission of the essay. When marking the student work the rubric is opened from within the Grade Centre. The marking criteria already existed as a paper rubric that was being used for this assessment so it was transposed into a Blackboard rubric and attached to this assessment.
Moderation took place within the grade centre in the Grading Notes area. Each tutor was assigned a sample of papers to moderate and made notes regarding the first markers' marking, and the grade.

THE BENEFITS & CHALLENGES

Benefits:
- Having the rubric attached to an assignment means that the criteria is visible to the student (in this case it was also included in the assignment brief).
- Submission and marking electronically meant that no paper had to be carried around and passed between markers.
- Enabled a more transparent approach to the distribution of available grades and ensures consistency across weighted elements.

Challenges:
- Ensuring the entries put into the rubric are saved is convoluted. There are around 3 or 4 clicks to open the rubric, then 3 or 4 clicks to "Save" and "Submit" the grade and feedback before it is saved against the student's name.
- Moderating and quality control proved to be challenging. Because the module has so many students, navigating the grade centre was difficult particularly when trying to group the students by grade achieved (or anything other than their surname). The ability to reorder rows in the grade centre would be a welcome improvement to its functionality to enable more efficacious approach to moderation.
- There is no way to tell if a paper has been moderated from the Full Grade Centre view which makes it feel like everything is 'hidden' or 'clicky' to access.
- The inability to track whether students had accessed their feedback caused issues with ensuring students were aware they needed to resit or follow up with the tutor.
- Browser based discrepancies can affect the quality of the experience. Internet Explorer and Chrome appear to 'time-out' if you have the rubric open for longer than 15 minutes. Firefox did not.
- The Turnitin document viewer proved to cause issues with loading time and slowing down after papers were viewed.

KEY POINTS

With the introduction of electronic feedback and grading at the University this year, this approach was one that I considered to be an ideal solution for the method of marking we were already using on this module. It proved to be more challenging than I thought it would be but I think that is because the tools just don't seem to be 'there' yet. The whole approach just seems a bit tedious, and at times very frustrating. The Learning Technologists have assured me that the challenges can be addressed and I am using it on other modules whilst working around the issues. I am also looking at ways to ensure the students realise the importance of reviewing/accessing feedback online.