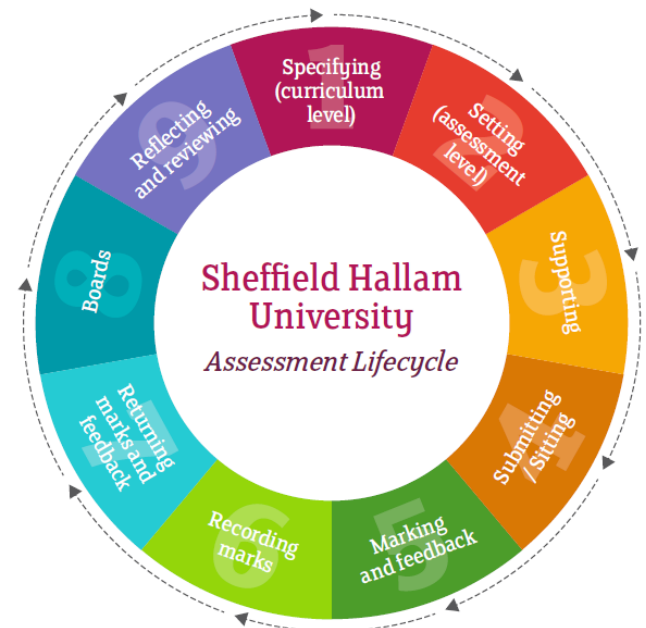**Assessment Journey:**
Enhancing the educational experience and institutional effectiveness of assessment and feedback

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About this presentation

- Learn how Sheffield Hallam University has implemented a **seamless and improved assessment experience** for students and staff

- Discover the technical solutions that have been exploited, the bespoke customisations that have been developed, and the process that have been established ...

- ... while hearing the stories, challenges and lessons learned in relation to institutional culture, stakeholder attitudes and the technology since full implementation of OMA in September 2017

About this presentation

Seventh largest university in the UK

32,000 students (25,000 undergraduate, 7,000 postgraduate, 20% part-time, 9% international)

2,100 academic staff

Four teaching faculties, 18 academic departments

Our aims for our journey to online management of assessment (OMA)

- Provide an integrated, end-to-end lifecycle, supported by the use of technology

- Deliver clear and accessible guidance and information to staff and students around assessment design, marking and feedback

- Provide a student course-wide view of upcoming and completed assessments

- Require the submission and receipting of coursework online

- Publish feedback and marks online

- Deliver a model for single mark entry

- Implement over three years:

  Sept. 2015 – Assessment Design and Delivery framework introduced

  Sept. 2016 – OMA for levels 3, 4 and 7

  Sept. 2017 – OMA fully implemented
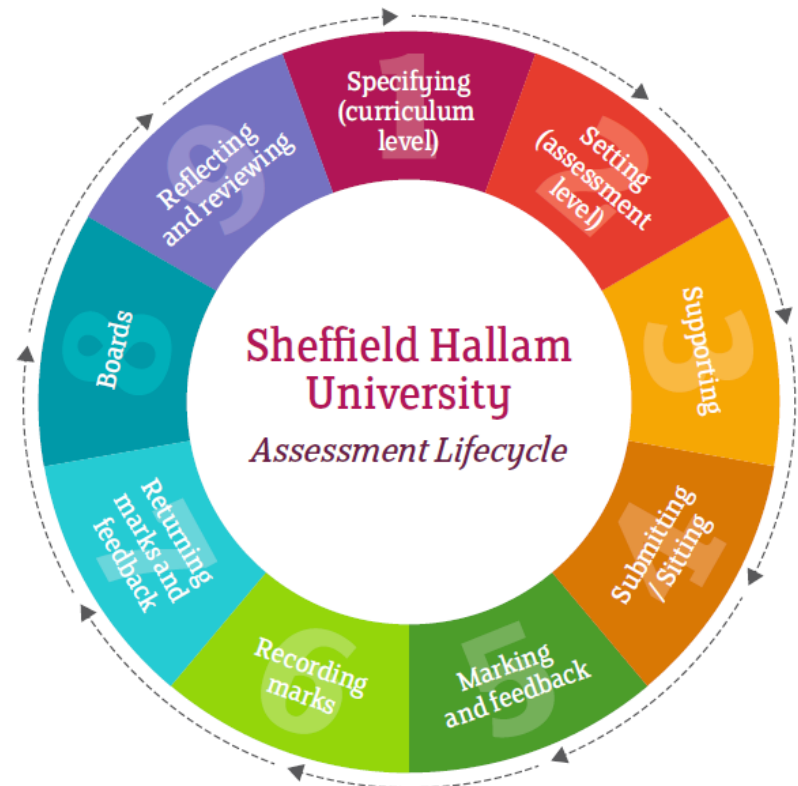
Lifecycle adapted from, and attributed to, JISC (after Ferrell & Gray, 2013)

