



Blogging - assessment & feedback

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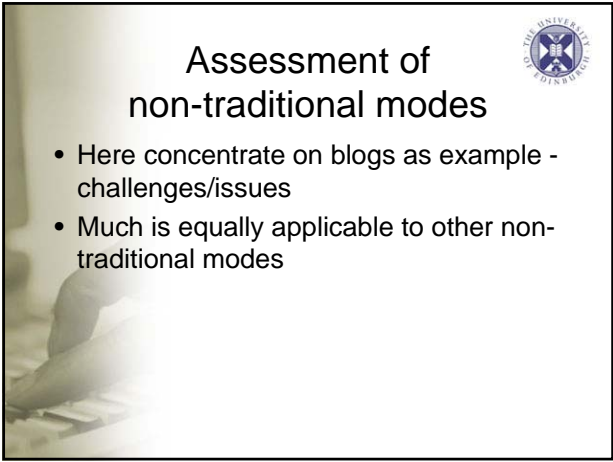
Background to School

- To date all courses are campus based, but all have an online presence (WebCT Vista)
- About 250-300 undergraduates in total
- At first/second year - Level 8; third/fourth year - Level 10
- Want to foster and encourage independent learning




Assessment

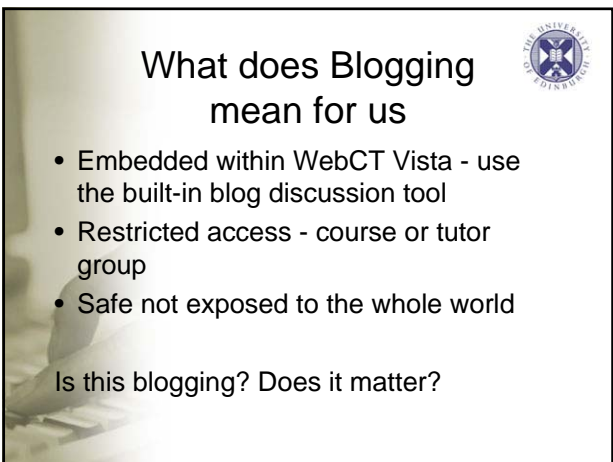
- Most courses have 40/60 course/exam split
- Exams all essay-based
- Course work normally made up 20% essay and 20% ? Where ? can be blog, a presentation, tutorial summary sheet etc
- Assessment by essay and exam standard across all courses



Assessment of non-traditional modes

- Here concentrate on blogs as example - challenges/issues
- Much is equally applicable to other non-traditional modes




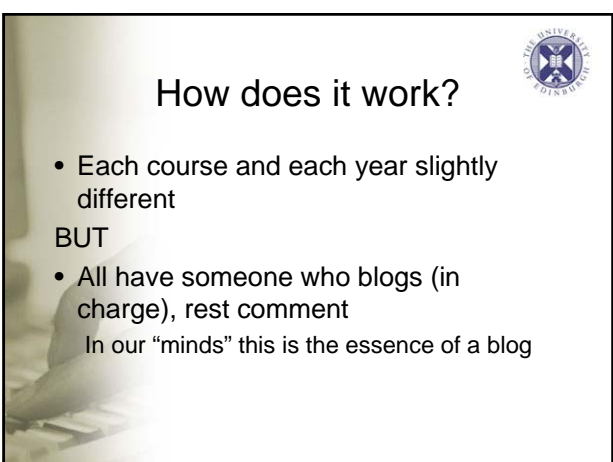


What does Blogging mean for us

- Embedded within WebCT Vista - use the built-in blog discussion tool
- Restricted access - course or tutor group
- Safe not exposed to the whole world

Is this blogging? Does it matter?






How does it work?


- Each course and each year slightly different

BUT

- All have someone who blogs (in charge), rest comment

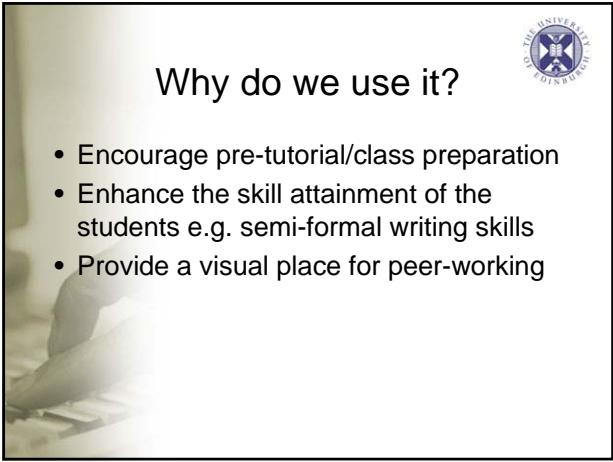
In our "minds" this is the essence of a blog






Why do we use it?

