

Northumbria Research Link

Citation: Powell, Lynne and Robson, Fiona (2010) Postgraduate Podcasting: An innovative approach to assessment. In: Northumbria Conference 2010, 9 September 2010, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK.

URL: <http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/ar/quality...>
<<http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/ar/qualitysupport/iteia/itaconf/archiveevents/nconf10/>>

This version was downloaded from Northumbria Research Link:
<https://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/9718/>

Northumbria University has developed Northumbria Research Link (NRL) to enable users to access the University's research output. Copyright © and moral rights for items on NRL are retained by the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. Single copies of full items can be reproduced, displayed or performed, and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided the authors, title and full bibliographic details are given, as well as a hyperlink and/or URL to the original metadata page. The content must not be changed in any way. Full items must not be sold commercially in any format or medium without formal permission of the copyright holder. The full policy is available online: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/policies.html>

This document may differ from the final, published version of the research and has been made available online in accordance with publisher policies. To read and/or cite from the published version of the research, please visit the publisher's website (a subscription may be required.)

Postgraduate podcasting: An innovative approach to assessment

Lynne Powell

and

Dr. Fiona Robson



Overview of presentation

- What is innovative assessment?
- Rationale for project
- Research methods
- Findings
- Reflections on using technology-based assessments
- Conclusions and implications for practice



Innovative assessment

Aims to produce students who are:

- Highly motivated and committed
- Enterprising
- Equipped with a range of transferable skills
- Capable of self-criticism and evaluation
- Active and reactive participants in the learning process

Source: Mowl (1996:5)



The quest for innovative assessment

- Podcasts offer the following advantages:
 - Respond to students' expectations that we will utilise the latest technology
 - Provides a range of transferable skills
 - Technical skills
 - Organisational skills
 - Working as a team
 - Interpreting research to create scripts
 - Moves beyond 'Death by PowerPoint'
 - *the ability to add clarity and meaning, motivation, emotion...*” (Gribbins, 2007:1)

Research methods

- Working with part-time students on MA HRM&D
 - Content analysis of reflective statements submitted as other half of the summative assessment
 - Self-completion questionnaires completed online by students



Key findings

Five themes were identified from the reflective statements:

1. Prior attitudes about the use of podcasting
2. Developing podcasting skills
3. Benefits of podcasting
4. Transferable skills
5. Future use of podcasting



Key findings

Prior attitudes

- Many of the students were anxious due to a lack of understanding of what podcasts were (fear of the unknown)

Developing podcasting skills

- The opportunity to develop these skills was identified by a number of students.



Key findings

Benefits of podcasting

- Combining technology with studies in a meaningful way
- Forced all members of the group to really learn the subject area (so they could speak authoritatively)
- Learning how to facilitate formal group discussions
- Broadened the experience gained from the programme

Key findings

Benefits (continued)

- Learning technical skills
- A quick and effective way of summarising information
- Learning how to write scripts
- Focus on being 'engaging' presenters
- Different from all of the other assessment methods used on the programme

Key findings

Development of transferable skills

- Enhanced team work and communication skills
- Knowledge about the topic chosen as the subject of the podcast
- Using finished podcasts as a means of sharing information in organisations
- Creative thinking
- Listening

Development of transferable skills

- Negotiating
- Time management
- Discovering better ways to find information on the internet
- Losing fear of technology – exploring it first before becoming daunted
- The ability to present ideas clearly and succinctly

Key findings

Future use of podcasting

- Whilst only a few could give examples of how it could be used in their current role, several considered how it could be used in the future:
 - Deliver elements of Corporate Induction
 - As part of the diversity strategy to communicate with hard to reach groups
 - To provide consistency in training delivery



Challenges of technology-based assessments

- Student apprehension
- Gaining the buy-in of teaching team
- Time implications for part-time students
- Writing clear assessment briefs
- Equipment availability
- Students' lack of technical skills (or perceived skills)
- Carefully defining assessment criteria
- Something different....

Conclusions

- There are clear advantages of using podcasts for students – both in the present and the future
- A wide range of transferable skills can be gained
- Successful podcast assessment requires:
 - A very clear assessment brief
 - Clear marking criteria
 - Technical support
 - Examples for students to listen to

Implications for teaching practice

- Discuss perceived problems (and subsequent reflections) with future students
- Check progress on an ongoing basis
- Share examples of podcasts from past cohorts with students to reduce anxiety
- Encourage self reflections
- Consider when podcasting is (and is not appropriate)
- Request student feedback on the process