Our technical model for OMA

- Blackboard and SITS-based architecture, additional reporting via data warehouse
- Dependent on accurate data set up in SITS
- Developed in partnership with stakeholders
- Considers practice, policy and organisational design

OMA major points of activities
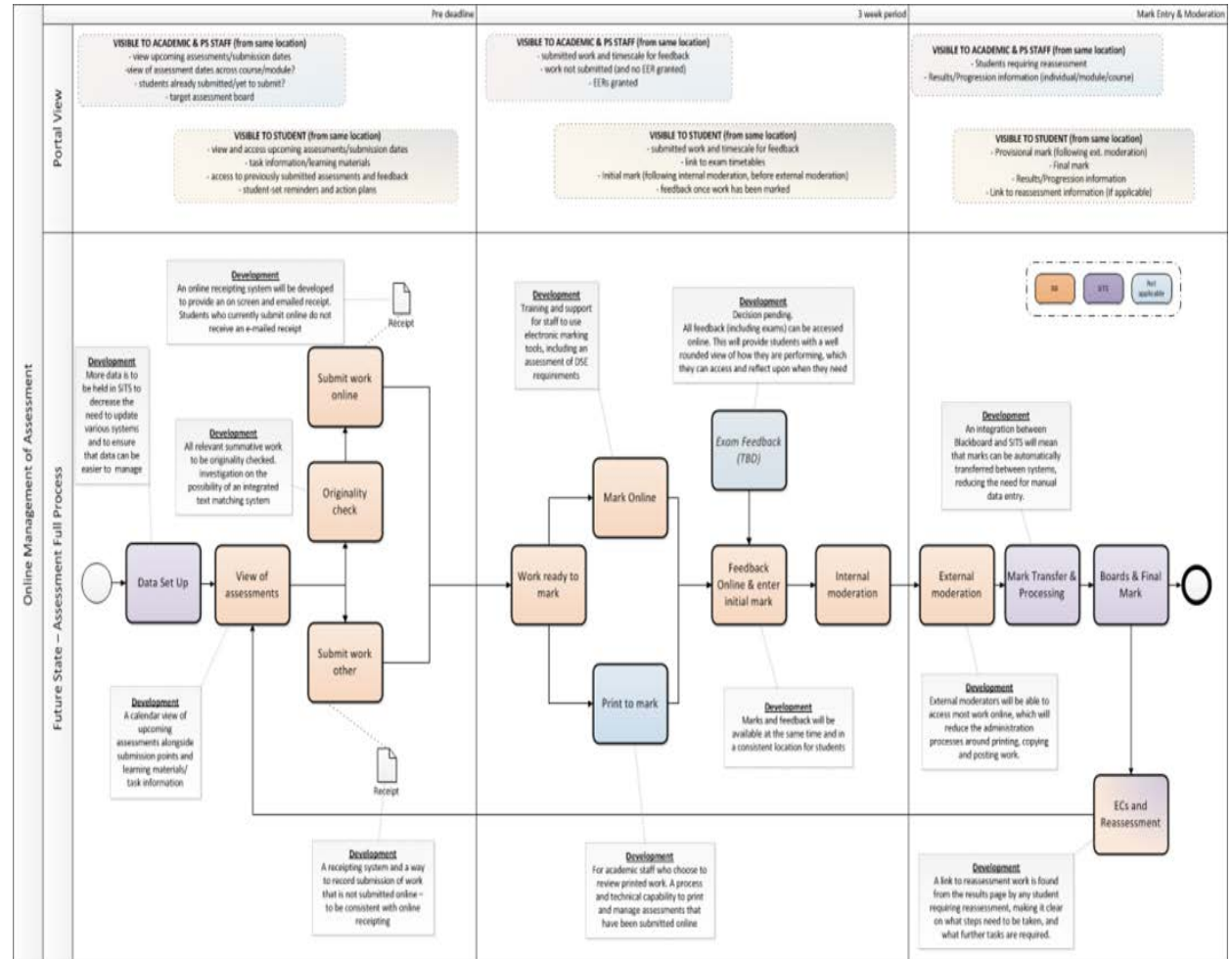
- Setting up assessment data

