

Using Screencasting to Close the Feedback Loop.

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Class Size
40 students

Discipline
Sports Pedagogy

Feedback Approaches
Formative Feedback, Screencast Feedback,
Multi-Stage Assessment

Technologies
Screencastomatic (screencastomatic.com)

Challenge & Aim

This case study seeks to address the challenge of getting students to engage with formative feedback.

The aim of this small case study was to:

- Explore the extent of student engagement with feedback provided by screencasting.
- Investigate student perceptions of screencasting as a feedback medium.
- Create guidelines for practitioners wishing to adopt screencasting as a mode of delivering feedback to students.

The case study took place in a 1st year *Leading the Active Child* (Sports Pedagogy) Module in the BA in Sport, Exercise & Enterprise at the Dundalk Institute of Technology

Evidence from the Literature

Student feedback surveys in Ireland and the UK indicate consistently that students are dissatisfied with the traditional feedback methods as being deficient in a number of aspects. Results cite a lack of feedback being provided, lack of clarity, illegibility or feedback being delivered too late for students to apply (NUS, 2012; ISSE, 2015). Academics frequently mention that students either skip directly to the grade, fail to act or engage with the feedback or even to collect it at all (Bloxham and Boyd 2007, Nicol 2010, Orsmond and Merry 2011). Whilst these are two very conflicting areas of debate, the common unifier is engagement, or lack of engagement, with feedback. The challenge therefore is how to get our students to engage with feedback when it is provided to them? One possible way to facilitate engagement may be to use a technology which appeals to the everyday communication tools that students are using outside of the third level environment. Students are engaging with multimedia, such as YouTube, on a daily basis for pleasure. One technology which shares similar characteristics to video is screencasting.

Why use screencasting?

A key benefit of this tool is that feedback provided by screencast combines the two major senses for learning: visual and auditory input (Mayer and Moreno 2003). Students can see and hear specifically what the lecturer is referring to; as a result it can avoid some ambiguity that may occur with traditional written feedback (Cranny 2016). The resultant video files provide the students with online access (once they have an internet connection) to their feedback which they can access at a time and place of their own choosing (Haxton and McGarvey, 2011).

Assessment context.

Students are assessed by means of a multi-stage assignment. Students complete and submit their practical logbooks for formative feedback midway through the semester (week 5-6). Students then apply the feedback provided to aid them with their summative submissions. Summative grading occurs at the end of the semester.

Description of the Approach used.

1. Students create their work using a word processing package.
2. Students upload their work to the assignment submission section Moodle. This submission is for formative feedback.
3. Lecturer logs onto the Moodle, views the student work and opens the screencasting software.
4. The lecturer records between 3-6 minutes of good quality, detailed formative feedback.
5. Once finished recording, the lecturer generates a hyperlink to the student's feedback using the screencasting software which is pasted into the assignment comments section for that student.
6. The student receives a notification email to inform them that they have feedback on their work.
7. The student logs on to Moodle and views the feedback, apply and modifies their work.
8. Student resubmits work for summative grading on week 12.

Feedback Approach

The multi-stage approach using formative feedback was selected. Students value the opportunity to submit for formative feedback early in their module as it provides them with some clarity on how they are 'doing'.

It also provides the lecturer with an indication as to their progress and can flag some potential issues that some students may be facing. This can also be used as a tool to possibly improve retention.

Outcomes

In evaluating this cases study the lecturer used a mixed methods approach using an anonymous online survey and a focus group. For both students and the lecturer using screencasting was an innovative and effective way to deliver formative feedback.

Student Response

Data analysis indicates that students engaged with screencast feedback in a number of ways.

1. Ease of access facilitates engagement: By using Moodle students know where to access their feedback. **Student Quote** *"It's very accessible, that is with the touch of a few buttons you are in. You know where it is (VLE) and once you've the internet you can access it anywhere. With my written feedback sheets I either loose, or I'll shove the feedback sheet in my bag, it ends up being crumpled and illegible"*
2. There is a preference for the dialogic nature that comes through strongly in screencast feedback: **Student Quote** *"It is very specific to you. It is something like a one to one meeting with a laptop but it is not really. If that makes sense"*

3. Students engage and apply the feedback provided: On average the students viewed their feedback 3-4 times. More importantly they are applying the feedback to their summative submissions. **Student Quote** - *"When I'm watching it, I'll watch it the whole way through. Then I'll have two tabs open, going over and back playing and pausing and making the corrections as I go"*

Recommendations

The use of screencasting to provide feedback is an effective medium that engages students. The medium however is only as effective as the message contained within it (Cranny 2016).

The structure of the feedback is crucial. Students need to be able to understand and act on the feedback provided. Where they need to improve suggestions should be offered on how to do so. Likewise where they have done well they need to be told where their work is good, and how they possibly may improve this further.

Guidelines for practitioners wishing to provide feedback using screencast software.

1. Use a good quality microphone/headset to capture your voice. It is important that the students can clearly hear your feedback.
2. Students are not expecting you to be a professional broadcaster. Be yourself and be genuine when recording (Jones et al. 2012).
3. Say Hi (student name), thank the students for submitting.
4. State which assignment you are giving feedback on (Rotherham 2009).
5. Keep your recordings short. The recommended time for recording is between 3-6 minutes. Any more than that and you can overload the students. Should you have further information to communicate, invite the students to seek further guidance by contacting the lecturer directly (Carless et al. 2011, Cann 2014)
6. Always address the assessment criteria.
7. Always try to be positive, and give praise for good aspects of the work (Merry and Orsmond 2007)
8. Offer a few, reasonably attainable, suggestions for improvement (scaffold the feedback), even if the work is excellent (Race 2001, Mosston and Ashworth 2002, Brown 2004, Rotherham 2009).
9. Provide the grade band that the work is in (for formative submissions).
10. Round things off in a friendly way (Rotherham 2009).
11. Generate hyperlink to screencast, this will ensure students can download it.
12. Use VLE (moodle) assignment section to circulate feedback back to the student.

Useful Links/Further Information

www.screencastomatic.com

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Contact



If interested in finding out more about this approach or technology, please contact David Cranny at david.cranny@dkit.ie or on Twitter [@davidcranny](https://twitter.com/davidcranny)

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