

Brightspace Audio Feedback: Student Engagement Success

Overview

Module/Programme/Stage Coordinator: Associate Professor S ofra Piere

Collaborators: Eva Kilar-Magdziarz

Module/Programme Title: Introduction to the Enlightenment (18thc France)

Module Code: FR20050

Student Cohort: (Stage/UG or PG/ Part-time or Full-time/Numbers registered) UG x 35 students



The Background

Experiment to trial giving AUDIO feedback to students for two online short essay submissions instead of usual extensive typed feedback stapled to their corrected work. Each student got some online corrections (on-screen edits), but also got an audio file within Brightspace with personalised feedback on their assignment.

What I aimed to do

The intention was

- 1) to improve feedback interaction between lecturer (me) and my students
- 2) to inspire students to engage more with this module (and with Brightspace generally)
- 3) to ensure each student learned something specific from the feedback

4) to have user-friendly feedback readily accessible e.g. before exams/ later in module (not misplaced/lost as with paper copies)

5) to save time – globally I found it quicker to speak from notes than to articulate a series of different written reports

6) to ease a recent case of tendonitis in my arm (less typing more voice)

Two written tasks were designed to motivate students to improve their writing skills through low stakes (summative) online continuous assessment pieces. My priority was to make this feedback more personalised, so that it was obviously addressed to, and tailored to, each individual student. The use of voice clearly makes feedback/criticism appear less threatening or critical, and instead makes criticism sound generally more positive and constructive to the recipient.

The Challenge:

On Brightspace, students had to submit two very short assignments (one mid and one end) semester. These were low stakes summative assignments (200 words each; total 10% of module grade) for students, but they permitted me to 1) check that students had read each core text and 2) trial the AUDIO functionality on Brightspace and 3) test student reaction to receiving AUDIO feedback instead of written.

How I did it

On receipt of assignments, I jotted down the usual positives, negatives and recommendations as prompt notes for myself.

Then, I recorded an AUDIO feedback file.

FYI: I started using video feedback, but because I often grade from home, I found this potentially intrusive at my end.

Each audio recording was individual and personalised. Because each message started with 'Hi Name! Siofra here', students reported that they felt they had got specific, helpful, targeted attention and they really appreciated the time I had taken to advise them personally.

Each recording started with a positive comment highlighting their strengths or a good idea/point/approach/contribution. Then the constructive criticism followed and this was tailor-made to focus on big and little changes each individual student might make in future work.

Recordings varied in length (typically 1-2 minutes, but never over 3 minutes – the max available is 5 mins). This let me challenge very good students by airing some challenging theoretical suggestions, or to focus solely on basics with any students who were struggling or weaker.

Technical Considerations:

When using MacBooks/iOS please use Chrome (not Safari) which permits use of MediaCapture (an audio recording tool that is already embedded into Brightspace). You can record a short audio or video with your device's inbuilt microphone or an external one, provided there is one in your device.

Students will access their audio feedback on their devices (desktops/laptops and mobile phones) by accessing their assignments and selecting the audio file attached to it. It then downloads the audio file in HTML format; once selected it opens a new tab/window with a player.

The screenshot shows the 'Feedback for Assignment 1' page in Brightspace. A callout box points to the 'Attached Files' section, which contains a file named '1394696_2019-5-24_1130.html (504...)' with a 'Download All Files' button. Another callout box points to the 'Submission(s)' table, which has columns for 'Submission(s)', 'Inline Feedback', and 'Date Submitted'. The table contains one row for 'Module Builder Manual.pdf (2.76 MB)' with a 'View Inline Feedback' link and a submission date of '24 May 2019 12:09 PM'. At the bottom, a browser download bar shows the file '1394696_2019-5-24_1130.html' with a 'Done' button. A third callout box points to this download bar.

Students go to their ASSESSMENT Tab and view the feedback

Audio feedback downloads itself to the device and plays when selected

How it went

Received loud and clear: The startling effect of this audio feedback is how INSTANTLY students accessed it: I let class grades all go live at once. I emailed students re feedback availability on bank holiday Monday 6 May (just before the start of their exams) and 26/31 students accessed their grade and feedback that very day, while 30/31 had accessed their Brightspace grade/feedback within 2 weeks.

Student feedback: I did not directly solicit feedback from students, but I received spontaneous 'thanks' and emails from students who were delighted with the personalised nature of the messages. One commented that this was the best feedback she had received so far in college: 'I have never experienced such helpful comments in University and I understand this must be an incredibly time consuming task for you but it has been much appreciated. [17444814]'.

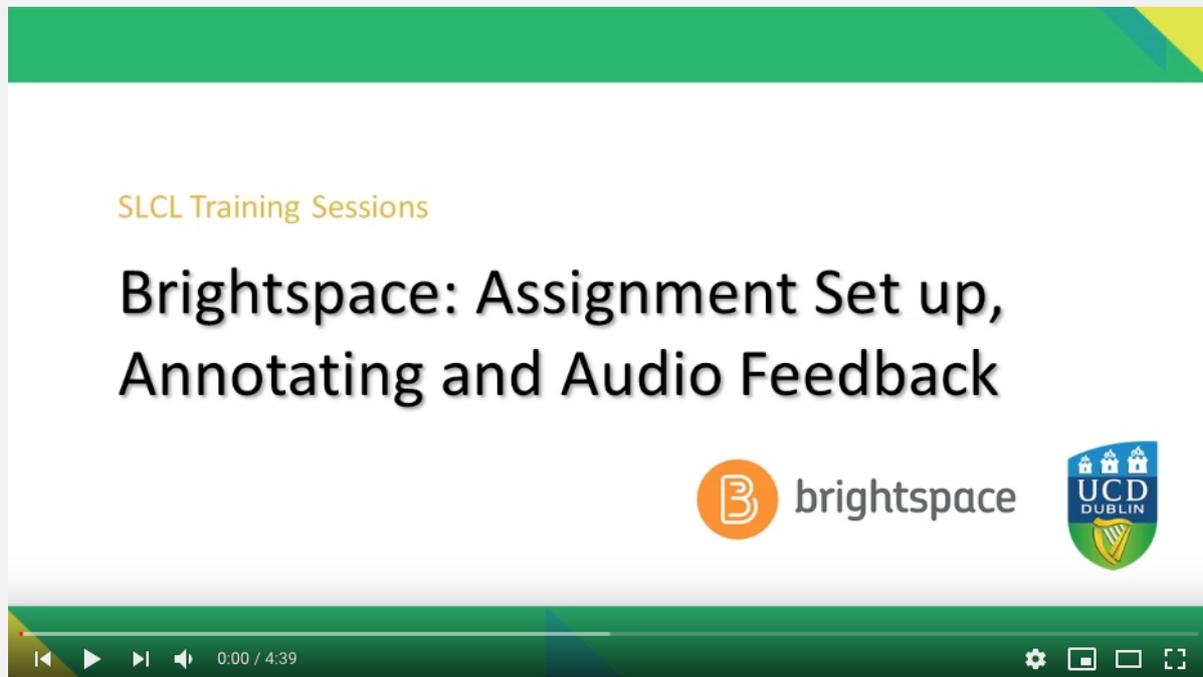
Novelty/ Online Factor?: The same constructive feedback messages were provided in written form before, but I never got such positive reactions to previous feedback. Nor was the audio file any more

time-consuming than typing up comments. Clearly the more personalised and friendly interface was better received by students.

Resources

[UCD Teaching and Learning – Giving Effective Feedback](#)

[How to set up Assignments, Annotate and Add Audio Feedback in Brightspace – a video](#)



[Showcase of Annotations and Audio feedback in Brightspace](#)

