Extending the boundaries of Computer based assessment

Module Leader: Marcus Warren

A Research Informed Teaching project in the Faculty of Business and Law investigating the theme of "Improving eLearning and eTeaching" by David Pickton and Harish R Ravat.

Supported by Mitesh Ravat (Research Assistant) and Suki Kaur (Project Officer, Quality Enhancement Unit).
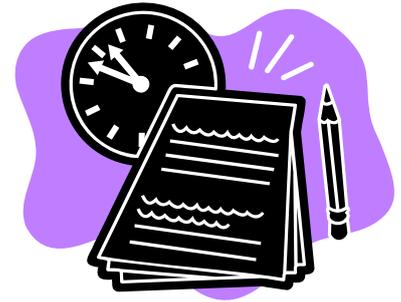
Project brief:

Factors affecting use of summative assessment on line and use of multimedia within this. The traditional authoring templates in computer based assessment offer limited or no support to incorporate multimedia. This project is seeking specifically to see how we can achieve this in a summative mode using a module that has a relatively large number of students.

Background:

This summative on line assessment was for some 660 students, carrying 20% of the module mark. The 'live' period during which the assessment ran was 3 weeks and this was set so students could re-visit the assessment during this visit and at the end the module leader was presented with the marks of the students in an Excel spreadsheet.   The marks were made available to the students too using Bb (my grades function) the day after deadline date.

Recommendations / Conclusions:

This project has been a great success considering the complexities in the operational details. The module leader is very happy with the outcomes, stating that this project has 'far exceeded all expectations'.

There was exhaustive testing before the assessment went live. The success of this project must be attributed to Mitesh Ravat who authored the on line assessment and was involved in all of the testing and de-bugging.   This was a full month's work and extremely demanding. There was extensive student monitoring, system checking and student communication throughout the live time line of this assessment.

In addition TIS (Tata Interactive Systems) were as always extremely proficient and delivered their part of the contract ahead of schedule. This was quite significant bearing in mind they only had some 7 weeks to deliver the project. Again the module leader has praised their contribution.

This approach can be used for diagnostic, formative or summative assessment. The scope of application is quite wide and the potential is increasing all the time. We have also been successful in loading videos now in Bb as a follow up to this project.

We must do more to disseminate actively this project outcomes and significance of relevance / appropriateness of addressing the assessment agenda. The challenge for us now is to how best to market and disseminate this project findings / outcomes.

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