Using the Journal tool to administer module evaluation questionnaires

Student Engagement // Resources for staff

About this guide:
This document is a single part of a wider set of guidance produced and provided by the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) team to support staff and students at the University of Sussex in the use and best practice of using technology to facilitate module evaluation questionnaires.

This specific guide addresses using the Journal tool in Study Direct, you can find more guides and information on our website:

www.sussex.ac.uk/tel/
1. Introduction

The 2015/16 pilot was set up by the Student Engagement Working Group as part of the University's ongoing student engagement agenda. The pilot is being co-facilitated by members of the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) and Academic Development Quality Enhancement (ADQE) teams and seeks to give staff greater autonomy over what they ask their students and through which tool the survey is delivered.

The pilot recommends three types of questionnaire that could be used to gain feedback from your students, as well as three methods of questionnaire delivery that will allow for both in-class and out-of-class feedback to be given and collected instantaneously so analysis and enhancement can be made quickly and on an individual basis. It is felt that this format of questionnaires would be best suited to be delivered between weeks 4 and 7 to allow teaching staff time to put any necessary module changes in place.

1.1. What is the ‘Journal’ tool?

The Journal activity in Study Direct is a survey tool which allows students to give text feedback to the staff that they can update over a period of time that can be set by the module convenor. The tool allows students to record their responses and the teaching staff can respond to this feedback in text form. The response is not anonymous but it is not visible to other students, just the teaching staff on the module. The students would be able to respond to the tool via any device that connects to the internet and so can be available for both in-class and out-of-class responses.

The Journal activity allows the students to respond freely, using as much text as they want. As such, this activity is probably most suitable for smaller size groups (0-20 students) so the responses can be analysed and responded to without greatly increasing the tutors workload.

1.2. How can Sussex staff access the ‘Journal’ tool?

The Journal tool is available to all Study Direct module sites and can be accessed and administered by any staff member who has editing rights on the module (i.e. they are assigned one of the following roles on Study Direct; Administrator, Course Creator, Tutor, Administrative Staff).

If you would like to receive training on using the Journal tool please contact tel@sussex.ac.uk.

2. Creating a module evaluation activity using the Journal tool

To create an evaluation activity using the Journal tool, log on to Study Direct and find the module site in which you wish the tool to be available. Once you have accessed the area of the module site you wish to create the activity, scroll down the page and select ‘Add Activity’.
Selecting this will open a drop-down menu which will give you a host of activities to select from and you need to select ‘Journal’ (to find out about any of the other tools, please contact tel@sussex.ac.uk).

Once you have selected ‘Journal’, you will be asked to fill in the details regarding the set-up of the activity. From this screen you can give your Journal activity a title and description and select how long you want it to be open for students to respond.

An example of how this can be set up:

3. Collecting module evaluation via the Journal tool

As the Journal tool sits in Study Direct can be answered either in class (via a smart device) or from outside of class (via any internet-enabled device).

3.1. How can students respond to the Journal tool?

Students can respond to the Journal activity in class as it can be accessed through any smart device via the internet or the University of Sussex app.

Students will be able to log into Study Direct (either via the University of Sussex app or through a browser) and submit their responses in-class. The Journal activity will look like this:
3.2. How can I respond to student feedback via the Journal tool?

Once you have collected responses from students you can reply to these in Study Direct by ‘View Journal Entries’ and typing in the box directly under the student's remarks. Once you have added your response, click ‘Save all my feedback’ and the student will then be able to see your response.

Students view:
Tutors view:

NICK DONFIELD  Last edited: Monday, 5 October 2015, 06:03 PM

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Feedback:  No grade...  •  Monday, 5 October 2015, 06:03 PM

Thanks for this. I agree with your suggested changes to the module and will look to implement these changes ASAP

Demo Student 1
No entry

Save all my feedback