

# Assessment Analytics at DCU

## This institutional approach...

...is based in Dublin City University.

...was developed in-house.

...involved the development of a report showing assessments across a programme.

...also enables programme coordinators to identify students at risk of non-progression.



## Identified Need

Coordinating module assessments across a semesterised programme is a recognised challenge of semesterised programmes. Within this context, DCU found that lecturers working independently to design and manage their module assignments could lead to a lack of coordination across programmes, potentially leading to an increase in student anxiety, particularly at key times. Responding to this challenge, and recognising the value of assessment data as a means of understanding students' progress through their programme, DCU set out to develop a means of capturing, analysing and reporting on assessment data in order to effectively manage students' workloads and to maximise the value of learner data as a resource for identifying students at risk of non-progression.

## Solution

The project team undertook a two-phased approach to addressing this challenge. They first developed a plugin for Moodle which enabled the Moodle administrator to add tags to the settings page of each module. These tags enable the association of modules with multiple programmes for reporting purposes. The second phase involved creating two different types of report:

- The first report provides lecturers with a calendar of assignments across the programme, including an assignment description.
- The second report outlines for programme coordinators the number of assignment submissions, late submissions and non-submissions across the programme.

These reports enable a coordinated approach to assessments across the programme and give programme coordinators a birds-eye view of students that may be at risk of underperforming.



### Enablers and Challenges

Having identified the solution, the team found the main challenge to be the diversity of Moodle usage across the institution. In cases where lecturers were not using Moodle to manage their assignments, the reports would be missing data for those modules. It was feared that this would undermine the value of the reports as they are intended to show all assessment activity across a programme or school. The team found that promoting the wide range of support materials provided for lecturers, increased engagement with the relevant features of the VLE and enabled staff to create and manage their assignments through it. A further enabler was the availability of accurate data relating to the linkages between modules and programmes.

### Advice

The advice of the project team to other institutions interested in pursuing such an approach is to enlist the support of the programme coordinators, heads of school and student class reps to encourage full engagement with the relevant features of the VLE. This ensures the availability of better data quality, leading to better reporting and a more accurate overview for programme coordinators. In the case of each of the aforementioned stakeholders, the team advises clearly outlining the benefits for all when the relevant features in the VLE are used appropriately. Finally, it is critical to make certain that only the appropriate people have access to the data in order to ensure GDPR compliance

### Further Information

Dr Mark Glynn ([mark.glynn@dcu.ie](mailto:mark.glynn@dcu.ie))

Phone: (01) 700 6181