



E-SUBMISSION, MARKING AND FEEDBACK

IWLP English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

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OVERVIEW

This case study provides an insight into the use of electronic submission and the exploration of e-marking and e-feedback for language projects within the Institution Wide Language Programme (IWLP). It provides a brief journey about the engagement in the adoption of electronic submission tools as a team whilst maintaining the identity of each language involved.



OBJECTIVES

- To facilitate the administrative process in submission of summative assessment
- To inform module convenors and language teaching fellows of the tools supported by the University LMS Blackboard Learn
- To provide the opportunity to apply the above tools, gather experience and inform decision on best approaches and best practice
- To explore usability and applicability of existing marking criteria in the form of Tii (Turnitin) rubrics
- To explore and facilitate a transition to use a basic set of QuickMarks across the Department whilst enabling room to create language specific amendments
- To facilitate timely and transparent accessibility of results for students via the Grade Centre

CONTEXT

As part of summative assessment, students of intermediate to advanced language courses in IWLP Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, German and Spanish submit a project (between 600 and 1000 words or characters according to language and stage) researched and written in the Target Language.

IWLP deals with a large volume of students each year so it was important to explore ways of facilitating a point of submission that would enable staff to easily follow up submission deadlines and late submissions eliminating paper based trails and multiple parties involved in the process, making it timely and easily accessible for staff to keep track of submission.

As the majority of language teaching staff works on part-time basis, it was felt that it would be of advantage to have a point of access to student's work from different locations. This also meant adopting electronic marking and feedback as a way to facilitate marking and moderation remotely.

Three years ago it was unclear whether Tii would support the modern languages provided by the IWLP programme. Once it was established that it did support modern languages, it was felt that the use of similarity reports would both assist teachers in detecting plagiarism and be good for student learning as it would force students to revise not just content but language as well and re-write when necessary.

One of the advantages of using electronic submission, marking and feedback is that both the marking criteria and the feedback can be provided in the same space, therefore avoiding reprinting and waiting for students to collect feedback. Language projects are assessed on the following areas: content, structure, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, range of expression, syntax and variety of grammatical structure. The aim was to upload the project marking criteria in the form of rubrics hence facilitating all the tools for marking and feeding back in one place for tutors, providing an area readily available for moderation, and granting ease of access to results and feedback for students.

There were two e-submission options to be explored: e-submission with inline grading or e-submission via Tii assignment submission, the latter supplying the facility to use rubrics and quick marks via the Turnitin Suite.

 IWLP Stages 3-5 Project

CRITERIA

Content

18-20 Well-argued/ researched; significant evidence of original insight; all points totally relevant and backed up; approach analytical and creative rather than descriptive; all aspects of task fully covered.
 14-17 Very good on factual information; good original thought and analysis; nearly all points relevant and backed up; all/ nearly all aspects of task sufficiently covered.
 12-13 Good factual information; some information/ points less analytical; all aspects of task covered.
 10-11 Some factual information but several points irrelevant or unsupported; some aspects of task covered.
 8-9 Limited relevant material; few aspects of task covered.
 6-7 Serious omissions in relation to the brief but some aspects of the task covered in a limited way.
 0-5 Insufficient relevant information; no aspects of task successfully covered.

Structure

9-10 Faultlessly clear; totally logical; persuasive progressive structure; appropriate linking points.
 7-8 Totally clear; logical; just one or two very minor weaknesses in linking points.
 6 No serious weaknesses but a few parts may lack clarity, or coherence, or are badly linked.
 5 Evidence of a partially planned structure but some parts may lack clarity or coherence.
 4 Often unclear; difficult to follow a lack of linkers but showing coherence in parts. Sections may be missing.
 3 Disjointed but some evidence of attempt at a planned structure even if the organisation is not successful and sections are missing.
 0-2 Impossible to follow; disjointed with points introduced at random. Or not enough written to judge.

Vocabulary

Sample of Grading Form

IMPLEMENTATION

Initial meetings took place three years ago with members of the TEL team which highlighted the advantages of using the electronic submission of written work. The meetings involved coordinators and module convenors of the languages that initially provided intermediate to advanced stages: English for Erasmus, French, German and Spanish. It was then agreed to pilot the use of electronic submission and to initially explore the use of “inline marking” tools for marking and providing feedback.