- Setting up submission points and grade columns

- Providing students with an assessment overview

- Submitting work online (where possible)

- Text-matching/originality checking

- Marking work (however staff wish to)

- Recording marks online

- Publishing feedback online

- Moderation online

- Transfer of marks from Blackboard to SITS

- Setting up re-assessment data

- **Setting up assessment data (Blackboard-SITS integration):**
    - **Single record** of summative assessment for students
    - Auto-creation of Blackboard sites and single approach to set up of **assessment items** in Blackboard for summative tasks and sub-tasks (including reassessments) … with supporting **Comparison Report** to indicate discrepancies
    - Requests for auto-set up of formative tasks
- **Submitting work:**
    - Receipting of online submissions
    - Custom **Offline Assignments** and **Receipting of Physical Submissions** tool
    - Integration of **Medial** with Blackboard for submission of media-based work
- **Marking:**
    - New **Equipment Policy** to facilitate flexible working and to enable adoption of efficient and effective online and feedback methods
   - Laptops offered plus a loan service for iPads

Our set up and submission challenges

- **Providing students with an assessment overview** …
    - … however putting everything into Blackboard has allowed a neater solution through use of **Calendar**, **To Do** and **Global My Grades**

- **Setting up assessment data (and changes to University Assessment Regulations):**
    - Managing variable dates, extensions and late submissions … development of **Marking Report** to identify students with valid extensions
    - Local deviation to single approach (deadlines and extension management)

- **Submitting work:**
    - Students saving attempts as 'draft' rather than submitting
    - 'Zero-byte' files
        - 0.5% all attempts
        - 0.2% last attempt
    - Large (non media-based) files

Our marking challenges

- **Text-matching:**
  - Who's responsibility to upload work to **Turnitin**?
  - Markers use the **Marks and Feedback Tool 'Package for plagiarism detection submission'** feature ...
  - ... a sustainable solution?: *'Simplify it?'* (Senior Lecturer)
- **Technical limitations of Rubrics:**
  - Nulling grades
  - Loss of feedback comments when switching between 'inline' and 'pop-out' views
  - Override scores: *'The rubric generates a score of 70 ... But our expert opinion is that it is perhaps worth 68. There is a note on the rubric the student sees, to the effect that "this score has been moderated from 70 to 68". This is going to cause a big problem for us unless we blindly accept what the rubric generates.'* (Senior Lecturer)
- **Feedback online:**
  - Students with extensions submit at different times ... cumbersome to manage staged return of feedback (even where '**Save Draft**' used)
  - Inadvertent use '**Override Grades**' impacted student access to feedback

