

Developing and supporting the curriculum

Production of short online videos for non-specialist audiences – An alternative assessment method.

1	Your higher education institution: Heriot-Watt University
2	Name author(s), and contact details: Dr Kirk Shanks
3	How does your project contribute to a research-informed and professionally relevant curriculum? The project contributes directly through its survey-based evaluation of student expectation and experience and indirectly through staff experience of framing and designing assessment criteria for video coursework. Interim survey results show students have positive attitudes towards producing videos on topics in their subject domain; however; staff experience indicates that video coursework is relevant to only particular types of learning objectives. A further contribution in support of a professionally relevant curriculum is that students gained experience of communicating their ideas in a way that enabled them to review and reflect on how they communicate, i.e. through playback of their recorded videos.
4	How does your project support an international and multi-disciplinary curriculum? In terms of the global language and awareness needed for effective engagement with online audiences, the project has supported student learning in communicating on an international platform. Similarly, the framing of the majority of the trialled video coursework exercises on communicating to a particular type of audience meant students had to draw on concepts and metaphors outside of their disciplines.
5	How does your project support student-centred approaches that promote student engagement and leadership? In 2 of the video coursework trials a student-centred approach was adopted whereby students had the option to pursue the production of videos or choose an alternative type of coursework exercise. The overarching aim of the video courseworks was to enhance student engagement by providing a contemporary format for communicating their learning within a course.

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How does your project help to reshape the learning environment? Please refer (where relevant to):

- **Technological mediation**

Video coursework helps reshape the learning environment through enabling students to review their outputs in a format and context more closely associated with regular activities in their everyday lives. This everyday format and context can encourage students to be more reflective of what they are saying.

The majority of the trialled video courseworks were group based. This group based context for a coursework activity combined with the production of a video, which is readily accessible and viewable, arguably encouraged greater individual participation as the group goes through cycles of building and reviewing the video. In producing the final video group members have to share the product of their personal ideas with the rest of the group and can readily monitor how their contribution compares to others. In more conventional coursework formats, such as oral presentations or group reports individuals do not get the same perspective on their personal contribution.

- **The distribution of learning across global locations**

The portability of students' videos enabled coursework outputs to be shared between Edinburgh and Dubai campuses. Students awareness of their videos being 'online' and viewable by their wider peer group creates an additional pressure to ensure what they are saying is correct and engaging.