**Outstanding teaching, learning and assessment: case study on operational project led by Bromley College**

**Using screencasting to improve learner independence**

# Introduction

Freely available screencasting tools, such as Jing used in this project or Screencastify from Google, enable a tutor or a student to record themselves speaking alongside what they see on their computer screen. The student can later play, pause and repeat the information, for example: to understand an assignment brief and marking scheme; follow a weakness in their assignment being corrected through an example worked by their tutor; review progressacross their framework; or go on to record an explanation of their work for their portfolio.

Requiring little technical ability, these tools can produce outstanding results for students in all settings, used innovatively to improve communication and understanding between students, tutors, assessors and employers. The aim of this project was to evaluate how screencasting with Jing improves learners’ experiences compared to written feedback, extends the opportunities of face-to-face feedback, and impacts on learning through increasing learner independence.

Project partners Bromley College, Bexley College and Kingston Colleges are further education providers that serve diverse populations across the south of London. Each is currently rated by Ofsted as good with outstanding features. Tutors and students were engaged from these vocational areas:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project partner** | **Profile** | **Course groups engaged in project** | **Tutors** | **Students**  | **Managers** |
| **Bexley College** | Medium FE | BTEC L2/3 diploma mediaBTEC L2/3 diploma ITGCSE mathsNCFE L2 teaching assistants | 8  | 32  | 1 |
| **Bromley College** | Medium FE | BTEC L3 diploma sport; BTEC L3 diploma sport & exercise sciences BTEC L3 diploma public services | 4 | 52 | 2 |
| **Kingston College** | Medium FE | BTEC L2 diploma health & social careNVQ L2 hairdressingBTEC L3 diploma performing arts | 8 | 22 | 2 |

# Approach

After staff and student surveys, discussion on what makes brilliant feedback, and sessions exploring different ways to use Jing, tutors selected learners with a diverse range of abilities and backgrounds to take part in pilot groups. Tutors then started to make recordings and compare the experiences with written feedback.

“I learn better when I hear rather than read feedback, see what the tutor is pointing out, go over it again and refer back to it later.”
 Aaron Manu, BTEC level 2 IT student

Students felt they learn best from an assignment brief or feedback that is accessible when needed, links other resources and appears more personalised to them. Crucially, using screencasting in feedback helps students understand what the tutor means and why, and enables the students to repeat the feedback. Ideally, the students would also have a chance to respond so that the feedback process becomes a conversation rather than one way.

A variety of screencasting experiments were tested appropriate to each curriculum area, e.g.:

* Sports sciences students could see examples of what they needed for pass, merit and distinction, what to avoid for a fail, then got feedback on their draft submissions shown alongside the marking scheme, clearly pointing how they can achieve their individual targets.
* A maths tutor used the onscreen calculator and drawing tools to record many different methods as part of feedback, to reach out to student nurses struggling to reach the 100% needed for drug prescribing calculations.
* Hairdressing apprentices could see on screen how, by drawing together many different systems, their performance in all the different elements needed for the framework contributed to their progress review, and were able to promptly share the assessment with their employer.
* Creative digital media students and performing arts students saw their video assignments assessed, with the tutor pausing and giving detailed onscreen comments, solving the limitations of paper based feedback.
* Students recorded their own responses to demonstrate how they were meeting challenges and targets, reflecting on their performance, which became known as ‘flipping the Jing’.

Adjustments were made for learners with technical requirements, language barriers and students who opted for written feedback.

“My NCFE Level 2 teaching assistant students all genuinely recognised the value and potential of screencasting. Using a voiceover increases the amount of feedback – you can say much more than you would normally write in the margin.”
Peter Smith, NCFE Teaching Assistant Lecturer

**Outcomes and impact**

Student evaluation of the impact of Jing screencasting shows significant improvements:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **BeforeJing** | **After Jing** | **Learners satisfied or very satisfied with** |
| 79 % | **90 %** | being able to **go over** and understand feedback to improve your work |
| 36 % | **78 %** | feeling that feedback is **personalised** to them |
| 76 % | **94 %** | the **amount** and detail of feedback |
| 74 % | **100 %** | being able to **access** feedback in a way they want |
| 66 % | **85 %** | being able to receive feedback **quickly enough** |