Further training was arranged, delivered by both the TEL team and Pilar Gray Carlos and on-going support was provided on an ad-hoc basis.

The first round of assessments took place and the feedback collected from tutors was varied. Some colleagues developed feedback systems utilising tools such as colour underlying and text boxes. As not only the content but the language is assessed, and identifying, correcting and explaining language mistakes can be a detailed process it was felt that, not only it took time to get familiar with the new system but that the result of the corrections and feedback was not easily accessible to students, making it necessary to print student’s work and go over corrections and feedback again with students in the classroom.

A period of required e-submission, but voluntary use of electronic marking and feedback followed until there was confirmation that Tii supported other modern languages. At this time modern languages such as Mandarin Chinese and Japanese had added intermediate courses to their provision. It was then decided to take the opportunity to start using Tii also as a formative tool, and in doing so, familiarising students with its use and enabling them to self-evaluate and readdress their own work. The use of similarity report was enabled for formative submission during the course and in view of the final submission of summative coursework.

Opportunities for training by the TEL team and in-house training were organised and provided by Pilar Gray Carlos and more experienced colleagues within ISLI. In this way module convenors and tutors were shown how rubrics and QuickMarks are used for marking and feedback in language teaching (see Rob Playfair case study and Jonathan Smith’s interview).

At the same time, and in parallel with work on e-submission, marking and feedback, a Grade Centre was created for the 31 modules provided in the 10 different languages. Weighted columns were created per assessment per module, teachers could directly input results and students would have direct access to marks as they were released. Having all that data available also meant that, although limited, some reports could be printed with regards to module performance per assessment and even for languages where classes are taught in parallel groups, group performance data reports could be produced.

Since then the EMA Core Systems Team has delivered a more streamlined process which produces similar data sets on RISIS (for more detailed information see the EMA Programme short videos link below).

Calculation on Grade Centre

Selected Columns:

Enter the weight percentage for each item. Percentages should add up to 100 per cent.

* 15	% Column: Listening	✖
* 25	% Column: Oral	✖
* 35	% Column: Final	✖
* 25	% Column: Project: Total	✖

IMPACT

The use of e-submission has enabled a variety of approaches to formative assessment to flourish, some languages have made the most of using e-submission to collect student's work and to feedback on line.

As per summative assessment, the adoption of QuickMarks is facilitating marking, and once the teachers get accustomed to using them it becomes an efficient way to point out generic language errors.

The use of the Grade Centre was a success, as it cut down on administration, freeing time on the side of administrators and teachers and it provides helpful information as to the performance of certain cohorts and groups. The only drawback was the missing step between Grade Centre and RISIS. At that point in time the only way to update records in RISIS was by downloading all marks in the form of a spreadsheet and manually inputting them in RISIS. The EMA Programme Core Systems Workstream are working to improve the integration between Blackboard and RISIS.

REFLECTIONS

The feedback obtained from the teachers indicates that there is a healthy satisfaction surrounding e-submission, it is also positive with regards to marking content but it is divided about how to approach correction and feedback on language items as they can be as particular as the individual but also as the language itself. In this sense written adjustments and examples need to be inserted in the text, an option that seems to be faster in paper rather than electronically but in the very specific context of inserting grammatical symbols in a text in language teaching there might be some additional thinking. The EMA Team are looking at requirements surrounding scientific, mathematical and grammatical type notations within the University and possible ways forward.

The general consensus is that at present out of the two options Tii is a better option for language projects than inline marking. In order to enable that transition we need to look into the set of rubrics we are using and adopt sets of QuickMarks applicable to all languages, with perhaps addition of specific sets for non-Latin language scripts.

FOLLOW UP

There will be a small working group set up to revise QuickMarks across all languages. This working group will also look into the rubrics and how can we best customise them for our assessment purposes and in line with CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for languages)

LINKS

EMA Project Reading – Resources

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/ema/ema-resources.aspx>

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/>