Our marking challenges #2
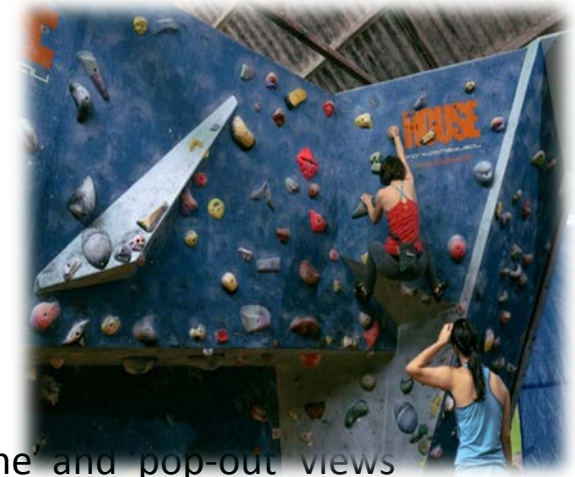
- Files downloaded for generating comments and feedback offline and bulk upload of feedback supported by Blackboard's **Marks and Feedback** solution …

  - … *'It took me vastly longer and I ended up having to do everything long hand anyway.'* (Senior Lecturer)

- **Print-to-mark** next business day print and delivery service provided by the Print Unit, using Grade Centre-generated **Assignment File Download** .zip file …

  - … solution now changed *'from a relatively simple process to a labyrinthine, frustrating and not-fit-for-purpose process.'* (Senior Lecturer)

Our marking challenges: from Crocodoc to New Box View

- **Negative impact on feedback?:**
  - *'We as a group worked really hard to improve student feedback in my view this change might have a negative impact on feedback and on the NSS.'* (Senior Lecturer)
  - *'We have spent ages getting our feedback NSS scores up, and delivering consistent quality feedback: to have these affected by a mid-semester technological step-backwards seems monumentally stupid.'* (Senior Lecturer)

- **Loss of functionality:**
  - *'Most of the tools have disappeared! [...] I used pretty much all of these [...] instead we have clumsier boxes, which then don't appear on the document properly [...] If the comments don't appear for students automatically, how sure can we be sure that students are actually going to look at them and learn from them?'* (Senior Lecturer)
  - *'Box View is very limited in functionality and I think the feedback with Box View is inferior [...] In fact it isn't really inline marking it's just a series of text boxes.'* (Senior Lecturer)

Our marking challenges: from Crocodoc to New Box View #2

- **Bugs and issues:**
  - *'When you use apostrophes in the comments box, they are converted to %#39; when you post the comment, and quotation marks are converted to " I'm having to be quite creative to avoid the use of both!'* (Senior Lecturer)
  - *'It does not open the comment box when you click on the text. You have to keep scrolling up to the top to open the box and then trying to find your place in the text to add a comment. Then it doesn't even add the comment in the correct place.* (Senior Lecturer)
  - *'Attempts to highlight specific blocks of text and then post comments about that block often result in the software choosing a random block of text elsewhere on the document. Thus the feedback has no relevance to the student. For all the faults of Crocodoc you could at least give the students relevant feedback.'* (Senior Lecturer)

Our moderation and marks transfer challenges

- **Moderation:**
  - **External Examiners** automatically enrolled on Blackboard sites ...
  - ... custom role with read-only access to content and edit rights to Grade Centre ...
  - ... turned edit mode off for the role and could not be turned back on

- **Transfer of marks:**
  - **Grades Journey** not feasible (at the time of developing and implementing the OMA technical model) ...
  - ... revised guidance for sending marks to Student Administration using 'marks spreadsheet' generated from **Grade Centre Download**

- Single record of assessment data enabling auto-creation of submission points and grade columns ... but a single approach does not suit all
- Limitations of the technology and changes beyond our control:
  - (Lack of) staff engagement in training and development
  - Print-to-mark changes
  - Crocodoc to New Box View
  - Grades Journey ... revised current processes for marks transfer
  - Regulatory changes

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