

CASE STUDY 6 - SUMMARY

NAME

George Mahashe

LEVEL

Undergraduate

COURSE

FIN1005W - Fine Art Foundation

CATEGORY

Transforming Assessment

FACULTY

Humanities

One sentence summary

A new form of assessment was designed to get students re-engaged and into a practice of responding. Students were given themed provocations to discuss in groups using Vula chat rooms, which then formed the basis of a collective written response, summary and report.



Context

The exercise was themed provocations which asked students to interact with a text on their chat platform. This was like a tut without the tutor and could go on longer than tuts normally do, giving students time to get to the text in a meaningful and considered way. Students interacted on their own terms and developed a greater degree of independence. This is significant, as there was a rise of students needing personal affirmations, and staff may not have enough time to get to them individually due to admin overload.



Outcomes/ Lessons learned

This format really worked well and will be carried forward. Students responded incredibly well to the provocations and opportunity to engage - in some exciting cases, I could not keep up with the chats the students generated. The group process on Vula became a parallel form of learning. However, I realised that policing and monitoring engagement was actually quite invasive and the pressure was preventing learning.



Purpose:

The purpose was to get students to engage with the material and get them into a practice of responding. The assignment was designed to put them at ease and draw on their strengths. It wasn't about feedback; it was based more on peer learning and the principle of practice.



Recommendation

Providing the kind of space which allows student engagement is really important when working online. With a larger class, group assignments can become a form of peer learning. Having groups submit reports, including their chats, makes it possible to incorporate some of their emerging ideas into ongoing lectures as a way of keeping the students' engaged and thinking.



Process

Students were given a choice of four provocations (posted in the Lesson Tab on Vula) and had to do two. They worked in groups of 4-6 to produce a report (30-40 pages) where they had to write a collective 1500-word response to the provocation, along with all their transcribed chats and discussions, and then a 500-word summary of their chats and a blog. Students formed chat groups in Vula and were required to post in the chat at least twice a week. We used the collaborative blog via the student pages.