

Learning Bytes: Session 20: Thursday 23 February 12, 12:15-13:15

The use of GradeMark for Assessment

The session was facilitated by:

- Sue Folley, Academic Development Advisor
- Steve Bentley: Technician, School of Applied Sciences
- Paul Dagg: Learning Technology Advisor, School of Human and Health Sciences

Practical application

- Cheryl Reynolds: Senior Lecturer, Post-Compulsory Education and Training, School of Education and Professional Development

Sue Folley – Computing and Library Services

Introduction

Sue Folley introduced the session and explained that she would give an overview of using GradeMark for electronic marking; Steve Bentley would talk about the basic functionality of the software, including the use of rubrics; Paul Dagg would look at statistics and marking and Cheryl Reynolds would talk about how she uses GradeMark in practice.

Overview of using GradeMark for electronic marking

GradeMark is part of a system called Turnitin; this comprises three parts:

- **Originality Checking** software which checks electronic resources and common matches against a database
- **GradeMark** which facilitates the electronic marking of submissions
- **PeerMark** which facilitates peer review, so students can evaluate each other's work.

The benefits of using e-submission and marking for staff are:

- It can be much quicker once you become familiarised with the system, there is the option to use standard comments and create your own sets of quick mark comments. This removes the need to typing the same things over again. The majority of people can type faster than they can write.
- Moderators can concentrate on providing content relevant feedback and use quick comments for grammatical errors etc.
- Simultaneous moderation is possible, alongside originality checking.

- You can access diagnostic information e.g. via using a rubric you can see if a particular criteria is poorly understood. Access statistics on common grammar mistakes etc.
- Typing errors can be easily amended and it is very easy to go back and delete your comments if necessary.
- The system is safe and backed up, you don't have to carry big piles of marking around with you and can do your marking as and when you choose as long as you have online access.

The system integrates well with UniLearn and students are able to submit their work electronically from wherever they are, thus eliminating printing costs. An email receipt is issued so students know when they handed in their work. Students like receiving their results in private, they can access them from home or wherever. A rubric makes it clear what they have to do to improve and more detailed feedback can help them improve. All work is securely stored and can be accessed at a later date.

GradeMark is a good system for administration; School-based Learning Technology Advisors can provide further advice and support.

Steve Bentley – School of Applied Sciences

You create assignments and then students submit their work, give the assignment a name and allocate the number of points it is worth, the date when assignments can be submitted from, a due date and input a date when the grade and feedback will be available. There is an option to allow submissions after the due date; these late submissions will be highlighted. There is also an originality report option which can be turned off if you don't want to check the work for plagiarism. The option 'Reveal grades to students only on post-dates', must be turned on otherwise students will potentially be able to get their marks earlier, if they happen to check. If you enable anonymous marking; you won't know who the work belongs to until the post dates. There is an option for submitting work to the originality repository; this would allow future assignments to be checked against this work. A new development within Turnitin is the option to create rubrics.

Once an assignment has been set up students are able to access the assessment area and submit a piece of work, they will receive an email with a sample of their work as proof of submission.

Under module tools you will find Turnitin assignments, click on a named assignment and this will load the inbox where the submissions are. If an assignment has been submitted after the due date it will be highlighted in red. There is the option to go in and mark or to go in and download a copy of the original file that was submitted. Open the assignment in the GradeMark canvas to go in and mark, you will see the piece of work and a panel containing comments. If you select and click on a piece of text a comment box will open, input your comment and save. You can go back and edit or delete comments if required. If you save a comment as QuickMark you can choose which set to add it to. You can also use a generic quick comment and add a further more specific comments.

The 'Spanner' icon in the top right corner opens the QuickMark manager where you can create new items/comments. You can create whole sets of comments specific to a piece of work; these can be exported and shared with your team if you have a number of people marking a particular

assignment. In this situation try and plan ahead and create what you will need. You can copy whole sets of comments and then add to new sets. You can only delete comments that you have created yourself.

A rubric (grading scheme) is a table with the marking criteria down one side and the grades across the top. It can be scoring or non-scoring, for example it could be yes or no – whether criteria has been met. It can be difficult to get right in the first instance but is worth putting in the effort, it can ensure marking consistency across a number of moderators. It makes it really clear and transparent to students where their marks have come from, provides justification for the overall grade and importantly shows which areas they can improve in. You might find that all students do badly on one criterion which you can then address in a session. Good practice involves the students engaging with the rubric before their assignments, build in peer or self-assessment of their work, or ask them to create their own criteria – really get them engaged and thinking about this.

Paul Dagg – School of Human and Health Sciences

One of the features of GradeMark is that you can also collect a lot of information about the performance of the class. This data is accessed via the Turnitin UK assignments section of the system. There is a range of really useful class statistics tools. A list of all submission boxes within a module can be accessed and here you can see the number of students who have submitted and a frequency of originality reports. You can also access information on the breakdown of comments used across a piece of work but these have to be in the QuickMark palette. If you add in your own adhoc comments you need to add these to the palette for them to be visible here. So, for example, it might show that your students need more skill in referencing, something you could focus on in future.

GradeMark can be integrated with the *Grade Centre* a function available in UniLearn. This is like an Excel spreadsheet. It gives students an alternative option for accessing their grades (via view grades – to see grades for all modules). It provides you with a way of manipulating data; you can download as a spreadsheet, which you can then pass onto external examiners, ASIS managers etc.

Cheryl Reynolds – School of Education and Professional Development

Cheryl is using e-assessment with a large cohort of students and finds this beneficial but wanted to flag up the support required to make sure students are comfortable and capable of submitting their work via this medium.

There is a need to make sure that all students understand how to use the system. Provide information and clear instructions on how to use the system, including screenshots and maybe a video demonstrating how they are to hand in assignments and access their results. Cheryl uses the GradeMark report tool via 'rubrics' so she can see which outcomes have been met by which students, this information can be exported to a spreadsheet, thus enabling her to follow up on any issues.