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DIGITAL TOOLS FOR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT

Dr Mei-Li Roberts, Perth College UHI

KEYWORDS

Online learning, discussions, engagement, assessment & feedback, grading, marking

SUMMARY

Rubrics is a digital tool which is being used to strengthen student's engagement with their coursework. Dr Mei-Li Roberts highlights how she uses Rubrics in her lecturing role for assessment and to help her act on improving student engagement levels.

CONTEXT

Dr Mei-Li Roberts is a Programme Leader BA (Hons) Child and Youth Studies at Perth College UHI and is presenting her findings at the Learning and Teaching Academy Assessment & Feedback Symposium in 2020. She is discussing how she uses Rubrics, a digital tool in order to increase online engagement and how she also uses this for assessment.

WHAT, WHERE?

I use Rubrics in order to assess discussions. Students must contribute to each week's discussion on Rubrics, to gain 10% of their overall mark. Students are graded between 1 and 5 on their contribution per discussion topic on three criteria, argument, reading and referencing and academic conversation. 5 points will be awarded for excellent contributions, 0 points awarded for no contribution. As a lecturer, rubrics allow you to assess a Discussions topic each week, whilst also allowing you to mark the students' on academic conversation and engagement there too.

WHY?

Rubrics is an effective digital tool for escalating student engagement as we have the option to take action if students are not engaging with the discussions. This can be done by using Rubrics in conjunction with Intelligent Agents. Intelligent Agents are automated emails which are activated when defined activity occurs, or where there is a lack of course entry or login. You can also use these in order to identify course access and engagement – for example it can report on viewings/interaction with course videos, and can send an email out to you or directly to the students to bring attention to the fact the student has not engaged with the content. You can also use this tool in order to congratulate students who have viewed/interacted with the content, so you can consider whether you want to focus on encouraging students to participate or reward students who have participated.

Rubrics is also very easy to use as a marking tool, and the students will receive automatic feedback from you. As lecturers, we can see at a glance under Grades which students have contributed and each student's overall grade. You will also have the option to give marks at the end of the discussion or during the discussion – this depends on what you are using the tool for.

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DID IT WORK?

I am confident that Rubrics is a useful digital tool to enhance online engagement and assessment. Rubrics are useful as a tool to grade students and to encourage discussions as making them part of summative assessment. The range of options available within the use of Intelligent Agents allows you to refine your use even further and gives you options with regards to how you wish to handle the results.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please visit the EDU Brightspace Guidance Portal for guidance on how to use Rubrics.

More information on Intelligent Agents can be found on the UHI Support portal.

If you wish to submit your own case study, or have any questions about this resource please contact:
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