

Writing and the Arts: using a patchwork text approach with art students

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Abstract

Between October and December 2013, around 150 art students studying at levels four and five took part in a project designed to make academic writing assignments more approachable. The project, which was based around the idea of patchwork text assessment, was simply to identify whether a patchwork text assignment would be a viable alternative to an essay for some types of assessment.

In each of the modules, a written assignment of between 1,500 and 2,000 words which would normally have been submitted immediately before (or immediately after) the winter break was adapted, so that the single submission was broken down into several small submissions which were completed over a longer period of time. Total word lengths remained the same, the assessment outcomes did not change, and the final deadline was not altered – however, instead of submitting a single document at the end of the term, students used blogs/journals throughout the term to complete the assignment.

Feedback from the students is being gathered during February, March and April via a survey that is collecting qualitative and quantitative data. The survey aims to find out about students attitudes to writing, their confidence when producing written academic work, and their perceptions of the assignment. Differences in attitudes based on achievement levels are also being sought. Qualitative data about the project will be gathered from staff, and focus groups with students may be run once the survey has closed in order to clarify any issues arising from the survey.

Acknowledgements and Dissemination

This research has not been funded, nor has it been disseminated. Our aim is to repeat this project in 2014/15 with both undergraduate and taught postgraduate students, and to publish the findings in the summer of 2015.

References

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