School of Psychology  
Teaching & Learning Committee  

Minutes of the meeting: 25 June 2010  

Present Andrea Loftus  
Vance Locke  
Geoff Hammond (Chair)  

Apology Shayne Loft  

Visitor Nic Fay attended for Item 4  

1 Chair’s report  
- Following a recommendation of the coordinator of 1101, the coordinator of 1102 agreed to alter the weighting of some assessment components. The new weightings would be Lab participation 6% (previously 12%), WebCT quizzes 5% (previously 10%), Experimental participation 6% (unchanged), Lab report 33% (previously 20%), and multiple-choice exam 50% (previously 52%). The changes would increase the weighting of the lab report at the expense of ungraded components.  
- A matrix showing the nature and weighting of the written assignments required in each unit was distributed.  
- From the Faculty T&L Committee: Lectopia would not be mandated university-wide but would be required for regional units; the Faculty T&L Committee would continue the current application procedure for teaching awards, although a teaching portfolio could be submitted with relevant sections indexed, and student nominees would be invited to address the selection criteria.  

2 Electronic submission of assignments through Turnitin  

The Committee considered the written submission on the trial of Turnitin in 1101 and the Chair reported on its trial in 2217. (Note: the written report is attached.) Although there had been a few glitches during its introduction it was clear that Turnitin had reduced the administrative workload of receiving assignments, recording marks, and returning marked assignments, and had been well received by students and markers. Few cases of plagiarism had been detected and it was likely that its widespread use would eliminate plagiarism.  

Recommendation to the Head of School: that Turnitin be adopted as the default means of assignment submission from second semester 2010 and that a suitable level of administrative support be provided for creating and maintaining class lists.  

3 Teaching in Psychology 7416  

The Committee considered the purpose of this unit (Psychological research and theory) and the way that it was taught and assessed. It was agreed that all honours graduates should have an understanding of the history of psychology and in particular the historical antecedents of their honours research areas. The unit coordinator reported that the changes in the way the unit was taught had been
well received and that the SURF ratings had increased substantially from those in 2009. The Committee agreed to revisit the unit syllabus before it next ran in 2011.

4 Mid-year Honours entry

The School’s practice has been to allow students entering Honours midyear to do only coursework in their first semester of enrolment and to do their research in the following year. The course therefore takes three semesters to complete.

Several disadvantages were noted:

- eligible students might choose to enrol at a university which allowed them to complete in two semesters;
- the practice breached CRICOS regulation;
- the practice was not equitable as the workload for mid-year students was spread over a longer time.

In response, it was pointed out that a two-semester course had disadvantages:

- mid-year students would not enjoy the same cohort experience;
- it would not be practicable to convene a separate Honours Conference;
- staff workloads might increase.

The Chair would get information on the current mid-year entry applications and report to a future meeting.

5 Other business

There was no other business.
General comment

Taking on TurnItIn has been a challenging project. If TurnItIn is to be used wholesale across the school, then there will need to be appropriate management of such a project. Simply put, albeit TurnItIn solves some problems, it raises a whole host of additional administrative and organisational difficulties which need addressing and the consequent workload needs allocating appropriately.

On the plus side, TurnItIn reduced the amount of paper and ink (so is environmentally more friendly) and significantly reduced the multiple handling of paper submissions by the office and Unit staff (coordinators and tutors). It also significantly simplified the process of monitoring and administering the marking of Lab Reports at PSB Singapore (who ran the Unit during Semester 1). Plus, markers reported that, albeit slower to start with, they speeded up and many found it quicker than hand written marking when taking into account the increase in detailed and comprehensive feedback (by being able to cut and paste frequently applied comments into their own Clip board).

We would urge some notes of caution, however, about the following:

1. A small number of students complained that we had marked an older version of their report (not the most recent uploads). TurnItIn told me that this was not possible, but it is! If a student emails you to say this is the case, ask them to forward to you their ‘Digital Receipt’. At the bottom of this email from TurnItIn (confirming their upload) will be a text only copy of their report. It is easy to check whether or not this version is the same as the one listed on TurnItIn. In a few cases with PSYC1101 it was not, so I had to ask students to email us the correct version for manual uploading by the office.

2. A few students complained about their marks, saying that they had zero scores in the subsections of the rubric when they had submitted something in that section (abstract, introduction, methods etc). On checking, this was correct. It turned out that the grades marked by the tutor in the Rubric Scorecard had not been saved. Please urge your markers to check very carefully that they have allocated rubric grades to all sections and saved them.

3. In the current version of TurnItIn (we are told this will change come August) there are inconsistencies within differing ‘views’ of the same document. That is, if you download the pdf of the file the document will be in APA format (it preserves faithfully all use of italics), but for some students’ reports (and there was no consistent pattern for which) their use of italics disappeared in the GradeMark view, leading the markers to believe that the references and table titles were not properly formatted. We did not delete marks for this but did give verbal feedback. I am told by TurnItIn that their revised software will solve such problems. But, you have been warned!
Documentation

As part of the process of implementing TurnItIn, we created a slew of documents which are available on the KnowledgeBase for anyone to use as a basis for their own unit:

1. **What is TURNITIN and what does it do** – this is a document for students detailing what Turnitin is and what it does. The dates specified in this document are specific to PSYC1101 in 2010.

2. **Submitting your PSYC1101 Lab Report using TURNITIN** – step-by-step instructions for students describing how to upload their assignment to Turnitin. Again this has some monikers specific to PSYC1101 but is easily generalisable.

