

## **FOHSC CPD Assignment Handler Pilot Update (May 2013)**

### **Introduction**

During the first semester of the 2012 academic year, the Faculty of Health & Social Care Continuing Professional Development (FOHSC CPD) team at Edge Hill University piloted Learning Edges third and latest Electronic Assignment Management (EAM) tool; Assignment Handler. The pilot aimed to improve and secure the workflow of all FOHSC CPD e-submissions during December 2012 and January 2013 assessment period. As well as Assignment Handler, there is currently a range of EAM tools integrated within Learning Edge to support online submission, marking and feedback:

- Turnitin
- Learning Edge Assignment

Prior to this pilot the FOHSC CPD team used Turnitin as their default EAM tool within Learning Edge. The pilot aimed to help the FOHSC CPD team effectively use Assignment Handler as an alternative tool to Turnitin, and to see if the staff and student experience could be enhanced.

### **Key Objectives**

The key goal of the Assignment Handler pilot was to safeguard the student experience. Further objectives that were of importance to the FOHSC CPD team during the pilot are as follows:

- Staff and students experience a reliable system
- Students experience a clear and user-friendly submission process
- Students receive an electronic receipt
- Students can obtain feedback and marks online via Learning Edge
- Offline marking for staff
- E-Marking annotation with Microsoft Word for staff
- Staff can control online feedback and mark release via Grade Centre

### **Staff Training**

It was considered critical that all staff and stakeholders within the FOHSC CPD team were given hands-on training before and during the pilot. A series of training workshops and 1-2-1 sessions were delivered by LTD to ensure all staff engaged and fully understood all the processes involved in the use of Assignment Handler. All training workshops focussed on the following areas:

- Assignment Handler dropbox creation and management
- Batch downloading of submissions (compressed zip file)
- Offline E-Marking (Microsoft Word)
- Batch uploading of assessed submissions (compressed zip file management and file renaming)
- The import and the release of grades and feedback (Grade Centre)
- General troubleshooting issues

Furthermore a collection of staff guides were planned and created alongside a high level of ad hoc email and telephone assistance from Learning Services and the LTD; which was available throughout the duration of the pilot and beyond.

### **Student Support**

Student support resources and multimedia were created to ensure the key objective of safeguarding the student experience was achieved. These resources included a document which guided students step by step on the process to submitting through Learning Edge and how to obtain their grades and feedback. Another resource included a screencast that demonstrated all the steps involved towards successfully submitting online and receiving their digital receipt.

LTD advised that these materials be located alongside Assignment Handler drop boxes within Learning Edge to ensure that students received support at point-of-need, within their module areas during the submission period.

### **Challenges**

Admin support was not available to FOHSC CPD during the pilot of Assignment Handler. Academic colleagues were therefore involved in all processes of online submission, drawing upon support from LTD to ensure a consistent approach to using Assignment Handler, ie. Setting up dropboxes, managing files and returning graded work.

It was noted that staff found the Assignment handler's offline processes most challenging, requiring general ICT skills in the following 2 areas:

1. During the download and upload stages of Assignment Handler the tool combines all student submissions within a single compressed file (zip). Assignment Handler transfers all student submissions from and to Learning Edge within a single ZIP file. Though this was included within training, staff needed further support on use of ZIP files.
2. Support and guidance on how to rename and move Microsoft Word files before uploading assessed work into Learning Edge.

### **Next Steps**

To improve staff engagement with Assignment Handler the pilot has identified the following actions:

- ICT training with a focus on the file management aspect of compressed files (zip) and the editing of filenames.
- Engagement from the faculty administration team to improve consistency of the user experience for both staff and student.