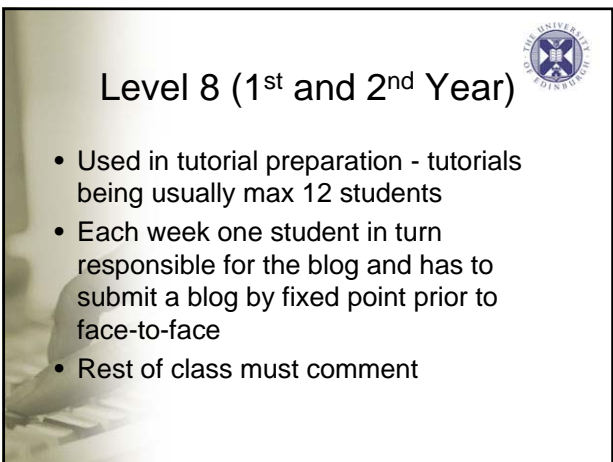
- Encourage pre-tutorial/class preparation
- Enhance the skill attainment of the students e.g. semi-formal writing skills
- Provide a visual place for peer-working






Level 8 (1st and 2nd Year)

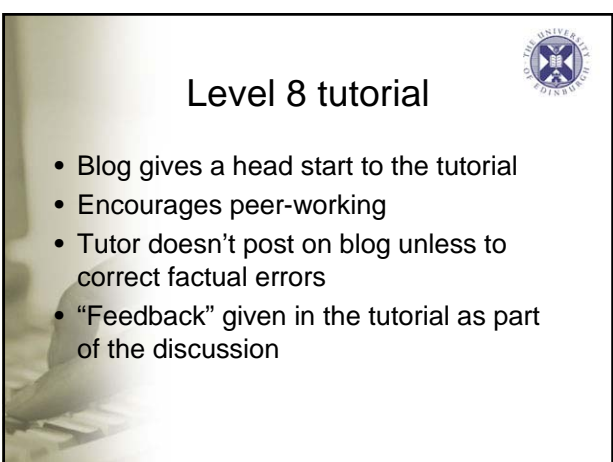
- Used in tutorial preparation - tutorials being usually max 12 students
- Each week one student in turn responsible for the blog and has to submit a blog by fixed point prior to face-to-face
- Rest of class must comment






Level 8 tutorial


- Blog gives a head start to the tutorial
- Encourages peer-working
- Tutor doesn't post on blog unless to correct factual errors
- "Feedback" given in the tutorial as part of the discussion






What looking for?

- Blogger - **ability to show understanding of the set reading text**; semi-formal writing style
- Commenter - adding to what the blogger said or providing an additional point
- Given guidance on length of prose



Assessment

- Created a blogging scale - for marking
- For some courses, the tutor now does give feedback formally on each entry - very time intensive




Formal marking criteria

- **Developed a marking scale based on the general scale used for essays – this is a work in progress and this is an example of current version:-**
 - **Main blog:** To understand the text; to critique it, by identifying appropriate questions for discussion; to compare it with other relevant texts; to write about it briefly, clearly and imaginatively.
 - **Response:** to show understanding of the main blog text by engaging briefly, thoughtfully and critically with the point(s) it makes and the question(s) it raises; to engage constructively with the blogging conversation as it develops through the course.




- 70 - 100% - Excellent - Correct comprehension, critical engagement, clearly written, comparative and imaginative reflection.
- 60 - 69% - Very good - Correct comprehension, critical engagement, clearly written.
- 50 - 59% - Good - Correct comprehension.
- 40 - 49% - Adequate - minimal comprehension.
- 30 - 39% - Unsatisfactory - incorrect and/or inadequate comprehension.
- 1 - 29% - lack of evidence of proper engagement with text.