3. **35% Turnitin Originality Report** – an example of a lab report returning 35% similarity (what might be considered ‘high’) but actually consists of many small percentage matches. For tutors and staff not for students as these examples contain currently used lab reports.

4. **76% Turnitin Originality Report** – an example of a lab report returning 76% similarity with a 61% match to a single other report. For tutors and staff not for students as these examples contain currently used lab reports.

5. **TURNITIN for tutors** – explanatory document explaining the set up of the Quickmark library and rubric scorecard

6. **Marking assignments in TURNITIN** – step-by-step guide to use GradeMark to electronically mark reports in Turnitin

7. **How to use Clipboard** – a guide to using the Clipboard function when marking in GradeMark

8. **PSYC1101 QuickMark Library** – A collection of generic lab report quickmark comments that can be uploaded for any psychology lab report assignment. Once uploaded from the excel file these comments can be used as “click-and-drag” icons placed anywhere in the document. When you hover over the icon the full comment is displayed.

9. **PSYC1101 Rubric Scorecard** – the rubric scorecard used in PSYC1101. This has been refined over many years and seems to be the best compromise between a system that is useful and easy to understand for students and markers and creates as much consistency as possible between markers. Other units have double the number of criteria possible. Our preference was to use fewer criteria to encourage greater marking consistency.
Process

Following the trial in PSYC1101, we recommend the following:

1. **Set your usual deadline for submission**
   Tell students that they should submit by that deadline, but that the Originality report they receive on submission will not be the final report we will use to judge their submission. Before the deadline, their paper will be compared with the web, journal articles and previous years’ submissions. After the deadline, their report will be compared with all the other students enrolled in the Unit. This means that the percentage similarity of their report may well rise;

2. **Set late or no late submissions**
   Decide if you are going to allow students to submit late (for the usual 5% penalty per day) and set this accordingly in TurnItIn. The only issue is how to manage this as TurnItIn does not keep a history of submissions. It shows us the most recent version and does not say whether this is the original or a resubmission. The alternative is to allow late submissions (but not on TurnItIn) and to require students to email the office with any submission post the deadline, so you can record how many days late the submission came in. Students who submit late (that is without an extension) should, in our view, be allowed correspondingly less time to re-submit, but a policy on this will need to be decided at school level;

3. **Managing extensions**
   Students who are given extensions should submit their report by email to the Unit Coordinator or to a nominated member of the professional staff by the due date. The work can then be uploaded by the office to TurnItIn and the student advised to go on line to check its originality. These students can then be given the same time period of 1 week to re-submit (by email) a revised version of the report.

4. **Set up TurnItIn to allocate papers to markers**
   In PSYC1101, we had 13 tutors marking in Crawley and Albany and 2 at PSB, Singapore. Students appear in TurnItIn in alphabetical order. Each tutor was allocated students alphabetically (which seemed the most random), so that they marked approximately 25 * number of tutorial groups they tutored. E.g. a tutor taking 3 lab groups marked about 75 lab reports. We have used random marking for fairness and to encourage consistency in the advice tutors give students;

5. **Re-open TurnItIn for re-submissions**
   Once all the reports are in, re-open TurnItIn for a further week (i.e. set a new deadline) and then mail all students to log on to TurnItIn to check the originality of their report. If their report looks uncannily like another student’s or the web or other sources, then they have up to the second deadline to revise and resubmit the report. They may do so as many times as they like up to the new deadline but TurnItIn will only email them a revised originality report once every 24 hours;

6. **Notify markers that TurnItIn is open for marking**
   Historically, we have allowed tutors 2 weeks to mark reports, but using TurnItIn they were quicker than this by a few days: partly because there was no need for the office staff to collect and then sort the reports before tutors could physically pick
them up. Markers provide feedback using GradeMark (General comments, Rubric scorecard, and qualitative feedback on the report using QuickMarks and their own cut and pasted comments). As a result, markers reported providing more detailed and comprehensive feedback in the same amount of time taken when marking paper reports in previous years.

7. Co-ordinator reviews marks
   Using TurnItIn, the coordinator can then review a) grades and b) originality reports to check the consistency of marking, to calibrate hard or easy markers, and to check that no suspected academic misconduct cases had been overlooked. Time for the Coordinator(s) to review grades and originality reports, and ask hard/easy markers to take a second look needs allowing when setting the date by which students will receive their marks.

8. Academic misconduct
   Tutors who identified cases of suspected academic misconduct were able to ask the Lab Coordinator or the Unit Coordinator to take a look on line to see if completing a misconduct form was warranted. If yes, tutors attached the completed report (with similar sections highlighted) and a copy of the TurnItIn originality report. This was very helpful when it came time to interview students about what had happened. Only 5 individuals were interviewed this year, of over 900 students. This is fewer than last year (8 cases of 870) when we were manually checking for collusion/plagiarism.

9. Transferring grades to PsyMarks
   Before the grades can be uploaded to PsyMarks, the unit coordinator will need to sit with a member of professional staff identifying those students to whom late penalties apply, or fail components (since TurnItIn simply has a blank, i.e. no grade, for people who fail to submit). We had a couple of students who submitted something other than a lab report in the hope that this would mean that they would fail the report but still be able to sit the exam and pass the unit. TurnItIn had these scored as zero grades, and they needed manually recoding as FC in PsyMarks.