**Assessing 'alternative media' elements: is there a generic model?**

**Soraya Mostefaoui:**

The initial motivation of these research projects stem from our early experiences developing and applying a common assessment framework for a Level 2 communication and IT module in the Open University. This same assessment framework has been used to assess both text based and non-text based outputs.

The research consisted of two main tasks. First data collection and data analysis. In data collection we have had a thorough literature review to compare our assessment model with other existing models in the literature. We have also had two surveys, one for the students studying the module and one for the tutors teaching the module. We have had a number of focus groups and both structured and semi-structured interviews with other module chairs in the Open University.

The main findings of these research projects is its potential to provide a flexible and consistent way to assess a wide range of alternative media across different disciplines.

We have had a positive feedback from tutors and I have invited a couple of them along to review and discuss the assessment framework.

Charlie, what was your experience using the assessment framework?

**Charlie Lowndes:**

I think I’d divide it into two. From my perspective marking once I’d got used to the criteria, and that takes a little while, applying them enabled me to be I think really consistent across a range of student responses. And what is accuracy? The consistency is accuracy I think in this kind of assessment.

From the students’ point of view giving them very explicit and transparent criteria to work with in their own self-assessments and in some activities assessments of peer work. I think that’s an enormously valuable kind of scaffolding to give them. And I think you can detect a student who’s familiar with that approach in the project work which I also mark. This is the final project before graduation for computing and IT degrees. And somebody who is able to apply almost a formal method to the process, a plan, do and then self-assess and then go round the loop again I think that’s great to see and it does improve the quality of their work.

**Soraya Mostefaoui:**

What about you Cheng?

**Cheng Lee:**

Yes. I would be happy definitely and I’ve started to use it in some of the other modules that I teach for the OU, and the only thing that I’m thinking about now is whether I should apply them to the engineering modules that I teach.

**Soraya Mostefaoui:**

And do you think our students would be happy to continue using such criteria?

**Cheng Lee:**

Definitely because I think the criteria gives them a set of things that they need to satisfy in their answers.

**Soraya Mostefaoui:**

This assessment framework is interesting because each provide a consistent model to assess students for both text based and non-text based outputs. It’s also very interesting because students are using it to assess their own work and to assess their peers. This assessment model is constructed around six criteria which are meeting the brief, factual accuracy, technical level, structure, style and English.