Level 10 (3rd and 4th years)

- Usage very dependent on the course and what course manager wants the students to achieve
- Here going to give two illustrative examples



Economy, Ethics and Theology

- 300 words weekly (11 weekly contributions in all) for 25% of final mark.
- All post before meet in class and are visible to all in the class
- No formal requirement to comment
- Mark given each week and feedback given in class verbally to all



Assessment criteria

- “Identification of and exegesis of key quotes; comparative critique of more than one text - i.e. When set two texts in one week or when they compare texts from different weeks by different authors; Reference to other primary sources as sources or comparators; Critique but with scholarly reasons (footnoting not required)”



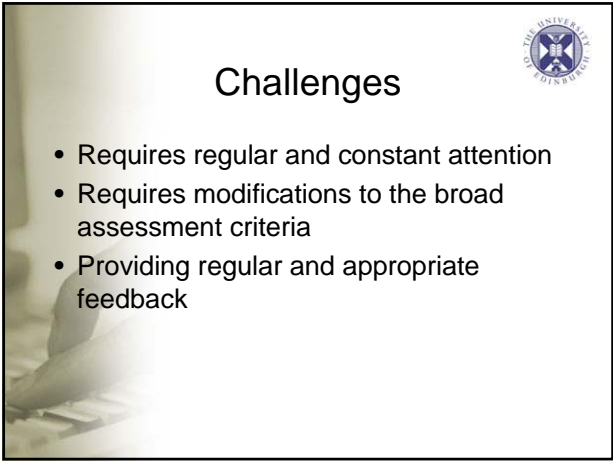
Film, Religion and Ethics

- Each week students write 300-500 words critical review of film by fixed time before face-to-face. One or two students use these to guide the discussion. 20% final mark
- These are used to do final review of 5 films 3000 words total. 30% final mark




Assessment Criteria

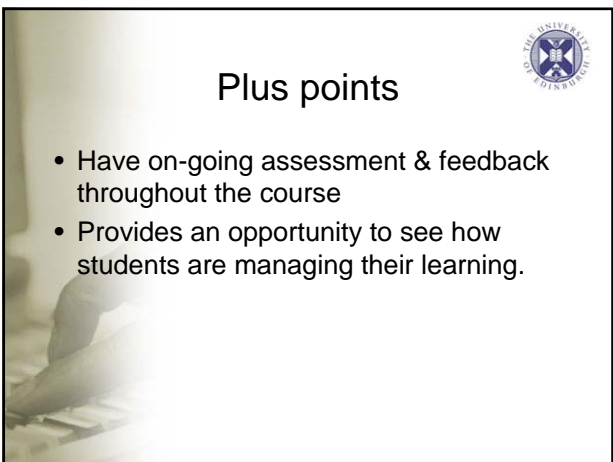
- Reference main points of pertinent texts, e.g. highlighting significant quotations or phrases
- Demonstrate that you have done the reading and understood the main point(s) of each argument.
- Highlight strengths and weaknesses of the texts through your own assessment of the film.
- Identify at least one question that the film, in light of the texts, has provoked.
- Add bibliography of texts read and filmography of films viewed.



Challenges


- Requires regular and constant attention
- Requires modifications to the broad assessment criteria
- Providing regular and appropriate feedback

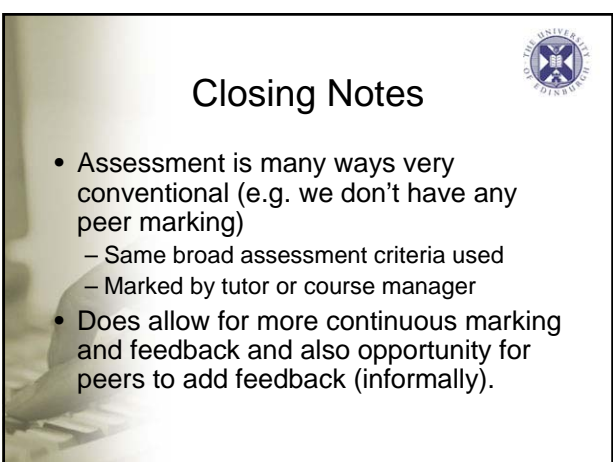




Plus points

- Have on-going assessment & feedback throughout the course
- Provides an opportunity to see how students are managing their learning.





Closing Notes

- Assessment is many ways very conventional (e.g. we don't have any peer marking)
 - Same broad assessment criteria used
 - Marked by tutor or course manager
- Does allow for more continuous marking and feedback and also opportunity for peers to add feedback (informally).