Tutor satisfaction also improved after trying the new approach:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **BeforeJing** | **After Jing** | **Staff satisfied or very satisfied** |
| 81 % | **92 %** | that the **methods** they are using to give feedback to their learners help the learners to make as much progress as possible |
| 76 % | **91 %** | with having enough opportunities to **repeat** the feedback to learners as required |
| 31 % | **44 %** | that the **time** they have available for feedback enables them to give a sufficient level of detail to all learners |

Tutors witnessed an increase in students taking responsibility for accessing feedback promptly – and acting on it – sometimes pausing the recording to make the improvement straight away:

“Written teacher feedback is not always clear. With Jing, you can listen again until you understand it. You get a lot from the tone of voice and know what they mean. As soon as I get the email with the link, I want to complete the resubmission right away.”
Amy Louise-Faulkener, sports sciences student

Students appreciated the effort being taken to personalise their feedback, linking their aims, the nuanced praise, individual challenges, supportive tone of voice, detailed appreciation, reasoned judgements, clearly signposted stretches and helpful links to contextualised resources. In return, students felt they had a greater understanding of what was needed and ownership of their responsibilities.

The quality of resubmissions improved substantially, with improved pass rates on second submission, as well as the tutors spending much less time being asked to repeat and explain feedback, check through multiple drafts of student work or repeat the assignment brief, with missed one-to-ones recorded and emailed.

Collaboration and reflection caused a real ‘buzz’ in the staffroom, with a focus on developing English and maths and employability skills.

“I only see assessors twice a year, so [*this gives me a realistic ongoing view*](https://www.blendspace.com/lessons/IUXAh4TmNWxNLA/jing-screencast)of the apprentice’s progress.”

Victor Pajak, salon owner

# Lessons learned

The introduction of an approach mid-term to this range of students, including the investment in staff development, was a bold decision that has repaid itself in the pilot groups’ learners’ motivation, engagement and improved performance in assignments.

Technical challenges were few and the tutors got quickly accustomed to speaking clearly and to the five minute time limit per recording. Currently Jing does not run on mobile phones although Google Screencastify does. Creating a small enclosed area, ‘a Jing booth’, helped provide a quiet recording environment in a busy learning resources area.

The Jing Booth – a quiet recording environment for learners

*“Screencasting provides equal access and equal opportunity. This is highly individualised and therefore this is a very inclusive approach.”*

*Eireann Brooks, eLearning Coordinator*

The acceptability of recorded feedback as an alternative to written feedback varies between awarding organisations, individual courses and college policy, and needs to be agreed on a course-by-course basis. Finding a simple tool to translate the recordings into a written transcript would be helpful. Embedding the feedback recording link in college monitoring and portfolio systems like eTrackr, Pro Monitor and OneFile saves time and widens the reach.

Tutor enthusiasm was infectious, spreading organically between areas. The tutors demonstrated their commitment to the Professional Standards by reflecting on what works best in their teaching and learning to meet the diverse needs of learners, and by applying appropriate and fair methods of assessment for constructive and timely feedback to support progression and achievement. In the future this will result in promoting and supporting the use of technology more widely and, with other professionals, assessing its impact on learning.

Close collaboration, shared development between the project leads and inter-college training expedited progress, broadened the subject specific experience base of each college and allocated those best placed to solve technical and pedagogic challenges on behalf of everyone.

# Sustainability and transferability

Partner colleges will monitor the impact on student success so that by the end of their courses they can make a solid case for building screencasting into the strategic planning from September, supported by the growing collection of subject specific screencasts.

The use of screencasting can be developed further through tutors and their students discussing how they could enhance the recording of task requirements for use in flipped learning activities, creatively link maths and English resources, use recordings as portfolio evidence to enhance CVs, and enable learners to peer review.

Innovative use of screencasting in professional development will give tutors a parallel experience, recording reflections on a scheme of work after a class, posting screencasts to a common resource area for peer review and encouraging their learners to record reflections on how they like to be guided*.*

“To engage students who don’t like going to English and maths,
30 second Jings show them our fabulous resources and how to access them, differentiated according to learning need.”
Kim Bacon, Head of GCSE & A Level

**Case study written by Julian Bream, Peer Advisor, supported by Eireann Brooks, Kingston College**